

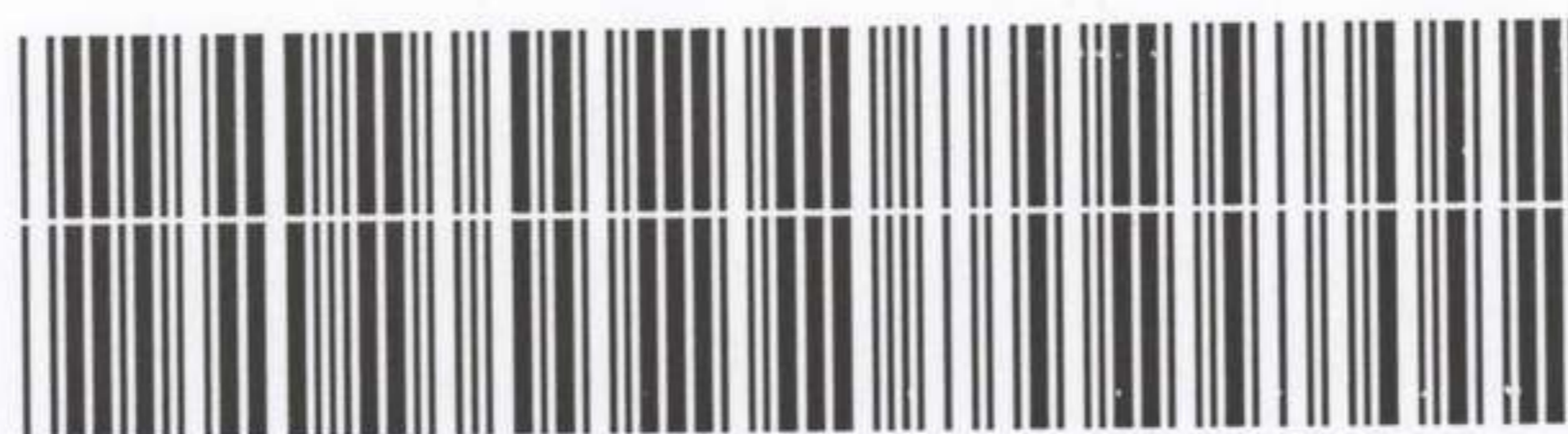
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Artillery

Item number: 13/11/2

Title: Headquarters, 2nd Australian
Divisional Artillery

April 1916



AWM4-13/11/2

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Antillery

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Antillery

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Marseilles	March 23 rd	9 am	Hd. Qrs Div ARTY arrived at Marseilles - entrained for Havre.	
	24 th	10 pm	Arrived in Havre 24 th March. The 4 th Brigade R.F.A arrived on the 23 rd . The 5 th - 6 th & Switzer Brigade & the arrived on following days. All Brigades drew their equipment & then entrained for the concentration area of the 2nd Div in the neighbourhood of Aire. The Divisional Ammunition column disembarked at Marseilles at the end of March & assembled at Abbeville.	
Lynde	March 31 st		On arrival at the concentration area AIRE a certain number of officers & men of each brigade were sent forward and attached to batteries of the 34 th Div Artillery - to learn the work & the ground.	
Lynde	Apr 8		On the 8 th of April the 4 th Brigade and 6 th Brigade commenced to take over the guns from the 24 th Div	

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Crix de Bac	April 8 th	-	The 5 th Brigade followed the 6 th Brigade & took over	
	9 th		the guns of the 2nd Div 160 th Bde R.F.A. 34 th Div	
	10 th		The B.A.C. & D.A.C. followed on the following	
	12 th		days & at 7.30 am on the 12 th April Brig. Genl Johnston - D.A. took over the responsibility for the Artillery defence of the front allotted to the 2 nd Aust Div. i.e. trenches 27 to 66 inclusive — 5 th Armoured Div The Howitzer Brigade of the 34 th Div still remains with the 2 nd Aust Div - until such time as the Howitzer Brigade of the 2 nd Aust Div has gained sufficient experience of the gun & the ground over which it is operating. — The batteries are daily carrying out practice.	
	12 th		Lt Col. C. Warren was transferred from the command of the 22 nd Howitzer Brigade to command the Div Artillery Column (temporarily). Lt Col. W. Davidson was	

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Croix du Bac	April 12 th		Transferred from the Div Ambr Column to command the 22 nd Howitzer Brigade in place of Lt Col. C. Warren (temporarily).	
	13 th		Up to date three [*] batteries of the 5 th Brigade have been shelled fairly heavily with various calibres of guns - up to 5.9". No damage to material or men. But one large billet has been burnt. Our batteries have retaliated & burnt some of the enemy's billets.	* 13 th 14 th & 15 th
	13 th		We fired several instructional series - and a few rounds at the enemy's trenches in retaliation for some damage to our trenches nos 54 & 55 - where the enemy obtained a direct hit on a dugout.	
	14 th		Very misty day and observation very difficult - only a few rounds were fired by us to register certain points. At about noon the enemy shelled one of our batteries	

WAR DIARY

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Croix du Bac	April 14 th	1 p.m.	<p>and at the same time - the men's billets were shelled by 77mm & 4.2" There was some slight damage to buildings - but no casualties.</p>	
	15 th		<p>A very fine day - aeroplanes were active very early in the morning. Several enemy working parties were visible at different points we fired a few rounds to disperse them -</p>	
		4 p.m.	<p>Between 4 & 5 p.m. the enemy shelled A 27a with 77mm and 4.2". one house was burnt down - no casualties</p>	
		11 p.m.	<p>A Zeppelin flew over the 2nd Div area & dropped a bomb behind our lines - it fell in a field, no damage.</p>	
	16 th	6 a.m.	<p>Enemy aeroplanes were very active - early in the morning - observation was very clear. Later on in the day several observation balloons were up also and at</p>	
		2 p.m.	<p>2 p.m. the enemy commenced to shell the vicinity of BOIS CRENIER. one of our batteries was shelled from</p>	

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Cros du bec	April 16 th	2 pm	<p>2 pm to 6.30 pm. About 230 shells of 4.2" calibre were fired of which about 50% were blind. No casualty to personnel or material - but considerable damage to officers' & mens' billets and the road - RUE DE CHARLES.</p> <p>In the afternoon also several 77m shells were fired on to some of our batteries in the 5th Brigade - one house was set on fire.</p> <p>During the day Mr Gen Birdwood visited the batteries of the 4th & 6th Brigades.</p>	
	17 th		<p>Very wet day & observation difficult - high wind and little or no aeroplane activity on the part of the enemy - a very quiet day on both sides.</p>	
	18 th		<p>Quiet day. A few test rounds only were fired by our artillery. A number of enemy working parties were seen & at 1.27 A 88 signs indicate tunnelling excavations proceeding. Cappingham Church has disappeared from view since yesterday.</p>	

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Bromide Wac	April 18		A screen erected which probably conceals a battery. Enemies 77 mm batteries shelled our trenches at various points + H.Q. 4 th arty Brigade No Damage	
	19		Weather bad. Observation very difficult. Enemy were not very active as regards artillery fire; a light Railway is being erected by the enemy at I. 27 D. a quiet day on the whole	
	20 th		Enemy was much more active today + fired a good number of 4.2" at our observation posts + communication trenches; late in the day a small shell hit one of our gun pits - no damage or casualty.	
Croix du Wac	21 st		A certain amount of artillery activity in the morning but one of our observation posts was completely destroyed by enemy's fire 4.2" + 5.9". We saw a few working parties in enemy's support + reserve trenches + opened fire on them. Nothing of any importance to report.	
	22 nd		Very clear day - + great aerial activity on both sides - one enemy aeroplane was brought down by	

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22nd Crosy du Bac	22		<p>our anti-aircraft guns. The enemy's artillery was active during the greater part of the day & shelled BOIS GRÉNIER - LILLE ROAD and RUE ALLÉE with 4.2".</p> <p>During the evening the 22nd How Bde 4.5" took over the guns in situ - from the 176th How Bde 4.5" 34th Div. From this date we took over the responsibility for the Artillery defence of our front entirely.</p>	
23rd	23		<p>Enemy was active during the greater part of the day & shelled our trenches 52-56 and 62-63-64 inclusive with 77mm 4.2". One of our billets at #3 Fleurbaix was set on fire.</p> <p>We engaged two hostile batteries with the assistance of aeroplane observation - Aeroplanes report damage to one target and a house set on fire.</p> <p>We also shelled part of enemy's trenches in retaliation for shelling of our own. —</p>	

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<u>Croix du Bac</u>	April 24		<p>The enemy were fairly active all day and shelled the following localities. Moat Farm Avenue Shaftsbury " Bowtellerie " TRAMWAY "</p>	
			<p>and also the vicinity of the Brewery and BOIS GRENIER - they obtained one direct hit on BOIS GRENIER church and one hit on one of our O.P.'s no casualties. Some hostile batteries were located</p>	
		2pm	<p>During the early part of the afternoon we we fired on enemy's trenches opposite 57.58.59 at request of Infantry.</p>	
		4p.m	<p>Four of our batteries - in conjunction with heavy artillery - engaged two enemy's batteries. Aeroplanes report effect good - a house was destroyed - we again had a good many blind-sounds</p>	
		9p.m	<p>Infantry requested us to fire a few rounds at enemy who was bombing our trenches - our action successful -</p>	

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Croix du Bac	25 th	9 am	Very little activity during the morning. In the afternoon the	
		2 p.m	enemy bombed our salient opposite trenches 59 & 60 & they also shelled our centre group area with 4.2" & 5.9"	
			We replied to these batteries & opened fire with 4.5" & 4.2" two batteries & some of our 18pr batteries shelled communication trenches.	
		4 p.m	Enemy again opened fire on our front line trenches & we replied by shelling W&Z. MACQUART. THE HALL and RADINGHEM with 4.5". The remainder of the day was quiet.	

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Croix du Bac	26 th		<p>a fairly fine day - but slightly hazy & observation rather difficult. In re Lt retaliation for the shelling of our trenches 53-54-55 & 56 - we bombarded enemy's trenches opposite these & also enemy's obs. posts at the distillery. A bombardment commenced at 12.15 p.m. & lasted till 12.30 p.m., 4.5" How were used on enemy's front trenches - the 18 pr batteries kept up a fire on communication trenches & obs. Posts.</p> <p>The Heavy Artillery co operated to with 4.7" guns & 8" How - & did considerable damage.</p> <p>The enemy returned our fire a little later. & shelled BOIS GRENIER & LA VESSE with 4.2" & 5.9" but heavy Artillery replied & at about 1.20 p.m. the enemy ceased firing - no damage or casualties to our side.</p>	

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Croix du Bae	27 th	9am.	<p>Very clear day - but slight haze in the morning which hindered observation. Enemy were very quiet all the morning - with very little aerial activity - only one observation balloon was up. We did not fire at all, except a few rounds to register certain points - Enemy fired a few rounds in the afternoon in the direction of ERQUENCHEM - causing some damage amongst the civilians - 4 children were killed & one of our drivers killed & 2 others were wounded (slightly)</p> <p>In the evening about 10.15 p.m. a warning of GAS was received from 17th Div on our left; this warning was passed on & our artillery opened fire as per instructions laid down - for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour - when news was received that no gas was coming on our front & no attack was being made by the enemy.</p> <p>The enemy kept up a desultory artillery fire</p>	

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27th Croix du Tac	27	11 p.m.	for about an hour - up till midnight & then ceased firing; a few odd shells were fired in the early morning.	
28th	28		<p>A very quiet day. enemy scarcely fired at all, we did not engage anyone -</p> <p>The 1st Aust Division is now taking over a part of the line from the 35th Div - The 2nd Aust Div hands over a part of the front which it has been holding to the 1st Div & the 17th Div on our left flank hands over to the 2nd Division a portion of the line which they have been holding - trenches 66-67-68 -</p>	

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<u>Cox du Bac</u>	April 15 29.	9. am	<p>A very fine day slight haze in the morning. Enemy was very quiet all day. with very little aerial activity.</p> <p>During the early part of the evening - the 14th + 15th Batteries handed over the guns & positions to the 1st Aust Div & took up their new positions in the centre group. Col Lloyd handed over the responsibility of the Artillery defence of that part of the line to Col Burgess 1st Aust Div.</p> <p>The 12th Bty 4th Bde also took over a new part of the line from the Artillery of the 14th Div & is in process of digging itself in.</p> <p>During the early hours of the 30th morning, a warning was sent to us that a gas attack was being made against the right Brigade of the 24th Div - all troops were warned and prepared - at 5.30. am the position was stated to be normal again -</p>	

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France	30 th	10 am	<p>Brig Genl Johnston handed over the responsibility of the Artillery defence of our right group to the Brig Genl Hobbs 1st Aust Div. In the morning the enemy was displaying aerial activity - but was not not shelling our front at all. In the afternoon about 4 pm enemy commenced to shell us with 5.9" - about 230 shells were fired - at an old battery position - no damage - one casualty. We located the battery and opened fire. During the evening 30th the 4th Bde Party took over the the defence of a new piece of front from the 17th Div & batteries moved into their new positions. The 12th Battery took up an entirely new position. The 2nd Aust Div has taken up its new part of the line now & the Artillery of the division is all in the line - no batteries being kept in reserve. We cover trenches 46 to 68 inclusive.</p>	
<p>Geo J Johnston Brig Genl</p>				