

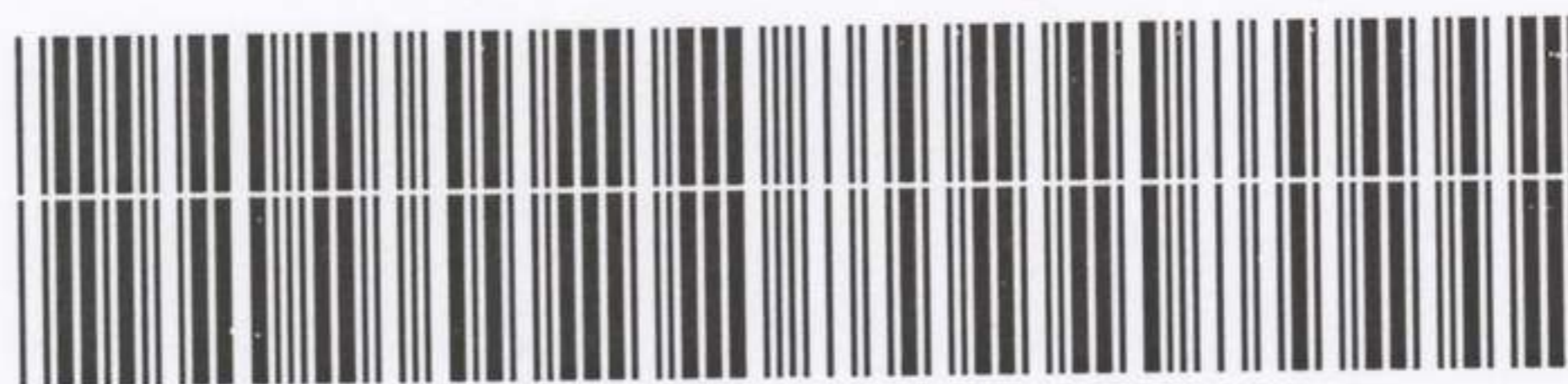
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Artillery

Item number: 13/115/11

Title: 2nd Australian Light Trench Mortar
Battery

May 1918



AWM4-13/115/11

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.

DUPLICATE.

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

2nd Aust L.T.M. BATTERY

FOR

MAY 1918

Signature of Officer compiling

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Signature of Officer Commanding

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ORIGINAL

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2nd Aust L.T.M. Bty WAR DIARY MAY 1918

Army Form C. 2118.

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Orig

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
STRAZEELE (LINE)	1		Weather - Fine The front has become very quiet. During the night 42 rounds were fired by our mortars, on enemy posts and trenches. Good harassing fire. Our right section succeeded in capturing a small enemy message balloon which floated across our lines this morning. It did not contain a message. ARRIVALS NIL. DEPARTURES NIL UNIT STRENGTH 3 OFFS 45 O'RANKS	
— " —	2		Weather - Fine The situation remains quiet. Harassing fire by both sectors guns was carried out during the night on enemy posts & roads. 42 rounds in all being expended. We sustained one casualty 1 O'Rank wounded ARRIVALS 1 O'Rank ^{FROM BASE} DEPARTURES - Nil Strength 3 OFFS 46 O'RANKS	
— " —	3		Weather - Fine Enemy artillery has again become very active, the sector being subjected to bombardment with heavy calibre shells. Our guns & mortars were active firing 56 rounds harassing fire on enemy posts, M.G.'s & buildings with good results. We sustained two casualties - 2 O'Ranks wounded one remaining on duty. ARRIVALS - NIL. DEPARTURES - 1 O'Rank casualty STRENGTH 3 OFFS 45 O'Ranks.	
— " —	4		WEATHER - IDEAL Spasmodic shelling of whole area by the enemy to day quieting off gradually. Both section mortars harassed enemy tracks & posts during the night firing 48 rounds. We were relieved in the line tonight by the 3 rd Aust. L.T.M. Bty and with the exception of two casualties the relief was without incident and completed by 2 AM. The Battery then proceeded by route march to ERGENEEST between HAZEBROUCK and SYLVESTIE CAPPEL and billeted being in SUPPORTS ARRIVALS - FROM BASE 1 O'RANK. DEPARTURES - 1 O'RANK - CASUALTY STRENGTH 3 - OFFS 45 - O'Ranks	
L'ERGENEEST	5.		WEATHER. THUNDERSTORM and HEAVY RAIN The day was spent in resting completely. Pay to amount of £66 paid to all ranks. Nothing else of importance happened. No 31340 Pte W. J. BUSH. Died of wounds received whilst being relieved last night ARRIVALS - NIL. DEPARTURES - 2 O'Ranks casualties Strength 3 Offs 43 O'Ranks	
— " —	6		WEATHER - DULL gradually becoming fine Re-organising and refitting parades were carried out during the day ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES - NIL Strength as on 5 th	

ORIGINAL

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2nd AUST L.T.M. BTY

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L'ERGENEEST	7		WEATHER - WET. Light parades were carried out during the day. On account of the low strength of the unit, owing to heavy casualties it was found necessary to obtain reinforcements from the Battalions, each supplying four men. The regimental funds of the unit were augmented to the extent of £1-5-8 proceeds of sale of fat collected during April. ARRIVALS - From Batt ^{ns} 16 O'Ranks DEPARTURES - NIL Strength 3 Offs 59 O'Ranks	
"	8		Weather - Fine Usual light parades. Lieut J. W. DARLING rejoined unit after a period of duty at A.G.B.D. ARRIVALS 1 Officer DEPARTURES - NIL Strength 4 OFFS 59 O'Ranks	
"	9/12		Weather - Fine Usual light parades ARRIVALS 2 O'Ranks from Base. DEPARTURES - NIL STRENGTH. 4 OFF 61 O'Ranks	
" T STRAZEELE	13		Weather - Light rain The day was spent in making preparations for another bout in the line and at 7 PM the Battery moved into the STRAZEELE sector relieving the 3 rd A. L.T. M. BTY. The relief was completed without incident by 11.30 PM. 5 Guns in the line 3 on right Batt ⁿ + 2 on left Batt ⁿ ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES 1 O'RANK to Field Hosp Strength 4 Offs 60 O'Ranks	
STRAZEELE	14		Weather - Fine Immediately on taking over last night both sections guns got busy firing 62 rounds as harassing fire on enemy trenches and tracks. The day was very quiet. In handling their guns two men were severely injured about the hands & had to be evacuated. ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES - 2 O'Ranks to Hospital Injured Strength 4 Offs 57 O'Ranks 1 to Gas School	
"	15		Weather. Ideal Enemy planes very busy last night on bombing stunts. Our mortars fired 101 rounds on specially selected targets with good results. The sector continues to keep fairly quiet ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES - NIL Strength as on 14 th	

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2nd AUST. L. T. M. BTY

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STRAZEELE	16		<p>Weather - Warm Very good shooting was done last night by both sectors, 85 rounds being expended on enemy posts and tracks. Parties of the enemy were dispersed and casualties caused. Except for spasmodic shelling the area was very quiet. We sustained one casualty Lieut P. G. GANDON being wounded in left foot ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES - NIL Strength 4 Offs 59 O'Ranks</p>	
— " —	17		<p>Weather - Ideal & Warm The area was subject to much heavier shelling than usual. During last night both sectors expended 98 rounds on well known targets with satisfactory results. Enemy planes flew over the area in the evening and bombed much of our area ARRIVALS 1 O'Rank from Base DEPARTURES 1 Officer - casualty Lieut P. G. GANDON STRENGTH 3 Offs 58 O'Ranks</p>	
— " —	18		<p>Weather - Warm During last night the 5th Batt^y carried out a successful raid and in support our left sector mortars fired 154 rounds on to specially selected targets. A good barrage was put down and the flanks well protected. As a diversion shoot the centre guns fired 99 rounds on usual targets. Enemy artillery was very active today and his bombing planes made their usual nightly visit. ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES - NIL STRENGTH as on 17th</p>	
STRAZEELE L'ERGENEEST	19		<p>Weather - Warm All guns continued to be very busy during last night, 97 rounds in all being expended on the usual enemy positions with good results. Except for spasmodic shelling the sector was quiet. We were relieved in the line tonight by the 1st AUST. L. T. M. BTY. The relief being completed without incident by 12.30 AM. The Battery then moved back to their former billets at L'ERGENEEST. We sustained one casualty 1 O'Rank wounded ARRIVALS - NIL. DEPARTURES - 1 O'Rank casualty Strength 3 Officers 59 O'Ranks</p>	
L'ERGENEEST	20		<p>Weather - Warm The Battery are in SUPPORTS. Today was spent in resting completely. Pay to amount of £77-3-8 was drawn & paid to all ranks ARRIVALS - 1 O'RANK from 15th Corps GAS SCHOOL DEPARTURES - NIL STRENGTH 3 OFFS 59 O-RANKS " " BASE</p>	

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L'ERGENEEST	2/24 25		<p>Weather - Warm</p> <p>These few days were spent in reorganising and refitting the Battery personnel. Light parades were also carried out. An epidemic seems to have struck the unit, many being ill with a low fever similar to influenza. On the 21st No 2936 Sgt N.F. DAY this unit was appointed to 2nd Lieut through the 5th Battal and posted to this unit for duty.</p> <p>ARRIVALS - 3 O'Ranks from Base DEPARTURES 3 O'Ranks transferred to Batt^{on} Strength 3 Off 59 O'Ranks</p>	
" SERCUS	26		<p>Weather - Fine and Warm</p> <p>We were relieved from Supports today by 3rd AUST. L.T.M. BTY and moved back by march route to SERCUS the reserve area.</p> <p>ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES 2 OFF 2 O'Ranks to Hospital Sick Strength 1 Off 57 O'Ranks</p>	
"	27		<p>Weather - Warm</p> <p>Whilst in this area a syllabus of training is laid down for each day, though the area does not provide much spare space for training grounds. This programme was carried out in the morning and afternoons devoted to recreation this being in the nature of a cricket match and training for Brigade sports. Notification was received today of the death of 1330 Lt Cpl S.F. ERWIN on 25-4-18. The results of wounds received on that date.</p> <p>ARRIVALS - 2 O'Ranks from Base DEPARTURES - 3 O'Ranks to 15th Corps School. Strength 1 Off 56 O'Ranks</p>	
"	28		<p>Weather - Warm</p> <p>Musket parades carried out. Experiments were carried out this morning with the trench mortar for use against enemy tanks. It was found possible to fire the mortar at an angle of 17° thus obtaining a direct hit at 190 yds. The practice of firing at such a low elevation is not considered advisable on account of the difficulty of the shell reaching the base of the barrel, resulting in a large number of misfires. Other experiments proved that a more effective manner of dealing with these tanks is by firing with a sling at an high elevation. This allowing a good barrage to be put down at a distance of 140 yds. The latter experiment proved entirely successful & the method that would be used by us.</p> <p>ARRIVALS - NIL DEPARTURES - NIL 2nd Lieut N.F. DAY taken on strength STRENGTH. 2 OFF. 55 O'Ranks</p>	

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SERCUS	29		<p>Weather - Warm Usual parades. A demonstration of firing French mortars with a sling was carried out this morning before Gen. Walker, G.O.C. 1st Aust Division and proved highly successful. In the afternoon the cricket season opened and a match was played by this unit against B Company 5th Battalion, the latter winning after a very enjoyable afternoon's sport. ARRIVALS - 2 ranks from Base. DEPARTURES 1 O'rank to Field Hosp. <i>accidentally injured</i> Strength 2 OFFS 56 O'ranks</p>	
" "	30		<p>Weather - Ideal Usual parades & cricket in afternoon Personnel from this unit visited the 3rd English Division and gave a successful demonstration of firing a Stokes French mortar with the sling ARRIVALS - NIL. DEPARTURES - NIL STRENGTH as on 29th</p>	
" "	31		<p>Weather - Warm Personnel from this unit visited the 9th English Division and gave a successful demonstration of firing a Stokes French mortar with a sling A Brigade review parade was held this morning and a march past the G.O.C. 1st Aust Division. At this parade the battery gave a demonstration of firing mortars with a sling and the laying down of a barrage against advancing enemy tanks. This demonstration was entirely successful. In the afternoon the Brigade sports were held and quite an enjoyable afternoon's sport and music were provided. The Battery had several entries and obtained two second places. In the evening the sports were continued by a good concert. ARRIVALS - From Field Hospital 2 OFFS Lieut J.W. DARLING " " " " D.C. MACKINNON DEPARTURES - NIL STRENGTH 4 OFFS 57 O'ranks</p>	