

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

Artillery

Item number: 13/50/21

Title: 2nd Australian Siege Battery

October 1918



AWM4-13/50/21

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 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.

WAR DIARY
 or
 INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Army Form C. 2118.

(Erase heading not required.)

2nd Aust. Siege Battery 357

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAZEBROUCK	1-10-18		Personnel remained in HAZEBROUCK awaiting orders. 5 guns parked on main ST-SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL - CAESTRE ROAD. One gun at N°4 O.M.W.(HEAVY) ABEELE STATION.	<i>PM</i>
	2-10-18		Working party proceeded to Brigade HQ. at WULVERGHEM. erecting shelters &c. Lieut J. S. Birtwell returned from leave to U.K. Personnel remained in HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST-SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL - CAESTRE ROAD. One gun in workshops.	<i>PM</i>
	3-10-18		Working party proceeded to Brigade HQ. at WULVERGHEM. Lieut Morrison returned from Gas course. Personnel remained in HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST-SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL - CAESTRE ROAD. One gun in workshops.	<i>PM</i>
	4-10-18		Working party proceeded to Brigade HQ. at WULVERGHEM. Salvage party proceeded to position held by Battery in PLOEG-STEERT WOOD, during March & up to 10th April, and salvaged a large quantity of stores & wheels &c. off the guns abandoned by us during operations on 10/4/18.	<i>PM</i>
	5-10-18		Working party proceeded to Brigade HQ. at WULVERGHEM. Personnel remained at HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST SYLVESTRE CAPPEL - CAESTRE ROAD. One gun in workshops. Salvage party at old battery position PLOEG STREET. Personnel remained billeted at HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST SYLVESTER CAPPEL - HAZEBROUCK ROAD. Lieut B. O'Neil returned from leave to U.K.	<i>PM</i>

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2nd Aust. Siege Battery

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAZEBROUCK	6-10-18		Personnel remained billeted at HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST. SYLVESTRE CAPPEL-HAZEBROUCK ROAD.	<i>File</i>
	7-10-18		Salvage party proceeded to old battery position at PLOEGSTEERT WOOD Personnel remained billeted at HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL-HAZEBROUCK ROAD	<i>File</i>
	8-10-18		No 3 gun returned from No 4 Ordnance Mobile Workshops (Heavy) No 4 gun proceeded to No 4 O.M.W. (Heavy) for overhaul. Salvage party to positions held by Battery at NEUVEGLISE to try and salvage firing beams.	<i>File</i>
	9-10-18		Personnel remained billeted at HAZEBROUCK. Strength of Battery Officers Sick Duty Leave Detached Employed Eff. strength O.K. 10 153 2 117 48 200	<i>File</i>
			Party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. at WUVERGHEM. Personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. 5 guns parked on ST-SYLVESTRE CAPPEL-HAZEBROUCK ROAD. One gun in No 4 O.M.W. for overhaul. Checking of all stores etc.	
			Inspection of battery by O.C. at which he expressed satisfaction with the way all ranks had carried on their work both in the line & out of it. Lieut J. Saunders proceeded to 2nd ARMY ARTILLERY SCHOOL, TILQUES as instructor of file Lieut H.H. Mc proceeded to hospital.	<i>File</i>

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2nd Australian Siege Battery

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAZEBROUCK	10-10-18.		<p>Working party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. at WULVERGHEM. Personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. 5 Guns parked on ST SYLVESTRE CAPPEL-HAZEBROUCK ROAD One gun in N°4 O.M.W for overhaul. P.C. to Bde H.Q. Wulverghem Seven reinforcements joined the unit from A.G.B.D.</p>	JH
	11-10-18.		<p>Working party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. at WULVERGHEM. Personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. 5 Guns parked on ST SYLVESTRE CAPPEL-HAZEBROUCK ROAD. One gun in N°4 O.M.W. for overhaul. Major G. E. Manchester proceeded on leave to Paris.</p>	JH
	12-10-18		<p>Battery strength Officers 10 } Sick Leave Employed Detached Duty ORs 235 } Party proceeded to Brigade headquarters for fatigue duty. Gun No 326 returned from being overhauled at 4 O.M.W. (Heavy) and parked on ST SYLVESTRE HAZEBROUCK Rd. Carriages of No 1 gun and No 5 gun taken to workshop for overhaul.</p>	JH

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2nd Australian Siege Battery

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAZEBROUCK	13-10-18		Party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. at WULVERGHEM for fatigue duty. Personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. Four guns complete, two pieces + two beds parked on ST SYLVESTRE CAPPEL - HAZEBROUCK ROAD. Two carriages on No 4 O.M.W (Heavy) for overhaul.	<i>JH</i>
	14-10-18		The strength of the Battery was 10 officers 236 ORs. detailed as follows:- Officers Duty Sick Leave Employed Detached ORs. 7 1 4 - 1 155 7 10 48 16	<i>JH</i>
	15-10-18		Lieut L.O. Marchett taken on strength of battery from Cadet School. Party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. WULVERGHEM for fatigue duties. The strength of the battery 9 Officers 233 ORs. Officers Duty Sick Leave Detached Employed ORs. 2 12 17 47	<i>JH</i>
			Lieuts B.D. O'Neil and P.H. Dodgson proceeded to Brigade for duty with 1st Aust. Siege Battery. Party for fatigue duties left billets for Brigade at 8.30 a.m.	<i>JH</i>

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2nd Aust Liego Battery

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAZEBROUCK	16-10-18		Party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. at WULVERGHEM for fatigue duty. Personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. Four guns complete, two pieces + two beds parked on ST SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL - HAZEBROUCK ROAD. Two carriages in N° 4 O.M.W. (Heavy) for overhaul.	<i>Plu</i>
	17-10-18		Party of 50 men under 2 nd Lieut Hanchett proceeded to COMINES to report to 62 nd Divisional Engineers. Party of 28 men proceeded to Brigade H.Q. WULVERGHEM for fatigue duty. Remainder of personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. Four guns complete 2 pieces + 2 beds parked on ST SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL - HAZEBROUCK ROAD. Two carriages in N° 4 O.M.W. (Heavy) for overhaul.	<i>Plu</i>
	18-10-18		Party of 50 men proceeded to COMINES to report to 62 nd Div. Engineers. Fatigue party proceeded to Brigade H.Q. Remainder of personnel remained in training at HAZEBROUCK. Four guns complete, 2 pieces + 2 beds parked on ST SYLVESTRE-CAPPEL - HAZEBROUCK ROAD. Two carriages in N° 4 O.M.W. (Heavy) for overhaul.	<i>Plu</i>
	19-10-18		Working party with 62 nd Div Engineers constructed bridge over COMINES CANAL. Orders received from Brigade to move personnel to billets in WERVICQ. Guns to be parked in vicinity of workshops. ABEELE Comes not available before personnel.	<i>Plu</i>

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2nd Aust Siege Battery

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAZEBROUCK	19-10-18		Battery personnel other than those on working parties remained in HAZEBROUCK. B.C. returned from Paris leave.	J.M.
	20-10-18		Guns and carriages moved to park near ABEELE, accompanied by No 5 Section. Sgt Elliott proceeded to England to undergo course at flying school.	J.M.
	21-10-18		Remainder of battery personnel moved from HAZEBROUCK to billets in WERVICQ.	J.M.
	22-10-18		Capt A.W. Mc Bride took over duties as Adjutant 2nd Aust Brigade during Capt W.W. Whittles illness.	J.M.
WERVICQ	22-10-18		One hundred men attached to R.E. 62 nd Div.	
			Twenty seven men on gun guard at ABEELE	
			Remainder of personnel in billets at WERVICQ	J.M.
			Six guns parked near No 4 OMW (Heavy) ABEELE	
	23-10-18		One hundred men attached to R.E. 62 nd Division via guns parked near ABEELE	J.M.

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2nd Aust Siege Battery

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WERVICQ	24.10.18		<p><i>Original</i></p> <p>Battery strength sick Leave Detached Employed. Duty Eff Strength Officers 2 2 134 29 53 9 O.A. 2 11. 29 53 229.</p> <p>Remainder of Battery personnel remained in billets in WERVICQ</p>	<i>J.M.</i>
	25.10.18		<p>One hundred other ranks and two officers attached to R.C. 62 Division Six guns parked near ABEELE</p>	<i>J.M.</i>
	26.10.18		<p>Lieut H Priestly-Smith proceeded on leave to United Kingdom Gnr F Boydell proceeded to Artillery Officers training course England Major G E Manchester selected billets in TOURCOING for battery personnel.</p>	<i>J.M.</i>
	27.10.18		<p>Lieut R Adams joined battery from A.C. B D LE HAVRE and posted to strength as from 28.10.18 Remainder of battery personnel shifted billets from WERVICQ to those selected in TOURCOING. 5 guns left ABEELE enroute to TOURCOING 1 gun in workshops.</p>	<i>J.M.</i>

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2nd Aust Siege Bty

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and references to Appendices

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
47 Rue du Conditionnement TOURCOING	28/10/18		<p>Two officers & 100 O.R. attached to R.E. 62nd Division One Lieutenant 2 Corporals & bombardier & 10 men reported to Town Major for duty as guard on Railway Station and Railway bridges during the hours of darkness. Orders received that this battery was to commence work immediately on the preparation of gun positions. Beams not to be put in until further orders. Major G.E. Manchester reconnoitred and picked a position at POMME D'OR near Dottignies with the Brigade Commander. Five guns parked in TOURCOING 1 gun in N° 4 O.M.W. ABEELE.</p>	J.M.
	29/10/18		<p>Lieut. Adams & 40 O.R. proceeded to new position & commenced work on gun pits.</p>	J.M.
	30-10-18		<p>Party under Lieut. Britnell proceeded to battery position and completed work on gun pits. Guns arrived from gun park at ABEELE and parked</p>	J.M.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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2nd Aust Light Battery

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices										
RUE DU	30-10-18		on RUE DE LEVANT.											
CONDITIONE- MENT.	31-10-18		<p>The strength of the Battery was.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Officers</td> <td>12</td> <td>Detached</td> <td>Leave</td> <td>Employed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ORs.</td> <td>225.</td> <td>111.</td> <td>5</td> <td>21.</td> </tr> </table>	Officers	12	Detached	Leave	Employed	ORs.	225.	111.	5	21.	<i>File.</i>
Officers	12	Detached	Leave	Employed										
ORs.	225.	111.	5	21.										
TOURCOING			<p>6 guns parked on RUE DE LEVANT. Battery personnel remained in billets in 47 RUE DU CONDIT- -IONNEMENT TOURCOING.</p>	<i>File.</i>										

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p><u>Summary for Month of October.</u></p> <p>The battery personnel was engaged in the construction of bridges over the Canal consequent on the advance of the 2nd Army, & also did a considerable amount of road construction.</p> <p>During the period the roads were in a very bad condition preventing the forward movement of H.A., due to our own & enemy shelling & enemy mines. The principal the whole of the bridges over the canals were damaged by the enemy before retiring.</p> <p>During the last week this battery's personnel carried out bridging in conjunction with front line infantry at the St. Scault Canal in front of ESPIERRE. The battery lost 2 men (evacuated sick). General training of the remaining personnel was carried out at Red billets.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">31/10/18. J. J. Lambert Major Royal OC 2nd Aust Bn.</p>	

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APPENDIX

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Second Army No. 6681.
dated 3/10/18
XV Corps No. 128/30 d.
dated 5.10/18.

36 TH	
(AUSTRALIAN) BDE.,	
R.G.A.	
No.	<i>6196</i>
Date

R.A. XV Corps No. P. 302.

The attached copy of letter from General Gillain
Chief of the General Staff, Belgian Army, and the Army
Commander's reply thereto, is forwarded for your information
and communication to all concerned.

SB. W.P. BUCKLEY, Major,
for Brigadier-General
General Staff,

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- O's. C 1st Aust Siege Battery
- 2nd Aust Siege Battery
- 155 Siege Battery RGA
- 353 Siege Battery RGA.
- 142 Heavy Battery RGA
- 111 Heavy Battery RGA.

For information.

W.W. Whitt

Captain R.A.A.

Adjutant 36th (Aust) Brigade R.G.A.

9/10/18.

Le 3 Octobre 1918.

36th
(AUSTRALIAN) BDE.
R.G.A.
No. 61961
Date.....

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 ARMEE BELGE,
 Chef d'Etat-Major General.

Mon Cher General,

Incertain de pouvoir le temps d'aller vous voir, je m'empresse de vous adresser mes plus chaleureuses felicitations pour les magnifiques succes remportes par les troupes de la II Armee Brittanique, dans L'offensive declenches le 28 Septembre dernier.

Votre habile direction et le merveilleux elan de ves combattants n'ent pas seulement delivre de l'oppression ennemie une partis du territoire national, ils ont aussi permis a l'Armee belge de concourir avec succes au meme but: l'attaque conjugee realises victorieusement en cette occasion par le II^o Corps, l'a aides dans la perfection. Je tiens a vous an exprimer ainsi quiau General Sir Jacob ma plus vive gratitude.

En outre de ce soutien, la II Armee Brittanique a preto efficacement a nos operations le concours direct d'une partie de son artillerie et de son aviation.

Cette derniere tout particulierement a fait preuve, en depit de circonstances atmospheriques des plus defavorables, de qualites combattives si elevees que notre Armee gardera toujours le souvenir vivace des exploits glorieux et feconds dent elle a ete le temoin ces dernieres jours.

Je serais vraiment heureux, Mon Cher General, si vous vouliez bien faire part de mon admiration, de ma reconnaissance et de mes felicitations a la belle II Armee sous voutre Commandement et tout principalement a l'Aviation et a l'Artillerie qui end secunde directement nos operations.

Veillez, Mon Cher General, agreer l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

SD. GILLAIN.

A Monsieur le Lieutenant General Plumer,
 Commandant la II Armee Brittanique.

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My Dear General.

On behalf of the troops of the Second Army I beg to thank you very warmly for the tribute paid to them in your letter of today.

The contents of your letter will be communicated to all the troops concerned.

Allow me to offer to you and through you to all the troops of the Belgian Army my personal congratulation on the splendid success achieved by them and to say on behalf of the Second Army how proud we all are to have co-operated with them.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

SD. HERBERT PLUMER.

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APPENDIX

Royal Artillery Headquarters,
IIInd Corps.
4/10/18.

36 TH
(AUSTRALIAN) BDE.
R.G.A.
No. <i>A1933</i>
Date.....

Dear Hurst,

I regret that stress of work prevented my coming to see you and your Officers again before you left this Corps.

The Corps Commander wishes me to thank you for the good work done by your Brigade during the attack which commenced on 28th September.

I personally wish to thank you, your Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men for the way in which positions were prepared, occupied, and ammunition dumped in preparation for the attack. This highly important work in order to secure surprise for the attack had to be done entirely by night, and consequently largely increased the difficulty of preparation, and the manner in which your Brigade carried out this Work is beyond all praise.

I wish you and your Brigade every luck in the future,

Yours sincerely,

SD. A.D. *KIRBY.*

Lieut-Colonel J.H. Hurst,
Commanding 36th (Aust) Brigade R.G.A.

-2-

- O's.C. 1st Aust Siege Battery
- 2nd Aust Siege Battery
- 155 Siege Battery RGA
- 353 Siege Battery RGA
- 140 Heavy Battery RGA
- 151 Heavy Battery RGA.

2ND AUSTRALIAN SIEGE BATTERY. A.I.F.
No. <i>FA 123744</i>
Date. <i>8.10.18</i>

The above copy of letter received from
G.O.C. R.A. II is forwarded for information.

W. Whitth

Captain R.A.A.
Adjutant 36th (Aust) Brigade R.G.A.

7/10/18.

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36TH
AUSTRALIAN BDE.,
R.G.A.
No. *C 2026*
Date.....

41st Infy. Bde. 930/10.

14th. Division.

Please inform the D.A. and 36th Brigade. H.A. and the Counter Battery Artillery, how greatly all ranks of the 41st Infantry Brigade appreciated their help and support during the recent operations on the Lys River.

It was greatly due to their assistance that our losses in personnel along the long line of communications and in the line were not heavier.

16/10/18.

(Sd). W.F. Sweny, Brig-Genl.
41st Infantry Brigade.

2.

C.B.A.
36th Brigade, R.G.A.
C. B. S. O.

14th Division GS 1341.

I am glad to forward this testimony to the co-operation between the two arms.

17/10/18.

(Sgd). X X X.

Major-General.
Commanding 14th Division.

3.

- O!s.C. 1st Aust Siege Battery
- 2nd Aust Siege Battery
- 155 Siege Battery R.G.A.
- 353 Siege Battery R.G.A.
- 140 Heavy Battery R.G.A.
- 151 Heavy Battery R.G.A.

For Information.

W. W. Whitt

17/10/18.

Adjutant 36th (Aust) Brigade R.G.A.
Captain R.A.A.

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14 Division
G.S. 1426

Brig. General Commanding
Heavy Artillery
XV Corps.

On behalf of this Division, I desire that my appreciation and best thanks may be conveyed to the O.C., 36th (Australian) Brigade, R. G. A., for the hard work performed, and excellent assistance rendered by the gunners of that Brigade to the Royal Engineers of this Division, beginning with bridging operations over the River Lys, and continued ever since.

30/10/18.

(Sgd.) P. M. Skinner Major General
Commanding 14th Division.