

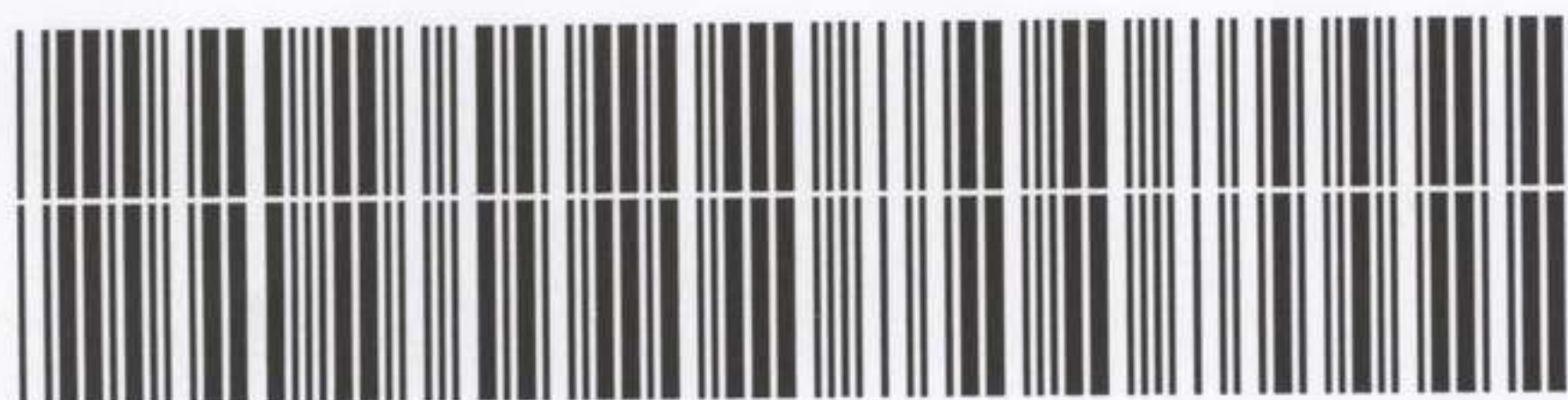
**AWM4**  
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
**1914-18 War**

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/33/17

**Title:** 16th Infantry Battalion

April 1917



AWM4-23/33/17



# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 9

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.

## or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

16 MB

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<u>Reference Map ECOUST-St MIEN 1/10000.</u>	
Beugnatre	1-4-17	9a.m.	The Battalion moved from BIEFVILLERS to BEUGNATRE today and relieved the 49th Battalion in the First Defensive System.	
Beugnatre	2-4-17		Under orders to proceed without delay to the assistance of the 13th Brigade if required. "A" and "C" Companies moved into close support of 13th Brigade leaving Bivouac at about 1p.m. They were however not required.	
Beugnatre	3-4-17		Received orders to reinforce 50th Battalion. This order was eventually cancelled.	
Noreuil	7-4-17	5p.m.	The Battalion moved into Sunken roads East of NOREUIL. 1 Company ("A" under Captain Somerville M.C.) moved into the Outpost line and relieved 1 Company 52nd Battalion on Railway Cutting running through C.5.d. and C.6.b.	
Noreuil	9-4-17	12 noon.	Conference of Company Commanders and Specialists with Commanding Officer regarding the proposed operation to pierce the HINDENBURG Line between BULLECOURT and QUEANT. Details attended to and finalised. A special Officers' patrol was to move out to reconnoitre the wire and also ascertain the strength of the garrison of the HINDENBURG Line. It was proposed if the HINDENBURG Line was lightly held we were to send out strong fighting patrols and occupy it. Special platoons were told off for this and were loaded with a good supply of bombs in addition to their other arms and equipment.	
C.5.d.6.6.		9p.m.	The Officers' Patrol consisting of Captain A. JACKA V.C., M.C., 14th Battalion, Lieutenant F. WADGE M.C. and Lieutenant H.J. BRADLEY 16th Battalion moved out to the task allotted them. They got out as far as the enemy's wire and found that it was badly smashed in some places, but in others it was still intact. They also reported that the garrison of the HINDENBURG Line was very strong and that there were also no signs of probable evacuation. They reported that there was considerable enemy movement in front of his own lines in the shape of strong patrols. They advised that it was useless to attack the HINDENBURG Line without Artillery support and until the wire was thoroughly cut.	Letter from 4th Aust. Divn. to 4th Aust. Inf. Bde. No 8587 /6 dated 9-4-17 attached.
			1.	



# WAR DIARY

Army Form C, 2118. 9

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## or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Noreuil	9-4-17	11p.m.	(2). Received orders to be ready to attack the HINDENBURG Line at 4a.m. on 10-4-17. Tanks were to be the only arm of support as per continuation of Brigade Order 76 attached.	Continuation of 4th Aust. Infantry Brigade No 76 attached.
Noreuil	10-4-17	2a.m.	Conference of Company Commanders and Specialists with Commanding Officer at advanced Battalion Headquarters in Railway Cutting at C.5.d.6.6. The final arrangements were that the Tanks were to leave jumping off place at 4-30a.m. and proceed to trample down wire as marked in Appendix and then when wire was fit for Infantry to cross to show a green disc when the Infantry would follow and occupy the HINDENBURG Line with two objectives.	Appendix
Noreuil	10-4-17	3-30 a.m.	No arrival of Tanks yet and nothing can be seen or heard of them. The 14th and 16th Battalions were placed in position in Sunken road running through C.5.a.5.c. Whilst placing troops in position a patrol of 1 Officer and 1 Other rank was captured. Their regiment was the 123rd Wurtembergers.	
Noreuil	10-4-17	4-20 a.m.	Orders received to postpone the operation as Tanks could not be in position by time required. The supporting Battalions were got out of Railway Cutting and back to Sunken roads near Noreuil. Men from jumping off place came back. "C" and "D" Companies went back to Sunken Roads near Noreuil. "A" Company stayed in Railway Cutting and "B" Company in Sunken Road south of Railway Cutting	
Noreuil	10-4-17	12 m.n.	Final conference of Brigadier and Battalion Commanders at Brigade Headquarters. Final arrangements as per Brigade Orders 76, 77 attached.	Brigade Orders 76, 77 appendices.
C.5.d.6.6.	11-4-17	12-15 a.m. to 2a.m.	Final conference of Company Commanders with Commanding Officer, arrangements finalised. The deposition of the Battalion was as follows, "B" Company (Major P. Black D.S.O.) on the right, "A" Company (Captain R.S. Somerville M.C.) "D" Company (Captain V. Tucker) and "C" Company (Captain H.S. Hummerston) on the left. Battalion Headquarters and Regimental Dressing Station = in Railway Cutting at C.5.d.6.6. and C.5.d.5.5. respectively.	
"	11-4-17	2-15am	Battalions started to move into position in Sunken road, and were all in place, and ready for the attack by 3-30a.m.	



WAR DIARY

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or  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
C.5.d.6.6.	11-4-17	3a.m.	<p>(3). First Tank arrived at rendezvous at Railway Crossing. Intelligence Officer FAD got in touch with Section Commander of Tanks operating on right front, and found it to be impossible for Tanks to reach First Objective in 15 minutes. O.C. Tanks was then taken to Battalion Headquarters where he verified above statement to Commanding Officers. Lieut-Colonel Brockman then informed FACE, and asked for Infantry time to be put back 15 minutes. This was referred on by Brigade through the usual channels to General Headquarters but orders came back programme to be adhered to. In the meantime two other Tanks had arrived, and a 4th was reported out of action.</p>	
	11-4-17	3-20 a.m.	<p>Tanks were led out to, and lined up in front of jumping off place. The interval between Tanks was approximately 100 yards. Three Tanks were in position and ready to move off by 4-20a.m. The other two Tanks to operate on left flank were not then in position. Intelligence Officer got in touch, pointed out level crossing to one, who ignored same, and tried to get over Sunken road. Consequence was Tank got into road and could not be got out again. The other Tank complained of engine trouble. This left us with only three Tanks to operate on whole front, instead of <u>six</u>.</p>	
	11-4-17	4-30 a.m.) 4-45 a.m.)	<p>Three Tanks already in position moved out, followed at 4-45a.m. by Infantry in four successive waves. About half way to First Objective two Tanks stopped, and commenced to open fire; thus giving away position, and almost telling enemy that some attack was in progress. Infantry decided to push on alone, and soon were in First Objective. The third Tank had by this time got up to first Objective and crossed over to between that and the second Objective, and was almost immediately put out of action by a gun from firing from REINCOURT.</p>	
	11-4-17	5-16 a.m.	<p>Runner got back to Battalion Headquarters with a message from Major Black of FILE, stating First Objective gained and pushing on to Second.</p>	
	11-4-17	6-30 a.m.	<p>Message came stating all Units in First and Second Objectives. From this time on the fighting was most severe, continuous bombing parties having to be beaten off, while all the time Machine Guns from all directions kept up a continual fire on parapet, also very heavy gun fire on Railway Cutting. Absolute enfilade fire from QUEANT being experienced causing serious casualties.</p>	
	11-4-17	7-21 a.m.	<p>Definite information was received that First and Second Objectives were ours, and being consol-</p>	



# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 9

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## or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
C.5.d.6.6	11-4-17	7-21 a.m.	dated, and also that casualties were very heavy: that Tanks were an absolute failure, and that prisoners were being sent back.	
	11-4-17	7-45 a.m.	First contact plane flew over, and drew very heavy Machine Gun fire, from QUEANT.	
	11-4-17	8 a.m.	S.O.S. signal sent up eighteen times by our troops, but failed to get any response from Artillery. Many prisoners were sent back. Party of 37 arrived also parties of two's and three's. Many others were sent back including one party of 32 but were mostly destroyed by their own Machine Gun fire before arriving at Battalion Headquarters..	
	11-4-17	8-45 a.m.	Report received from Captain Murray of FACT confirming report already received as to capture of First and Second Objectives.	
	11-4-17	10-12 a.m.	Message from Captain Wadsworth of FAD urgently asking for S.A.A. bombs and also men.	
	11-4-17	10-45 a.m.	Lieut-Colonel Brockman sent to FACE asking for carrying parties from Reserve Battalion, also for Artillery co-operation on flanks; especially the right.	
	11-4-17	11-20 a.m.	Lieutenant Aarons of FILE came back reporting situation very serious, both flanks being bombed back; supply S.A.A. and bombs almost expended and only 25 per cent of personnel left. Proposed to fall back to line of shell holes out in front, out of bomb range and hang on there until night.	
	11-4-17	11-30 a.m.	Sgt Boland of FAD reported supply of bombs absolutely used up, and Brigade on left retiring. Having lost about 80 per cent of strength, and supply of bombs and S.A.A. being expended, FACE at 11-45a.m. was compelled to retire to original line held.	
			<p>The Battalion went into the attack with a fighting strength of 20 Officers and 797 other ranks. About 17 Officers and 700 other ranks actually went into the attack and only 3 Officers and 87 Other ranks got back again. The names of those who actually went over and came out again, is attached as an appendix.</p> <p>The Officer casualties were as follows :-</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KILLED:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Major P. BLACK D.S.O. Capt. V. TUCKER 2/Lieut L.G. GLOWREY</p>	Appendix.



# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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## or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>(5).</p> <p><u>MISSING:</u> 2/Lieut. F.M. CULVERWELL 2/Lieut. M. WALTON</p> <p><u>WOUNDED AND MISSING:</u> Captain H.S. HUMMERSTON Lieut. J.P. COURTNEY M.C. Lieut. R.H.O. CUMMING 2/Lieut J.H. WATSON 2/Lieut S.B. SMITH</p> <p><u>WOUNDED AND PRISONER OF WAR.</u> Lieut. G.D. McLEAN 2/Lieut K.L. JOHNSTON</p> <p><u>WOUNDED:</u> Capt. R.S. SOMERVILLE M.C. Lieut. J.S. KERR 2/Lieut W. JORGENSEN. 2/Lieut L.D. McCARTHY 2/Lieut H.W. LEAKE</p>	
			A special report on the Tank co-operation in the attack is attached as an appendix .	appendix
C.5.d. 6.6.	11-4-17	6p.m.	The 16th Battalion was relieved in the Outpost line and moved back to shelters near FAVRIEUL.	
Favrieul	12-4-17	12-30 p.m.	The 16th Battalion moved to BAPAUME and entrained for ALBERT en route for Brigade Camp MAMETZ.	
Mametz	13-4-17 to ) 18-4-17 )		Battalion resting, and engaged in partial reorganisation and re-equipping.	
Mametz	19-4-17		The Battalion moved to RIBEMONT via MEAULTE, DERNANCOURT and BUIRE,	
Ribemont	20-4-17 to ) 30-4-17 )		The Battalion was engaged in reorganising, re-equipping and Training.	
	25-4-17		2nd anniversary of Anzac Day-Commemoration service and Brigade Sports at which Battalion won the cup for the highest aggregate number of points.	

2449 Wt. W14957/Mco 750,000 1/16 J.B.C. & A. Forms/C.2118/12.

Capt. Adjutant 16th Battr. A. I. F.



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APPENDIX

S E C R E T

Fourth Australian Infantry Brigade,  
HEADQUARTERS  
9th April 1917.

8587/6.

C.O.

ALL UNITS.

The following is a copy of a letter received from 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION dated 9/4/1917 :-

1. Strong patrols are being sent out by the 4th and 12th Aust. Infantry Brigades tonight to ascertain if the HINDENBURG Line is held.
2. In the event of the Line being reported unoccupied
  - (a) The Brigadiers will immediately send forward troops to hold it.
  - (b) No advance will be made beyond the second trench during the night, but in the morning at an hour to be notified, 4th Aust. Inf. Brigade, supported by Tanks, will push forward and occupy REIN-COURT and the line shown on attached map.
  - (c) 12th Aust. Infantry Brigade (less 2 Battalions) will occupy the two main line trenches and will, if necessary, co-operate by guarding the left flank of the 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade.
3. In the event of the line being reported occupied
  - (a) In certain eventualities orders may be issued for the trenches to be attacked at dawn.
  - (b) For the purpose of this operation, 12 Tanks will be sent forward and the Infantry will not advance until the Tanks have reached the trenches.
  - (c) 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade (2 Battalions) and 12th Aus. Infantry Brigade (2 Battalions) will each attack on the frontages already selected for them.
  - (d) The attack will be carried out under a barrage, which will be communicated later.
  - (e) Zero hour will be 4-30a.m.
4. After occupying the line the 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade will move forward as outlined in 2 (b).
5. "C" Squadron 13th A.L.H. Regiment and the two Reserve Battalions 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade are being sent up to near NOREUIL, to be at the disposal of G.O.C., 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade for operations in the morning.
6. One Battalion 13th Aust. Infantry Brigade will move up tonight and take over the front occupied by the 12th Aust. Infantry Brigade.
7. Further details regarding the attack will be issued."

With regard to 3 (b) & 2 (b) the 16th and 14th Battalions will divide the frontage (vide Brigade Order No 74) between them. The 13th and 15th Battalions pushing through to the line shown on attached sketch.

(sgd) C.M. JOHNSTON, Major,  
Brigade-Major,  
4th Aus. Inf. Brigade.

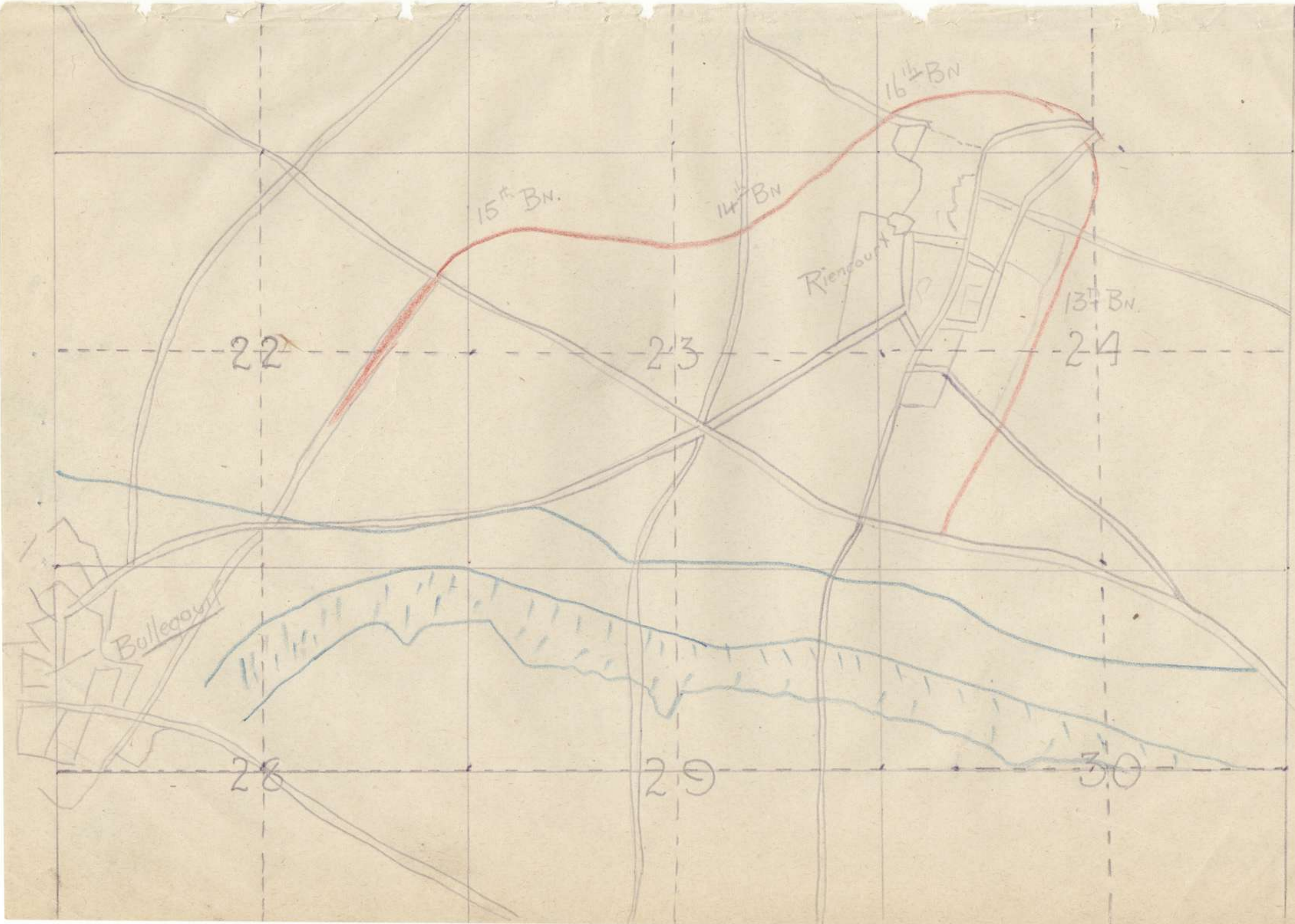


409

With regard to 2(b) the frontages allotted to Battalions are shown on attached sketch.

(sgd) C.M.J.





APPENDIX



APPENDIX

SECRET

Copy No 8.

FOURTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE ORDER NO 74

Reference EGOUST - St. MEIN 1/10,000 9-4-17.

1. On a date to be notified hereafter the enemy will be driven from the HINDENBURG LINE.
2. The objectives of the 4th and 12th Infantry Brigades are as shown on the attached sketch map.
3. Barrage table is as follows :-  
 ZERO PLUS 16. Barrage lifts off First Objective and comes down between First and Second Objectives.  
 ZERO PLUS 24. Barrage begins to creep back to Second Objective.  
 ZERO PLUS 33. Barrage lifts off Second Objective and comes down 200 yards beyond.  
 ZERO PLUS 38. Barrage lifts another 200 yards beyond.  
 ZERO PLUS 60. Barrage begins to creep forward to Third Objective.
4. The 16th, 15th and 14th Battalions in that order from the right, each with four companies in line distributed in depth in four waves will capture the First and Second Objectives allotted to the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade.
5. The 52nd and 13th Battalions will capture the ~~third~~ Objective, This, however, is dependent on circumstances of which the amount of resistance encountered in securing the First and Second Objectives will be the main governing factor.
6. Units will be formed up on the "jumping off line" indicated by tape 1/2 hour before zero which will be communicated later.
7. I section of Tanks, ~~two~~ on either flank of the Brigade will co-operate. C.O.'s are responsible all Ranks are familiar with the signals to be used when working with Tanks.
8. O.C. 4th Machine Gun Company will allot 4 guns to 16th Battalion, 2 to 15th Battalion, 4 to 14th Battalion, 4 to 13th Battalion, keeping two in reserve.
9. O.C. 4th Light Trench Mortar Battery will allot two Stokes Guns each to 16th and 14th Battalions keeping two in Reserve.
10. The 1st and 2nd Divisional Machine Gun Companies are allotted to the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade for the protection of the right flank. A sketch showing arcs of fire of each group of guns is attached hereto.
11. At.....a.m. on.....instant flares will be lit by Units in their advanced line and also in any forward posts.
12. Advanced Brigade Headquarters will be established at C.5. central when the second objective is reached.
13. Watches will be synchronised 2 hours before zero.

14. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(sgd) C.M. JOHNSTON, Major,  
Brigade-Major,  
4th Aus. Inf. Brigade.

Issued at 10a.m.

- Copy No
1. War Diary
  2. DAB
  3. DAB
  4. FACT
  5. FAD
  6. FADE
  7. FILE
  8. FALL.

8. FALL
9. FAIR
10. ARTILLERY GROUP COMMANDER
11. GABY
12. KATE
- 13.



## APPENDIX

S E C R E T

No G.....

Headquarters,  
4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.  
9th April 1917.  
12 midnight.

C.O.

ALL UNITS.

The following is a copy of a letter received from 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION dated 9/4/1917 :-

"In continuation of G.5/226 of to-day's date. In the event of the HINDENBURG Line being occupied and an attack against it in conjunction with Tanks being ordered, it will be carried out as under.

1. All troops will form up in rear of the jumping off trenches already marked out, under cover of the railway embankment and cutting.
2. At 4-30a.m. the Artillery will put down a flank barrage on QUEANT and BULLECOURT, and the Tanks will move forward.
3. On reaching the trenches, and as soon as they have occupied them the Tanks will display a green disc, meaning "come on" or make some other prearranged signal.
4. The Infantry will then advance and occupy the trenches.
5. The Artillery flank barrage will be kept on until ordered to stop.
6. The heavy artillery are shelling BULLECOURT, REINCOURT and the QUEANT Salient Trenches until 4-30a.m.
7. As soon as the trenches have been made good the 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade will move forward as outlined in G.5/226, para 2 (b). This subsequent operation will be supported by Tanks which will go to REINCOURT and BULLECOURT."

re para 1. Stow the men away somehow.

There is no certainty that the attack will take place - all depends on Third Army.

The Tanks will crumble down the wire.

(sgd) J.G. TAFT, 2/Lieut.  
for Brigade-Major,  
4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.



Copy No 7.

SECRET

Fourth Australian Infantry Brigade,  
HEADQUARTERS,  
9th April 1917.

With reference to para 10 of 4th Australian Infantry Brigade Order No 74, the following arrangements for Machine Gun co-operation are forwarded for information :-

The following Machine Guns have been placed at the disposal of the G.O.C. 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade to guard his right flank -

6th Australian M.G. Company  
7th " " " (less 4 guns)  
13th " " " (4 guns only)

At the disposal of the 12th Aus. Infantry Brigade, to guard his left flank -

7th Australian M.G. Company (4 guns only)

The hour at which all guns are to be in position will be notified later,

Disposition will be as under -

(a) Attack Guns, to cover Infantry advance.

7th Aus. M.G. Company. 4 guns at about C.18.b.4.4. To enfilade enemy trench from U.30.b.7.0. southwards to road in C.6.

6th Aus. M.G. Company. 8 guns at Sunken road in C.4.d. To traverse enemy trench in U.30., particularly on the higher ground. Left limit of traverse - Road in U.30.a.

7th Aus. M.G. Company 4 guns at C.9.b.3.3. To traverse and enfilade trench round S.E. corner of BULLECOURT from road in 27.b. to 28.a.7.7.

(b) Barrage Fire.

6th Aus. M.G. Company. 8 guns dug in on railway line along cutting to C.5.d.

The object of these guns is to prevent counter attack from enemy trenches running from V.13, 19 and 25, and U30. These form very likely jumping off trenches for that purpose.

The roads leading to the rear of REINCOURT should also be intermittently fired on for the first 45 minutes after zero.

A careful watch will be kept to the east for any direct flank movement from QUEANT.

(c) Reserve Guns.

7th Aus. M.G. Company. 4 guns at about C.18.c.2.8. To fire towards QUEANT.

7th Aus. M.G. Company. 4 guns at about C.17. central. To fire towards C.6. central.

13th Aus. M.G. Company. 4 guns at about C.11.a.4.1. To fire towards QUEANT.

12 guns, 13th Aus. M.G. Company will be in reserve near NOREUIL.

Rates and times of fire will be notified later.

Ammunition. Bulk Reserve at 4th Aus. Infantry Brigade Dump near NOREUIL. 14 boxes per gun to be with guns.

As guns near Railway are in a forward position, the O.C. will arrange a forward dump for these.

Copy No 1. War Diary  
2. 4th Aust. Division  
3. 4th Aust. Division.  
4. 12th Battalion  
5. 14th Battalion  
6. 15th Battalion  
7. 16th Battalion  
8. 4th M.G. Company  
9. 4th A.L.T.M. Battery  
10. Artillery Group Commander  
11. 12th Aust. Infantry Brigade

(sgd) C.M. JOHNSTON, Major.  
Brigade-Major,  
4th Aus. Inf. Brigade.

12. 13th Aust. Infantry Brigade  
13. 3rd Aust. Infantry Brigade.  
14. File.



4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

Headquarters,

9th April 1917.

Signalling Instructions

1. The following will be the Signalling arrangements for the attack on the HINDENBURG Line by the 4th Aus. Division.
2. Between Divisional Headquarters and 12th Aus. Inf. Brigade Headquarters.  
Buried cable and wireless.  
Between Divisional Headquarters and 4th Aus. Inf. Brigade Headquarters.  
Buried cable.  
The 4th Aus. Inf. Brigade Headquarters is connected by telephone to 12th Aus. Inf. Brigade H.Q. so that Wireless and Power Buzzer messages can be telephoned on to them.  
Between Divisional Headquarters and Artillery Groups.  
Buried and ground cables.
3. Forward of Brigade Headquarters (NOREUIL)
  - (i) Ground cable to both advanced Brigade Headquarters at C.5. central (4th Aus. Inf. Brigade) and U.28.d.3.0. (12th Aus. Inf. Brigade).
  - (ii) (a) An Amplifier at 12th Aus. Infantry Brigade Headquarters, working with Power Buzzers at both the advanced Headquarters.  
(b) An Amplifier at each advanced Brigade Headquarters, working with Power Buzzers, two of each will be carried forward into the second German Line by each Brigade, so they will go in rear of the second wave.
  - (iii) A Trench Wireless set will push forward into REINCOURT with the Battalion attacking the village. This set will, link up direct with any Wireless set in rear.
4. (a) A Central Visual Station G.K.V. will be established at C.9.d.5.9., which will received all visual messages from the captured positions, This Station will be connected to the 12th Aus. Inf. Brigade Headquarters by cable.  
(b) The exact location of this station, both on the ground and on the map, must be explained to all signallers, including Regimental.  
(c) Each message to this station must be sent in its entirety, and then sent twice again.
5. Pigeons. 20 Pigeons will be allotted to each attacking Brigade.
6. As each Brigade advances to the attack one pair of lines per Brigade will be taken forward from each advanced Brogade Headquarters by the centre Battalion. The party laying out these lines will move in rear of the rear wave. Further lines will be run out subsequently as opportunity arises, but all these lines, Infantry and Artillery, will follow the same route, and one maintenance party will be detailed.
7. The position of each Advanced Brigade Headquarters must be communicated to all Signallers and Runners, so that they may







APPENDIX

SECRET

Copy No 8.

FOURTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE ORDER NO 75

Reference ECOUST - St. MIEN 1/10,000 9/4/1917.  
1p.m.

- 1. Reconnaissance will be made during the next 24 hours to ascertain whether the HINDENBURG LINE is held lightly or in force.
- 2. If held in force the operation referred to in Brigade Order No 74 will be carried out on a date and hour to be notified hereafter, but if only lightly held an Advanced Guard, in order of march as under, operating with the Advanced Guard of the 62nd Division. The dividing line between the two advanced guards is the ECOUST - BULLECOURT - HENDECOURT road.

Brig-General C.H. Brand  
C.M.G., D.S.O.

- Van Guard ( 1 Troop "C" Squadron 13th A.L.H. Regiment  
( 16th Battalion  
( 1 Battery 11th A.F.A. Brigade
- Main Guard ( 14th Battalion  
( 4th Brigade Headquarters  
( 2 Sections 4th Field Company  
( 11th A.F.A. Brigade less 1 Battery  
( 13th Battalion echeloned to right of 14th Battn  
( 15th Battalion (less 1 Company) echeloned to  
( left of 14th Battalion.  
( 4th M.G. Company less guns allotted to Battal-  
( ions.  
( 4th A.L.T.M. Battery.  
( 1 Company 15th Battalion  
( 1 Section 4th Field Ambulance.

- 3. The direction of the centre of the advance will be approximately C.4. Central - U.23.central - U.12.Central. O.C. 14th Battalion to be prepared to "picquet" the high ground in C.24. by means of Vickers and Lewis Guns strongly escorted by Infantry.
- 4. Instructions as to Transport and rations will be issued later.
- 5. Where Units have not already runners at Headquarters 4th Australian Infantry Brigade C.10.c.1.2. steps will be taken to have same quartered there day and night.
- 6. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Issued at 4p.m.

(sgd) C.M. JOHNSTON, Major,  
Brigade-Major,  
4th Aus. Inf. Brigade.

- Copy No
- 1. War Diary
  - 2. 13th Light Horse Regiment
  - 3. 11th F.A. Brigade
  - 4. 4th Field Company
  - 5. 13th Battalion
  - 6. 14th Battalion
  - 7. 15th Battalion
  - 8. 16th Battalion
  - 9. 4th A.M.G. Company
  - 10. 4th A.L.T.M. Battery
  - 11. 12th Infantry Brigade.
  - 12. 4th Australian Division.
  - 13. 3rd Aust. Infantry Brigade.
  - 14. File.



SECRET

Headquarters,  
4th Aust. Inf. Bde,  
10th March 1917.

C.O.  
ALL UNITS

The following ammunition dumps can be called on for any emergency.

- (1) C.5.a.4.3.
- (2) C.5.b.2.7.
- (3) C.5.d.5.7.

BDE DUMP

- (4) C.15.b.9.9.

6th M.G. COY.

- (5) C.4.d.5.3. (32000 S.A.A.)

4th L.T.M.

In railway embankment

The 7th Machine Gun Company by arrangement with  
right Brigade supply their own dump.

(sgd) Alex H. Fraser, Capt.  
Staff Captain.  
4th Aus. Inf. Brigade.



THIS CANCELS ALL PREVIOUS ORDERS.

Copy No 1.

S E C R E T

## FOURTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE ORDER NO 76

10/4/17.

Reference ECOUST - St. MIEN 1/10,000.

1. On 11th April (zero hour 4-30a.m.) the enemy will be driven from the HINDENBURG LINE in co-operation with the 12th Australian Infantry Brigade and 62nd Division on our left. Diversions have been arranged to deal with our right.
2. The First and Second Objectives of the 4th and 12th Australian Infantry Brigades are as previously indicated. The 16th and 14th Battalions will capture the First and Second Objectives and the 13th and 15th Battalions securing the Third Objective REINCOURT the left of the 15th Battalion linking with a Unit of the 12th Australian Infantry Brigade in U.22.b.
3. All troops will be formed up in rear of their jumping off line at 4a.m. under cover of the Railway embankment cutting and Sunken road.
4. At 4-30a.m. on 11th April the Artillery will put down a flank barrage on QUEANT and BULLECOURT and the 12 Tanks will move forward. On reaching the trenches and as soon as they have occupied them, The Tanks will display a green disc meaning "come on". The 16th and 14th Battalions will then advance and occupy the trenches. The 13th and 15th Battalions being ready to follow so as to follow on with the Tanks to the Third Objective.
5. The 6th and 7th Machine Gun Companies plus 4 guns 13th Machine Gun Company are so distributed as to beat off hostile counter attacks. The O.C. 6th Machine Gun Company will be at C.5. Central. The allotment of the 4th Machine Gun Company and 4th A.L.T.M. Battery to Units to be as already arranged.
6. After the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade advances the 52nd Battalion will be responsible for holding the outpost lines linking with the 10th Battalion at about C.6. central and 51st Battalion at about C.5.a.2.5. Communication must be kept up with 16th Battalion whose right rear will be at U.50.a.2.4. The Headquarters 52nd Battalion will be at 14th Battalion Headquarters C.10.c.6.8.
7. At 6a.m. and 8a.m. flares will be lit up by Units in the advanced line and also in any forward posts.
8. Advanced Brigade Headquarters will be established at C.5. central when the second Objective is reached.
9. Conference of all C.O's will be held at Brigade Headquarters at C.10. c.1.2. at midnight 10th/11th April
10. ACKNOWLEDGE. Issued at 6p.m.

(sgd) C.M. Johnston, Major  
Brigade-Major,  
4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.

Copy No 1 War Diary  
2 4th Aust. Division  
3 4th Aust. Division  
4 12th Aust. Inf. Brigade  
5 13th Aust. Inf. Brigade  
6 13th Battalion  
7 14th Battalion  
8 15th Battalion  
9 16th Battalion

10 4th M.G. Company

11 4th A.L.T.M. Battery

Copy No 12 4th Field Company  
13 13th L.H. Regiment  
14 6th Machine Gun Coy.  
15 7th Machine Gun Coy  
16 Artillery Group Commdr.  
17 O.C. Anzac Cycle Coy  
18 A.D.M.S.  
19 3rd Aust Inf. Brigade

20 52nd Bn



APPENDIX

S E C R E T

Fourth Australian Infantry Brigade,  
HEADQUARTERS,  
10th April 1917.

10-45p.m.

In continuation of Brigade Order No 76 -

The attack will be carried out as under :-

- 4-30a.m. Tanks move forward as in sketch 1. Their advance will be covered as far as possible by Machine Gun fire.
- 4-45a.m. Infantry move forward and occupy HINDENBURG Line.

Artillery arrangements will be as under -

- 4-30a.m. Heavy Artillery continue to shell BULLECOURT, REINCOURT, and QUEANT Salient (no increase of night rate).
- 4-45a.m. Field Artillery barrage will be placed on each flank.
- 5a.m. All Artillery fire on BULLECOURT ceases, to let four Tanks followed up by a Battalion enter BULLECOURT and mop it up.
- 5-15a.m. Heavy Artillery fire on REINCOURT ceases and begins to creep back.
- 5-15a.m. Field Artillery barrage on QUEANT switches back to permit two Tanks to go along. This barrage is resumed at 5-45a.m.
- 5-30a.m. A barrage will be put round REINCOURT.

NOTE: There will be no barrage beyond the captured position, but an S.O.S. line will be arranged and fired on upon an S.O.S. Signal.

- Reference para 4. Delete whole paragraph.
- Reference para 7. Flares will be lit at 6-30a.m. and 8a.m.

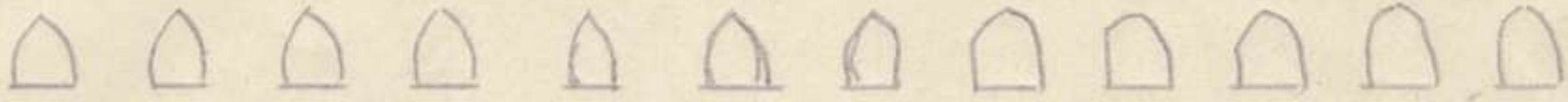
(sgd) C.M. JOHNSTON, Major,  
Brigade-Major,  
4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.



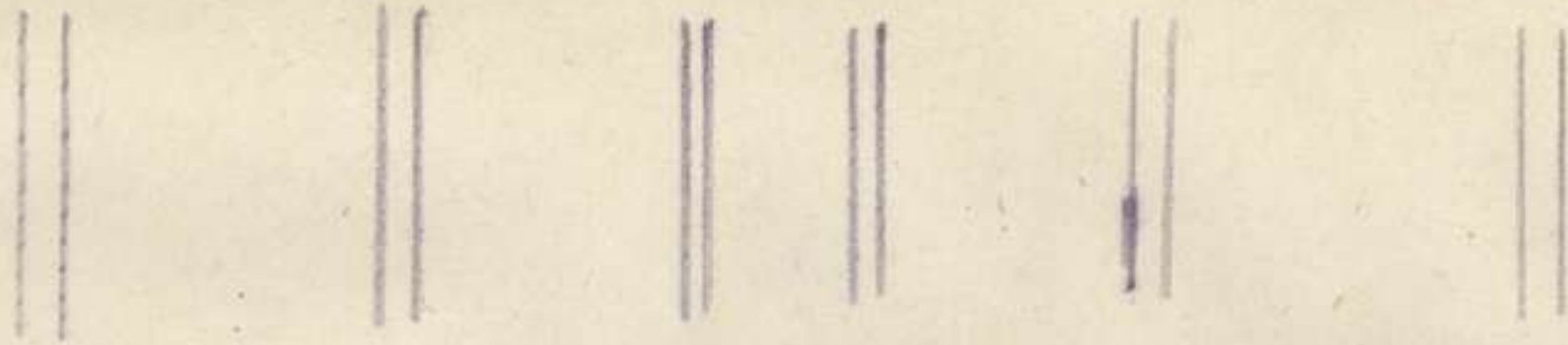
FIG I

FORMATION IN ORIGINAL ADVANCE

Towards HINDENBURG LINE



Queue



Tanks go into trench first & Infantry follow at fixed hour

FIG 2

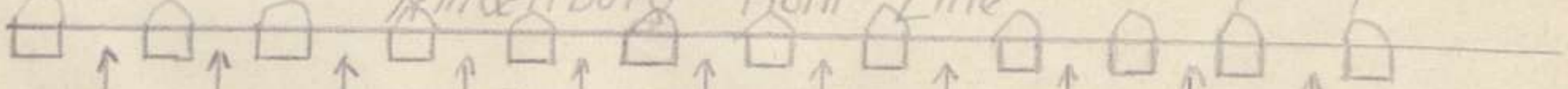
Manoeuvre

Reinforce\*

Hindenburg Support Line

Hindenburg Front Line

Queue



4 Tanks clearing flanks & covering blocking parties

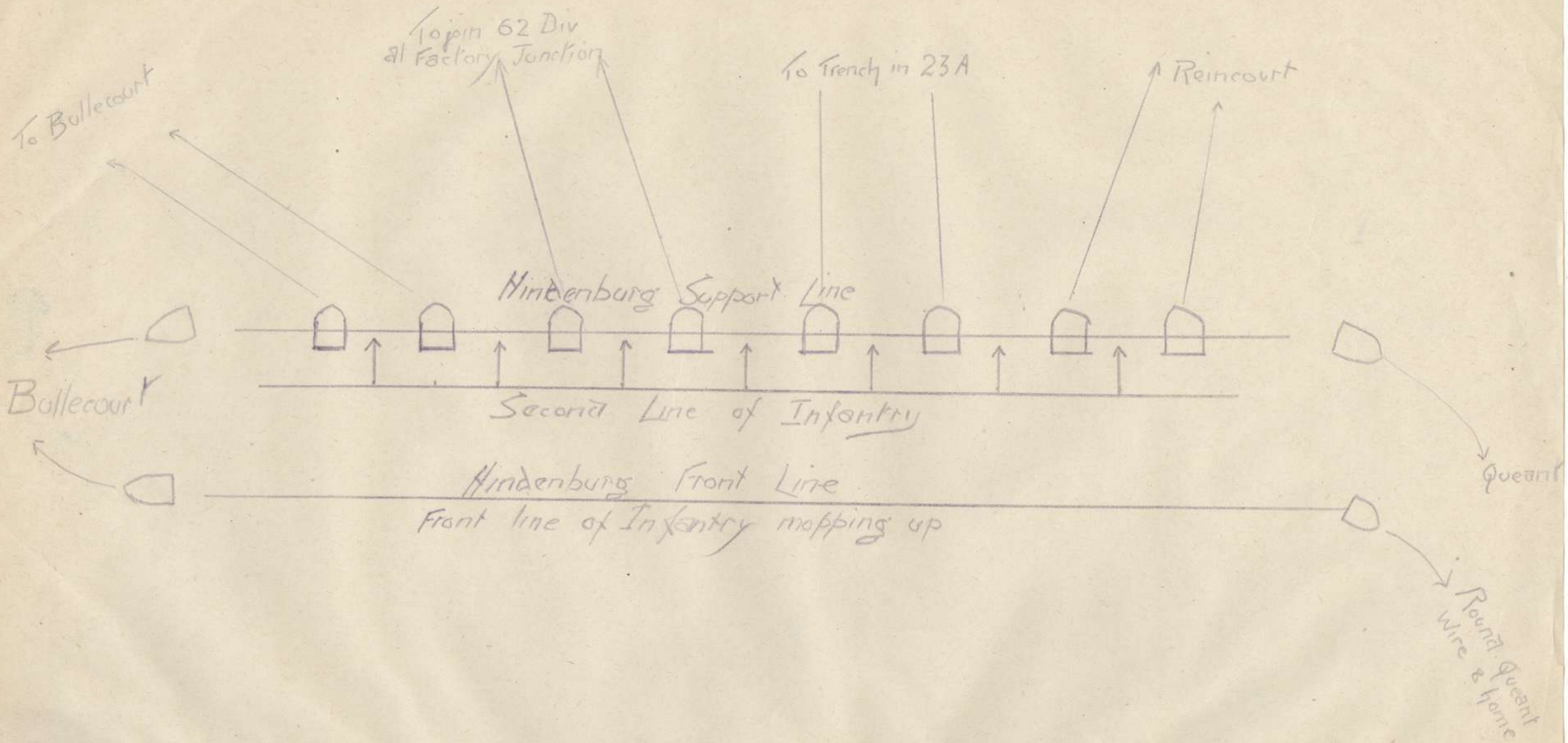
Front Line of Infantry

2 Tanks clearing flanks & covering blocking parties

Second line of Infantry



Hindencourt



607



INTELLIGENCE REPORTFROM FILE AND FAD ON OPERATIONS NIGHT OF 10th-11th APRIL 1917.

(Brigade Operation Orders 76 &amp; 77).

To/  
FACE.

The Battalions' Intelligence Officers moved out over the ground at 12-15a.m. and patrolled in front of jumping off place. They next laid tapes to indicate Battalions' and Companies' flanks.

At 2-15a.m. Battalions started to move into position in Sunken road, and were all in place, and ready for the attack by 3-30a.m.

At 3a.m. first Tank arrived at rendezvous at Railway Crossing. Intelligence Officer FAD got in touch with Section Commander of Tanks operating on right front, and found it to be impossible for Tanks to reach First Objective in 15 minutes. O.C. Tanks was then taken to Battalion Headquarters where he verified the above statement to Commanding Officers. Lieut-Colonel Bröckman then informed FACE, and asked for Infantry time to be put back 15 minutes. This was referred on by Brigade through the usual channels to General Headquarters, but orders came back programme to be adhered to. In the meantime two other Tanks had arrived, and a 4th was reported out of action.

At 3-20a.m. Tanks were led out to, and lined up in front of jumping off place. The interval between Tanks was approximately 100 yards. Three Tanks were in position and ready to move off by 4-20a.m. The other two Tanks to operate on the left flank were not then in position. Intelligence Officer got in touch, pointed out level crossing to one, who ignored same, and tried to get over sunken road. Consequence was Tank got into road and could not be got out again. The other Tank complained of engine trouble. This left us with only three Tanks to operate on whole front instead of six.

At 4-30a.m. three Tanks already in position moved out, followed at 4-45a.m. by Infantry in four successive waves. About half way to First Objective two Tanks stopped, and commenced to open fire; thus giving away position, and almost telling enemy some attack was in progress. Infantry decided to push on alone, and soon were in First Objective. The third Tank had by this time got up to the First Objective and crossed over to between that and the Second Objective, and was almost immediately put out of action by a gun firing from REINCOURT.

At 5-16a.m. Runner got back to Battalion Headquarters with message from Major Black of FILE, stating First Objective gained and pushing on to second.

At 6-30a.m. message came stating all Units in First and Second Objectives. From this time on the fighting was most severe, continuous bombing parties having to be beaten off, while all the time Machine Guns from all directions kept up a continual fire on parapet, also very heavy gun fire on Railway Cutting. Absolute enfilade fire from QUEANT being experienced causing serious casualties.

At 7-21a.m. definite information was received that First and Second Objectives were ours, and being consolidated, and also that casualties were very heavy: that Tanks were an absolute failure, and that prisoners were being sent back.

At 7-45a.m. first contact plane flew over, and drew very heavy Machine gun fire from QUEANT.

At 8a.m. S.O.S. signal sent up eighteen times by our troops, but failed to get any response from Artillery. Many prisoners were sent back. Party of 32 arrived, also parties of two's and three's. Many others were sent back including one party of 32 <sup>but</sup> ~~must~~ were mostly destroyed by their own Machine Gun fire before arriving at Battalion Headquarters.

At 8-45a.m. report received from Captain Murray of FACT confirming report already received as to capture of First and Second Objectives.



- 2 -

At 10-12a.m. message came from Captain Wadsworth of FAD urgently asking for S.A.A. bombs and also men.

At 10-45a.m. Lieut-Colonel Brockman sent to FACE asking for carrying parties from Reserve Battalion, also for Artillery co-operation on flanks, especially the right.

At 11-20a.m. Lieutenant Aarons of FILE came back reporting situation very serious, both flanks being bombed back; supply S.A.A. and bombs almost expended and only twenty-five of personnel left. Proposed to fall back to line of shell holes out in front, out of bomb range and hang on there until night.

At 11-30a.m. Sgt Boland of FAD reported supply of bombs absolutely used up, and Brigade on left retiring.

Having lost about eighty per cent of strength, and supply of bombs and S.A.A. being expended, FACE at 11-45a.m. was compelled to retire to original line held.

N.B. Special report is being forwarded, dealing with Tank operations.



## APPENDIX

16th BATTALION A.I.F.

NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS AND OTHER RANKS WHO ACTUALLY TOOK  
PART IN ATTACK ON "HINDENBURG LINE" on 11th APRIL 1917  
AND CAME BACK.

No	Rank	Name	Remarks
<u>"A" Company</u>			
5978	Pte	ANDREWS H.R.	
5658		ADKINS A.	
6330		ANDERSON J.N.	
1984	Sgt	BOULLY L.	
750	L/Cpl	BARKER W.	
5674	Pte	BOWERS H.	
1595		BUSWELL E.	
5691		COLLINS A.J.	
1684		CALDWELL T.C.	
5084		DICKENS A.	Stretcher bearer
2389		ENGLAND E.	" "
4599		ELDRIDGE T.	
5717		FORD E.J.	
1503		MANSFIELD A.	
209	Sgt	MACKIE A.	
6319	Pte	POUND G.T.	Stretcher bearer
5164		POWELL G.S.	
4046		PLUMMER W.H.	
2690		PEKIN J.	
6568		RUTHVEN S.W.	
2699		RODGERS W.R.	
1860		SINGLE W.	
6096		SMITH J.	
6598		WHITTEN J.	
6109		WREFORD R.	
4960		WALSH J.	
5223		WHETTEM A.R.	
128	Sgt	PHILLIPS D.C.	
<u>"B" Company</u>			
1454	Cpl	BATTISON R.	
6481	Pte	BUCKINGHAM A.R.	
3420		BENT E.T.	
5336		BOULTON C.P.	
1783		BOLTON B.C.	
4568		BROADHURST W.F.	Stretcher bearer
3413		BARROW S.	" "
6610		COOPER E.G.	
1995		ELVERD W.A.	
4808		FARMER A.P.	
6019		FAIR A.	Stretcher bearer
3461		FOX P.F.	
4030		HULKES J.E.	
5723		JENNINGS J.E.	
6049		KING A.H.	Battalion H.Q. Runner
3500		KENDRICK R.J.	Stretcher bearer
629		LOVELOCK J.	
6060		MOORE A.F.	
3530		MERCHANT J.	Stretcher bearer
6066		MILES E.G.	
5141		MCDONALD R.	Stretcher bearer
16165		NUNAN P.	
6248		OLIVER L.	
1888		PRATER W.	
6219		PACKHAM F.	
120		REED W.E.	
3545	Cpl	REED A.A.	
5423	Pte	SPRATLEY W.N.	
6338		SWINDLEHURST A.	

6589



- 2. -

No	Rank	Name	Remarks
6589	Pte	TAYLOR A.E.	Battalion H.Q. Runner Stretcher bearer.
6205		THORN C.N.	
5456		WRIGHT H.	
<u>"C" Company</u>			
	Lieut	J.S. KERR	
	Lieut	W. BURROWS	
4543	Pte	BROWN R.P.	
3854		BERGSTROM P.	
1591		BRETT J.	
1794	L/Sgt	CHOULES H.L.	
3427	Pte	CHALMERS W.R.	
5687		CARTER C.F.	
3890		DOUGLAS J.	
3248	L/Cpl	DAW R.	
4805	Pte	FUHRMANN H.	
1281	L/Cpl	HILL T.H.	
576	Pte	GEGGIE W.	
1295	Sgt	LAW S.	
6552	Pte	MARTIN R.B.	
3137		McNEE R.	
6349		NOBLE J.	
1317		PALMER E.G.	
3542		PARTLON C.	
5779		ROBIN C.H.J.	
6340		REID J.	
4700		REARDON W.A.	
6145		SADLER J.	
6202		SERMON J.C.	
2524	L/Cpl	STOCKTON W.N.	
6349	Pte	WALKER G.W.	
5937		WEIR J.B.	
3037		RSESZOWSKI L.J.	
<u>"D" Company:</u>			
	Lieut	D.S. AARONS	
2105	L/Sgt	BRIDGES R.G.	
1130	Sgt	BITMEAD J.	
650	Pte	BAIL G.	
5337		BERCOVITCH M.	
6235		BONZER G.E.	
5670		BENARI R.L.	
2631	L/Cpl	CRISP D.B.	
6005	Pte	CLARKE T.A.	
1713		DYER C.	
5358		EVE F.	
6016		FORREST L.	
1915	Sgt	GARRETT C.G.	
4609	Pte	GLADSTONE F.	Stretcher bearer
3704		HOLDEN A.	
1042		HALLIDAY W.J.	
768		JEFFREY J.G.	
5370		KEILMAN W.	
5371		Longbottom H.C.	
1753		LANGFORD A.	
5737		LARRETT P.	
1453 1196		McDONALD A.D.	
6072		RISELEY A.E.	
6573		PAYNE G.	
294		RISCCI J.	
2310	Sgt	THOMPSON H.C.	
6111	Pte	WOODLAND C.A.	
1848		WILCOX W.	
1114		YOUNG G.	

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SPECIAL REPORT ON "TANK" CO-OPERATION IN ATTACK NIGHT OF 10/11th  
APRIL 1917.

TO PAGE  
FROM FILE and P.D

TANKS. The Tank Co-operation in the attack made on the HINDENBURG LINE on the night of 10/11th April 1917 was useless, or worse than useless as shown below:-

- (a). Tanks were late in arriving at rendezvous, which meant that they were late in getting to the jumping off place. In fact only 3 got to the latter place at all.
- (b). of the 6 Tanks allotted to the Brigade 5 reached rendezvous; 1 being out of action before that place was reached. Of the 5, 1 disregarding guidance by I.C. FAD tried to cross a deep sunken road, and in consequence got in and could not get out again. A second one was out of action through engine trouble before jumping off place was reached, leaving 3 actually to co-operate in the attack.
- (c). The Tank crews seemed to know little or nothing of an attack by Infantry, and nothing whatever about the particular operation they were to participate in. For instance: in the case of No 2 Tank, the Tank Commander had not even synchronized his watch; his time being 5 minutes behind true time as given to Infantry. Further, Tank crews did not even know direction of enemy. This is verified by the fact that they opened fire on our troops, thereby causing us many casualties. One Tank in particular opened fire on our men at jumping off place, killing 4 and wounding others.
- (d). The organization seemed to be bad, and no one appeared to be in direct command of the show. This was shown by the fact - that Tanks wandered aimlessly about in every direction, thereby drawing enemy fire on us, and on all our trenches.
- (e). One Tank only reached the objective, and did good work, but was almost immediately put out of action by direct hits from a gun in REINJOINT. Commanders and crews of other tanks seem to make no effort whatever to reach their objectives, and although their Tanks were in no way damaged, even after the attack was well under way, and Tanks could have given the greatest assistance in helping to connect up between us and the Brigade on our left, they made no effort to go forward, but wandered back, moving along the front of our jumping off place and finally pulling up alongside one of our Dressing stations. Other tanks which apparently had made no effort to get up to their objectives, were found in various places; on fire, although they had not been hit by shells. One crew in particular when asked why they had vacated their tank stated that, "it had caught fire", but gave no reason for same. This same crew returned carrying two sand bags: one containing enamel ware and the other food. Personal safety and comfort seemed their sole ambition. Another crew was asked why they did not go forward to help clear a communication trench. They replied that, "they had no officer, so could not do so". This showed a great lack of initiative in that the whole affair as far as this tank was concerned seemed to be the responsibility of one man, and that man gone, the tank could do no more, though undamaged. One tank returning almost to the reserve



## APPENDIX

E.

Battalion H.Q. pulled up right on the sky line in full view of HULLSCOURT, thereby making a splendid aiming mark, and drawing severe enemy gun fire, which made the route very dangerous for troops.

- (f). The whole outfit showed rank inefficiency, and in some cases, tank crews seemed to lack "British tenacity and pluck, and that determination to go forward at all costs", which is naturally looked for in Britishers.

In our opinion tanks armed by the bravest of crews, if placed directly under the Infantry officers concerned in operations would be of great help, but they should never be relied upon as the sole arm of support in an attack by Infantry. Further, when tanks are being got into position we think it absolutely necessary that an heavy barrage be put up by our guns to deaden the sound of tanks.

In our case not a shot was fired when tanks were taking up their positions, and so the whole show was given away to enemy.

Lieut-Colonel,  
Commanding 16th Battalion A.I.F.

Lieut-Colonel,  
Commanding 14th Battalion A.I.F.