

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/67/9

Title: 50th Infantry Battalion

March 1917



AWM4-23/67/9

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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.

(Erase heading not required.)

50th Bn A.I.F.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BUIRE	1917 March	1 to 3	Training devoted to close order drill, arm drill & steadiness. Extended order drill & bayonet fighting. Lt Col A. Salisbury took charge of Bde during the absence of Brig. Gen Glasgow C.M.G. D.S.O. but also remained in charge of the Battalion	
"		4 to 10	Divisional Baths used & blankets disinfected. Training comprised musketry instruction & range practices. Bn & Bde route marches. Platoon, Coy. Bn & Bde attack practices (trench warfare) Coy advanced guards & Coy out post scheme. Special attention given throughout to platoon & section organization. N.C.O classes & inter Coy football matches during afternoons	operation order nos 1 + 2 attached
"		10 to 16	Physical training, bayonet fighting, specialists work. Bn & Bde attack practice for open warfare. Range practices. Visual training & judging distance	
"		17	Brig. Gen Glasgow C.M.G. D.S.O. returned from leave & resumed charge of Bde on 14th March.	
"		18	Bde church parade. 50 reinforcements arrived (partially trained)	
"		19	Divisional attack scheme (trench & open warfare) in skeleton with signallers.	operation order No 3 attached
"		20	31 reinforcements arrived (partially trained)	
"		21	left Buire for Mametz Camp - 3 men fell out. arrived 12.45 pm.	operation order No 16 attached
"		22	bleared up Camp - Physical training - Divisional Baths	
WAMETZ		23	Phy. training - Fire Orders - Bayonet fighting - Extended order drill - Route march.	
		24	do Description & recognition of targets - Gas helmets drill. Coy tactical exercises Specialist training	filed

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50th Bn A.I.F. Page ~~35~~ 36

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
MAMETZ	1919 Mar	25	Orders received to take over advance guard on 27th inst. 6.0 + asst adyt- visited forward area.	
MARTINPUICH and EANCOURT LA ABBEY		26	Moved to Martinpuich + Eancourt-la abbey	
		27	Moved forward and passed through BAPAUME at 5 pm. Took over front line (outpost line) south of NOREUIL. Relief completed shortly after midnight. A, C + D Coys on outpost line B Coy in reserve. 52nd Bn holding LAGNICOURT on our right. 51st Bn on our left south of LONGATTE. 50th Bn HQ in VAULX-VRANCOURT	
FRONT LINE		28	NOREUIL still held by enemy. Moderate shelling of outpost line + VAULX. Our artillery registered on NOREUIL. Our patrols active during night 27/28 + got in touch with enemy at several points.	
"		29	Our patrols very active + again in touch with enemy at several points night 28/29. Two machine guns located on south edge of NOREUIL. Posts of right + left coys pushed forward about 100 yards. on night 28/29. Enemy shelling during day normal.	
"		30	Our patrols again active on night 29/30 + in touch with enemy. Enemy shelling again more active during day. Gas shells used on left coy about 6.30 pm. Enemy plane over Bn HQ about 6.15 pm + 7 pm. One of our Batteries heavily shelled from 6.15 to 7 pm. Well + cross roads about centre of VAULX blown up by mine. A + C Coys relieved by B Coy 10.20 pm.	
"		31	Our Patrols active + in touch with enemy during night 30/31	

W. Salisbury
C.O.
1. Col
50th Bn

457

OPERATION ORDER No. I. Copy No. 4

By,
LIEUT. COLONEL A.G. SALISBURY, COMMANDING,
50th. BATTALION.

In the Field,
March 7th. 1917.

1. A Battalion Attack Practice will be carried out about 11.30 a.m. tomorrow, 8th. inst., on ground North East of BUJAH.
2. ^{The line held by us and the two objectives to be taken will be} pointed out on the ground.
3. It will be considered that a Battn. is operating on either flank.
4. Battn. Frontage about 200 yds. A. B. & C Coys will attack on a frontage of about 70 yds. ^{each} A. Coy the Right flank, B. Coy the Centre, ^{C Coy the left} C. Coy. will be in reserve. Reserve Coy. will detail 1 Platoon as carrying party.
5. Attack will be made in two waves of two lines each. Lines will be 20 yds. apart. Waves 50 yds. apart. Attack will commence from a position of assembly, ~~XXXX~~ about 150 yds. from 1st objective. This position will be marked by a line of outposts which attacking Coys. will send out, 30 minutes before zero. Lieut Jose will see that these posts are placed in correct position. Attacking troops will move to position of assembly 20 minutes before zero. Reserve Coy. to arrive in our present front line 20 minutes before zero.
6. Artillery Barrage table as under.

1st. Phase. (a). 00 - 05 Creeping barrage from 50 yds in front of first objective, to first objective 10 yds. per Minute.
 05 - 10. On 1st. objective.
 (b) 00 - 10. Standing barrage on 1st. Objective.
 - - - - -

2nd. Phase. (a) 10 - 15. Creeping barrage from 50 yds. in front of 2nd. Objective., to 2nd. Objective 10 yds. per min.
 15 - 20 On 2nd. Objective.
 (b). 10 - 20 Standing barrage on 2nd. objective.
 - - - - -

3rd. Phase. 20 Onwards. On enemy line in rear of 2nd. Objective. The position of barrage will be represented by horsemen. The lifting of the barrage from each objective will be anticipated by two minutes. Watches will be synchronised on the ground at 10 a.m. when ZERO time will also be notified.
7. The usual coverers, exploiters, moppers up etc., will be told off before leaving our line. Immediately each objective is gained, consolidation & precautions against counter attack will be proceeded with.
8. B. Coy will commence communication trench from centre of 1st objective back to centre of our front line. The reserve Coy. will commence the back end of this communication trench working towards centre of 1st objective. A. & C Coys. will construct a communication trench each from 2nd. Objective to 1st. Objective.
9. Attacking Coys. will carry 10 shovels and 5 picks each.
10. Tool & ammunition & bomb dumps will be established on the ground.
 A contact plane. (imaginary) will call for flares 10 minutes after zero & 20 minutes after zero.
 A. & "C" Coys. will each burn three flares (improvised) on flanks of each objective.
 Flares (improvised) will be drawn from Sig. Sergt. on the ground

(2).

and will be carried by attacking troops, well distributed over Signallers & Runners.

Signal sheets, panels & station calls will be laid out at Bn H.Qs.

12. Coys. will send one runner to Bn.H.Qs. in addition to the two already doing duty at Battalion.
13. Prisoners captured together with any documents will be forwarded to Bn.H.Qs. without delay.
14. Bn.H.Qs. will be 200 yards in rear of centre of old front line.
15. Regimental Aid Post will be situated near Bn.H.Qs. Stretcher Bearers will report to ~~H.Q.~~^{MD.} at R.A.P. at 10.30 a.m.

Wm Fowler

Captain.

Adjutant 50th. Battalion.

Copy No.	I.	File.
:: :	2.	C.O.
:: :	3.	Senior Major.
:: :	4.)	
:: :	5.)	War Diary.
:: :	6.)	
:: :	7.	A. Coy.
:: :	8.	B. Coy.
:: :	9.	C. Coy.
:: :	10.	D. Coy.

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APPENDIX

OPERATION ORDER, No. 3.

Copy No. 4

By,
LIEUT COLONEL, A.G. SALISBURY, COMMANDING,
50th BATTALION.

In the Field,
8/3/1917.

1. The Brigade will carry out an attack practice tomorrow 8/3/17, on ground N.E. of BUIRE.
2. The line held by the 50th Bn & the two objectives to be taken will be pointed out on ground.
3. The 52nd Bn will be operating on the right & 4th BLANKSHIRE Regiment on our left.
4. Bn frontage about 200 yds. A, B. & C. Coys will attack on a frontage of about 70 yds each. A. Coy right flank, B. Coy the centre, C. Coy the left flank, D. Coy will be in reserve. Reserve Coy will detail 1. Platoon as carrying party.
5. Attack will be made in two waves of two lines each. Lines will be 20 yards apart. Waves 50 yds apart. Attack will commence from a position of assembly about 150 yds from the objective. This position will be marked by a line of outposts which attacking Coy will send out 30 minutes before zero. Lieut JOSE will see that these posts are placed in correct position. Attacking troops will move to position of assembly 30 minutes before zero. Reserve Coy to arrive in our present front line 20 minutes before zero.
6. Zero time 11 a.m. Watches to be synchronised on ground at 10 a.m.
7. Artillery Barrage table as under.-

1st Phase. (a) 00 - 05 Creeping barrage from 50 yds in front of first objective.
 05 - 10 On first objective.
 (b) 00 - 10 Standing barrage on first objective.

2nd Objective.-
 (a) 10 - 15 Creeping barrage 50 yds in front of 2nd Objective.
 15 - 20 On second objective.
 (b) 10 - 20 Standing barrage on second objective.

3rd Objective.-
 20 onwards. On enemy trenches in rear of 2nd objective. The position of barrage will be represented by horsemen. The Lifting of the barrage from each objective will be anticipated by two minutes.

8. The usual coverers, exploiters, moppers up etc will be told off before leaving our line. Immediately each objective is gained, consolidation & precautions against counter attack will be proceeded with.
9. B. Coy will commence communication trench from centre of 1st Objective back to centre of our front line. The reserve Coy will commence the back end of this communication trench working towards centre of 1st objective. A & C. Coys will construct a communication trench each from 2nd Objective to 1st Objective.
10. Attacking Coys will carry 10 shovels and 5 picks each which will be drawn from Bn dump near Bn H.Qs. Ammunition & Bomb/ dump will also be at Bn H.Qs.
11. A contact plane will appear & approach first objective shortly

(2).

after zero. The plane will then call for flares, signal being AAA made on Klarton Horn. Flares will then be lit. The plane will then return to Bde H.Qs and drop message.

Second objective being gained the same procedure re signal & flares and plane will be adopted.

12. Flares 12 have been issued to the Bn and will be lit in following wave positions. 1st Objective - a group of three on left flank of Bn, a group of three on left flank of A.Coy. The same positions hold good for 2nd Objective.
Flares will be drawn at 10 a.m. from Signal Sgt on the ground & will be carried by attacking troops well distributed over Signallers and Runners.
Signal sheets, panels & station calls will be laid at Bn H.Qs. B.A.B. Codes will be carried and signals to aeroplane will be done slowly.
13. Coys will send one runner to Bn H.Qs in addition to the two already doing duty at Bn H.Qs.
14. O.C. of the 2 Mortars allotted to the Bn will place one mortar in reserve at Bn H.Qs, the other he will place in such a position as to bring fire to bear in case of Counter attack on communication trench O.A. He will report to O.C. of "A" Coy, the position of mortar and will then come under orders of O.C., A.Coy.
Trench mortar teams will advance to position by moving forward in rear of second line of second wave of "A" Coy.
15. O.C. of Machine Gun Section (8 guns) allotted to the Bn will place both guns in front line selecting positions most suitable to repel counter attack. One gun to be placed in such a position as to cover our left flank. O.C. of each gun will report to the Coy Commander in whose sector he is and will then come under orders of that Company Commander.
16. Prisoners captured together with any documents will be forwarded to Bn H.Qs without delay. D.Coy will detail one section to represent enemy, who will be captured from each objective. Enemy will wear white hat bands to be provided by D.Coy.
17. Coy Commanders will arrange for batmen to take their horses to represent barrage. Horses to report to Lieut L.B. SMITH at Bn H.Qs on ground at 9.30 a.m.
18. 40 Magazines per gun will be carried.
19. Bn H.Qs will be 200 yds in rear of centre of old front line.
20. Reg Aid Post will be situated near Bn H.Qs. Stretcher Bearers will report to H.O. at R.A.P. at 10 a.m. They will then return to their respective Coys.
21. Casualties to be simulated. O.C. Coys will be given slips of paper stating class of wound. O.C.'s to pilot casualties.
22. Bn to advance on ground at 9.30 a.m.
Starting Point :- Q.M.s Store.
Order of March :- A.B.C.D Coys.
Dress :- Fighting Order with Jenkins.

Copy No 1. File.

11 B. C.O.

11 3. Sen Major.

11 4.)

11 5.) War Diary.

11 6.) A. Coy

11 7.) B. Coy

11 8.) C. Coy

11 9.) D. Coy

9.15 am

Wm Fowler

Captain.

Adjutant, 50th Battalion.

copy No 11. 13th Div. G. Coy.

12. 13th L.T.M.B.

BATTALION OPERATION ORDER No. 2, 3

By.
LIEUT. COLONEL A.G. SALISBURY, COMMANDING,
50th. Battalion.

In the Field,
March 19th. 1917.

Reference Map 1/40,000 and sketch attached.

1. The 4th. Australian Division in conjunction with Divisions on its flanks will attack the enemy's position between the AMIENS - ALBERT ~~ROAD~~ and BRESLE-BAIZIEUX Roads on March 19th. 1917.
Zero hour will be notified later.
2. Objectives & Distribution.
The distribution of the 13th. Brigade & objectives are shown on sketch attached.
The 51st. Battn. will be the Battn of direction, which is a bearing of 77 degrees magnetic.
49th. Bn. will be Bde. Reserve.
The distribution of the 50th. Battn. is as under.-
 - A. Coy. Right Flank.
 - B. Coy. Centre.
 - C. Coy. Left Flank.
 - D. Coy. will be in Reserve.

Battn. Headquarters will be situated at G.24.d.40.
3. The attack will be carried out in accordance with the Br rage table attached.
4. After securing the Third Objective the 4th. & 13th. Aust. Inf. Brigades will, if possible, push on and secure the high ground, S.E. East & North of BRESLE. The 13th. Aust. Inf. Brigade will consolidate the line won & become Divisional Reserve.

Tom Fowler
Adjutant 50th. Battalion.

Captain.

No. 1.	Copy	File.	
No. 2.	"	C.O.	
No. 3.	"	Senior Major.	
No. 4.	"	} War Diary.	
No. 5.	"		
No. 6.	"	} O.C. "A" Coy.	
No. 7.	"		
No. 8.	"		O.C. "B" "
No. 9.	"		O.C. "C" "
No. 10.	"	O.C. "D" "	

APPENDIX

To accompany Batn. Operation Order No. 3

Minus 5 minutes to Zero:-

Intense Bombardment of first objective by 90 18 pdrs.
Ditto of Second objective by all 4.5 Batteries, and 54
18 pdrs.
I Brigade 18 pdrs. in enfilade of Southern slopes of posi-
ion.

Zero to Zero plus 9 minutes.-

18pdrs. on first objective lift 100 yards every 5 minutes
till on second objective which will now have all 18 pdrs.
-less one Bde- on it.

I Brigade 18pdrs. searches back from prolongation of
second object to ALBERT - AMIENS Road, as far as square I
D.80.b.

Zero plus 5 minutes. :-

4.5's lift 900 yds. every 4 minutes till on third objective
at Zero plus 29.

Zero Plus 12 minutes. :-

18 pdrs. of 3 Brigades lift to third objective between
square 7 Central & square 14.c.6.8.

Remainder 18 pdr. Batteries lift 100 yards every 4 minutes
till on 3rd. Objective at Zero plus 36.

Zero Plus 31. minutes:-

4.5 Hows. lift 400 yards.

Zero plus 41 minutes:-

18 pdrs. lift to line shown on map.

Zero plus 41 to Zero plus 101:

Barrage gradually dies down and ceases when infantry
report consolidation or changes when infantry report mov-
forward.

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OPERATION ORDER No. 16,

By,

LIEUT COLONEL A.G. SALISBURY, COMMANDG,
50th, BATTALION.In the Field,
20th, March, 1917.

MOVE.

The Battalion will move tomorrow as follows, -
Destination. - NAMETZ CAMP.Route. - Via DERHACOURT-HEAULTE-FRICOURT.Time. - 12.15 P.M.Starting Point. - X Roads near No. 12 Billet.Order of March. - A.B., Band, C & D Coys.Dress. - Marching Order, leather Jerkins to be *worn*
~~carried~~. One blanket & Water proof sheet
to be rolled and ~~folded~~ folded round
the pack.Blankets. - One blanket per man will be carried by
transport, to be rolled shortways in bundles
of not more than 12 per bundle, and clearly
marked, to be dumped at Bn H.Qs by 10 a.m.
On arrival at destination Coys will
draw blankets immediately. Parties to be
detailed and marched to Q.M.'s Store by
G.Q.M.S.'s or storemen.Baggage. - Officers valises reduced to a minimum
to be at Bn H.Qs by 10 a.m.
Hess boxes to be at Bn H.Qs by 11.15 a.m.Rations. - Unconsumed portion of days ration to
be carried on the men. Water Bottles to be
filled.Loading Party. - Each Coy will supply two men as load-
ing party. Duty Coy will supply I.N.C.O in
addition, to report ~~at~~ at Q.M.'s Store at
10 a.m.Lewis Guns. - All Lewis Guns and Magazines to be at
Bn H.Qs by 10 a.m. To be loaded by Lewis Gun
ners under supervision of Lieut EDWARDS.Cookers. - Coy Cookers to be ready for teams by
10 a.m.. Two cooks per Coy will remain
with cookers and prepare hot tea for ~~the~~
~~day's~~ evening meal.Detention Guard,
& Prisoners. - Regimental Police, Detention Guard, &
Prisoners will move with "A" Coy.Band. - Packs of Bandmen to be at Q.M.'s
Store by 10 a.m.Sanitation. - Previous orders re sanitation will
be strictly adhered to. Bn Orderly Officer
and sanitary section will remain behind &
ensure that every Billet is left clean &
obtain a certificate to that effect from
the Officer taking over Billets.

Wm Fowler
Adjutant, 50th, Battalion, Captain,

457

By,
LIEUT. COLONEL. A.G. SALISBURY, COMMANDING,
50th. BATTALION.

In the Field,
March 26th. 1917.

Battn. will move tomorrow as follows.-

- Destination. WARLENGOURT, Le SANS Area.
- Route. By road via BAZENTIN Le PETIT to MARTINPUICH, thence duckwalks.
- Transport. Transport will move via La BOISELLE & POZIERES
- Time. 9.14 a.m. Coys. will be ready to move at 9 a.m.
- Starting Point. F.S.C.S 3.
- Order of March. Band "A", "B", "C", & "D" Companies.
- Dress. Marching Order, Leather Jerkins to be worn. One blanket & W.P. Sheet to be rolled & folded round pack.
- Blankets. One blanket per man will be carried by transport, to be rolled shortways in bundles of not more than 12 per bundle & clearly marked to be dumped at Q.M. Store by 7.15 a.m.
On arrival at destination Coys. will draw blankets immediately. Parties to be detailed and marched to Q.M.'s Store by C.Q.M.S's or Storemen.
- Baggage. Officer's valises & Coy. Stationery Boxes to be at Q.M. Store by 7.30 a.m.
Mess boxes to be at Q.M. Store by 8.30 a.m.
- Rations. Unconsumed portion of days rations to be carried on the man.
- Loading Parties. Coys. will supply two men as loading party. Duty Coy. will supply 1 M.C.O. in addition, to report at Q.M. Store by 7.15 a.m.
- Cookers. Coy. Cookers to be ready for teams by 8.15 a.m. Two cooks per Coy. will move with Transport.
- Detention Guard & prisoners. Regimental Police, Detention Guard & prisoners will move with "A" Company.
- Band. Packs of drummers to be at Q.M. Store by 8 a.m.
- Sanitation. Previous orders re sanitation will be strictly adhered to. Battn. Orderly Officer & Sanitary Section will remain behind & ensure that every hut is left clean & obtain a certificate to that effect from the Officer taking over Camp.
- Meals. Troops will halt from 1 to 2 p.m. for lunch.
- Details. Any details who do not move with the Battn. will report to the In. Orderly Officer & march with his party.

Wm. Fowler

Captain.

Adjutant 50th. Battalion.