

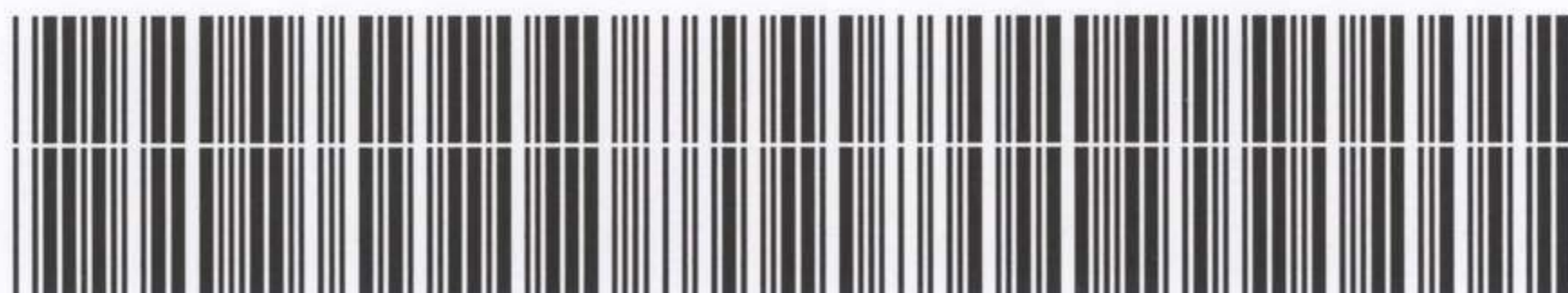
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/15/26 PART 2

Title: 15th Infantry Brigade

April 1918 Appendices



AWM4-23/15/26PART2

App. ~~XIX~~

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GENERAL

STAFF

OPERATION

DIARY.

24.4.18.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation
1.	4.10 a.m.	57th Bn.	15th A.I. Bde	R.D. 49.	Enemy shelling forward area in vicinity of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Battalion reserve line lightly shelled with H.E. and Green and Yellow Cross Gas Shells in squares O.8.B., O.14.B. and D. O.20.B. and D.
2.	4.15 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns.	B.M. 367	Liaison Officers will move at once and report for duty. Lieut. McKENNA 58th Bn. to 14th Aust. Inf. Brigade. Lieut. STALEY 57th Bn. to 8th Inf. Brigade H.Q. Lieut. BLANDFORD to right Brigade H.Q.
3.	4.30 a.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I. Bde.	G. 892	No. 4 troop to stand to ready to move at once. O.C. will report to 15th Infantry Brigade Headquarters and wait there for orders from D.H.Q. Addressed No. 4 Troop A.L.H. repeated 15th Infantry Brigade.
4.	4.50 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	59th, 57th, 58th, 60th Bns. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 368	59th Battalion will be prepared to counter attack along the spur running through O.27. 28. 29 and 30. Send forward independent patrols as far as grid line running North and South between Squares 28 and 29. They should have communication with 57th Bn. forward companies to you by visual and wire if possible roll of wire being forwarded to you but this should not delay party moving off. On going through Reserve Line they should notify British troops on right of 57th Battalion that they are going forward to reconnoitre in case of counter attack. You will reconnoitre shortest route with gaps in wire at once. Addressed 59th Battalion repeated 57th, 58th, 60th Bns. 5th Aust. Div. Acknowledge.
5.	5.5 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	60th, 57th, 58th, 59th Bns. 14th A.I. Bde. 24th Bde. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 369	60th Battalion will be prepared to counter attack along the spur running through O.16.C., O.18., O.5., thence along the track through O.24.B., P.19.C., P.25.B.. Send forward independent patrols as far as grid line between O.18. and O.24. They should have communication between 57th Bn. forward companies to you by visual and wire if possible. You will reconnoitre shortest route with gaps in wire at once. Addressed 60th Bn. repeated for information to 57th, 58th, and 59th Bns. 5th Aust. Div. 14th A.I. Brigade, 24th Inf. Brigade.

APPENDIX 1995

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To.	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
6.	5.10 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	57th, 59th Bns.	B.M. 370	Re B.M. 368. You will be prepared to assemble your Battalion and support the attack referred to if required. Addressed 57th Bn. repeated 59th Bn.
7.	5.15 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	58th, 60th Bns.	B.M. 371	Re B.M. 369. You will be prepared to assemble your Battalion and support the attack referred to if required. Addressed 58th Battalion repeated 60th Battalion.
8.	R4/3.	59th Bn.	15th A.I. Bde.	R4/3	Re B.M. 368. Patrols have gone forward.
9.	6.30 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 372	Front has quietened down considerably. Take steps to rest and feed the men but remain in state of readiness. Addressed all Brigade Units.
10.	6.30 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	Lt. REID No. 4 troop 13th Light Horse	B.M. 373	Message from Division states you are to rest and feed the men and remain in constant state of readiness awaiting further orders.
11.	7.40 a.m.	Right Liaison	15th A.I. Bde	R.L. 1	I am with 24th Brigade Headquarters at O.25.C.1-5. A man from the Battalion which was in the line in front of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX has come through to here and reports that enemy have advanced through out front line with tanks and flammenwerfer and that enemy Infantry were in open order. Nearly all communications have been cut. This report seems fairly reliable. Enemy are reported advancing towards VILLERS-BRETONNEUX but there are some troops reported to be making a stand in front of the village.
12.	7.45 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 374	At 6.40 a.m. Bosche reported to be advancing up Railway in V.1. and 2. and had driven left Battalion. of right Brigade of right Division. Situation believed to be well in hand. Right Brigade Headquarters Right Division in O.31.A. being heavily gas shelled and communications cut.

APPENDIX

1996

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
13.	7.55 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	59th Bn	B.M.375	See B.M. 374. Having regard to this message you will be prepared to attack along the Railway to the South of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Instruct your independent patrol to reconnoitre in this direction.
14.	7.50 a.m.	59th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	R4/4	Patrol report that a few stragglers state they saw enemy tank coming along Railway AAA No definite information can be obtained from them. Enemy still shelling area in Squares 28 and 29 moderate. No Gas noted.
15.	8 a.m.	15th A.I. B de.	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB, B.G.O C/o 57th Bn.	B.M.376	Enemy Gas falling in N.30 and 36 also in O.25. and 26. Warn everybody and take necessary precautions.
16.	8.20 a.m.	15th A. I. Bde.	5th Aust. Div. 57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 378	Our right liaison reports at 7.40 a.m. man who was in line in front of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX has come through and reports enemy have advanced through our front line with tanks and flammenwerfer. Enemy Infantry in open order. Nearly all communications have been cut. Enemy reported advancing towards VILLERS-BRETONNEUX but there are some troops reported to be making a stand in front of the village. 59th Battalion advanced patrol at grid line O.28. and 29. report that a few stragglers have come through who state they saw enemy tank coming along Railway. No definite information can be obtained from them. Enemy still shelling area in squares 28 and 29 moderate. No Gas noted. Message timed 7.50 a.m. Addressed 5th Aust. Div. repeated Units of Brigade.
17.	8.20 a.m.	Liaison Left.	15th A.I.Bde.	B.M.	Liaison 14th Brigade and 25th Rifle Brigade report 6.20 a.m. right Company 25th on main VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Road had given ground. Counter attack arranged. Situation obscure owing mist? Front Battalion 14th Brigade report slight Artillery and no Infantry action. Enemy shelling CORBIE Gas and H.E.
18.	8.35 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	Lieutt BLANDFORD Right Liaison	B.M.380	57th Battalion report verbally at 8.30 a.m. that an Officer of Artillery taking horses up to forward 18 pounders guns had stated that English troops had retired from front line and were halfway through VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Report entirely unofficial.

APPENDIX

1997

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
19.		5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G.901	Following from 8th Div. O.C. VILLERS-BRETONNEUX reports 6.40 a.m. Enemy advancing along Railway V.1 and V.2. Enemy reported to be using tanks. Left Battalion right Brigade have given ground. Situation believed well in hand. Situation obscure owing to mist. At 6.45 a.m. enemy was Gas shelling N.30 and N.36. and O.25. and O.26. with Lachrymatory and phosgene. Addressed all concerned repeated 3rd Aust. Div.
20	8.45 a.m.	15th A. I. Bde.	5th Aust.Div. 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	BM 379	Our 8th Brigade Liaison reports that left Brigade Right Division reported 6.20 a.m. their left Battalion had given ground. Counter attack arranged. Situation obscure owing to mist. No Infantry action this Divisional front.
21.	8.50 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	57th Bn.	BM 382	Re your verbal report to B.M. So far as Division can ascertain the situation is alright. Try and ascertain name of Officer giving information and in future take name and full particulars under similar circumstances.
22.	9.5 a.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	5th Aust. Div. 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B. 14th A.I.Bde, 8th A.I. Bde.	B.M.383	59th and 60th Battalions will move at once in accordance with B.M. 368 and 369. The right of the 56th Battalion is not O.16.B. Enemy advancing from WARFUSEE- ABANCOURT. Get into touch with troops on either flank. 57th Battalion will move as soon as possible echeloned to right rear of 59th and ultimately attack if required along Railway to right of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX clearing it by an enveloping movement. Scouts in front as soon as past AUBIGNY LINE. All British troops to be rallied and reformed as our troops march through them by selected officers and on any hesitation to be shot. Battalions to maintain touch. 58th Battalion to prepare to move at once reporting when ready. Objective is to restore our front line in prolongation of 14th Brigade. All Units report when ready to move. addressed 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Battalions repeated 15th A.L.T.M.B. 14th A.I.Brigrade, 24th Inf. Bde. 5th Aust. Div.
23.	8.45 a.m.	15th Left Liaison	15th A.I. Bde.	-	Enemy coming down road from VILLERS-BRETONNEUX to FOUILLOY. One Battalion this Brigade astride road.

APPENDIX

1998

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY. 24.4.18.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
24	9.20 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lt.Col. LAYH 57th Bn.	B.M.391	Until you move off from present position you will act as my representative. Take charge of Light Horse use them to get touch and information with 8th British Division and 14th Bde. Line now runs P.19.C. at point 104 thence O.24.D., O.23., O.22C. and D. to O.26.B.. British are counter attacking on right. Light horse to get in touch with situation and should 8th Brigade be repulsed or enemy making heavy attack put my plan into instant operation informing me. 13th Aust. Inf.Bde are to the right of BOIS L'ABBE in support of British. Should you attack as ordered try to get touch with them. Battery of Horse Arty. reporting to you to support the attack. He should thoroughly reconnoitre position forward and if he finds target let him go into action without waiting for our attack, but must closely support when we move.
25.	9.25 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 385	Brigade Command post and report centre will be established at once at 58th Battalion right company Headquarters O.8.C. 8-8.
26.	9.40 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 386	Right flank of 14th A.I.Brigrade is now at P.19.A. & B.. 56th Battalion is in Reserve and astride the WARFUSEE-ABANGCOURT-FOUILLOY Road, in O.17.C. and O.16.B.
27.	9.40 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 387	One troop 13th A.L.H. under Lieut. REID is reporting to C.O. 59th Battalion and later to C.O. 57th Battalion to watch right flank of Unit.
28.	9.45 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lieut. BLANDFORD Right Liaison	B.M. 388	59th Battalion are moving at once to counter attack along the Spur running through O.27., 28., 29. and P.30.. 60th Battalion are moving at once to counter attack along the Spur running through O.16.C., O.18. and O.5. thence along the track O.24.B. P.19.C. P.25.
29	9.55 a.m.	G.O.C. 5th Div. Div.	B.G.C. 15th A.I. Bde.	Verbal	British are endeavouring to restore the line. Our Division will stand fast pending further orders.

APPENDIX

1999

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
30	10 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div. 57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th L.T.M.B. Right Liaison 14th A.I. Bde. 8th A.I.Bde. 13th Light Horse.	B.M. 390	Stand Fast as British are endeavouring to restore line themselves. But be ready for instant action.
31.	10.4 a.m.	Left Liaison	15th A.I.Bde.		Enemy holds VILLERS. Right flank this Brigade runs through O.16.D. and 17.C. Line of Brigade on right of 14th thought run through O.19.A. and B. Enemy tanks reported W. of VILLERS. Expect here strong attack from West of VILLERS. 8th Brigade repulsed 2 enemy attacks 400 strong.
32.	10.31 a.m.	60th Bn. Bde	15th A.I.Bde.	W.15.	Moving to assembly position. Moving from assembly position 10.30 a.m.
33.	10.15 a.m.	G.S.O. 1	Brigade Major	Verbal	Sherwood Forresters are to counter attack on the Western Outskirts of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Two companies on either side of the Railway. Two tanks will assist and two sections M.G. Objective is to link up with left Brigade and Right Brigade at CACHY Switch. Another Battalion from right brigade reserve is moving to CACHY Switch.
33.	10.25 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns, 15th ALTMB, 5th Aust. Div. 14th A.I. Bde.	B.M.392	Wounded coming back from front report enemy in VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and is attempting to flank it on either side. 24th Brigade are in touch with their Division and have received no orders to counter attack. Reserve Battalion of Brigade which were holding front line may be doing this. Mounted orderly from left Battalion of Right Division gives verbal report that enemy are attacking between CACHY and DOMART. Reserve of the Brigade have now been ordered to counter attack on VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and join up on Eastern side of Village with 25th Brigade, who are holding line North of main road and who are reported to have swung back at defensive flank. Above received from Right Liaison timed 10 a.m.

APPENDIX

19100

Serial No.	Time.	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
35.	10.52 a.m.	Liaison 8th Brigade.	15th A.I.Bde.	-	Message received 14th Brigade 10.25 a.m. indications go to show attack may be expected from South and West of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Enemy tanks have been sighted. Ends.
36.	10.55 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A. L.T.M.B.	BM 395	Three tanks have been placed at the disposal of 8th Division. on right to assist their counter attack and deal with hostile tanks.
37.	11.5 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.		Report Centre established at SHED in O.5.C. and runners despatched to inform 59th and 60th of this. Line is down between here and 58th Battalion but SCHRODER is running a new one. Shelling is mainly concentrated SOUTH of BLANGY - AUBIGNY Road on the VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Ridge and along North side of BOIS L'ABBE. All high ground in front appears to be in our possession.
38.	11.15 a.m.	15th A. I. Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB, Liaison 24th Bde.	B.M. 393	Following received liaison 8th Aust. Infantry Brigade. Message received 14th Brigade 10.25 a.m. indications go to show attack may be expected from South and West of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Enemy tanks have been sighted. Ends. Many Officers as possible will reconnoitre ground over which our advance if any will be made.
39.	11.30 a.m.	GSO 1 5th Aust. Div.	Bde. Major	Verbal	Boche advancing through O.34.A. with Tanks.
40.	11.45 a.m.	Verbal from Lt.Col. SCANLAN	Bde. Major, rptd. 5th Aust.Div.	B.M. 394	Cpl. KINCAID, 59th Battalion has returned from one of our patrols and reports our line runs along North and South Grid line in O.28.. The patrol in charge of Lieut. CHRISTIAN, 59th was in touch with British on right but there was 400 yards between our patrol and troops on left. KINCAID saw tanks or armoured cars moving in O.34.B. All this occurred about 10.15 a.m.
41.	11.52 a.m.	57th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	B 6.	General situation unchanged enemy hold VILLERS-BRETONNEUX 56th Battalion H.Q. Quarry O.17.C.3-7. This Battalion is

APPENDIX 19101

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
42.					astride FOUILLOY- VILLERS ROAD. The enemy is held and counter attack to clear him out of VILLERS is being prepared. 14th Infantry Brigade Line remains intact. Report from 13th Light Horse.
42.	12.20 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lieut.Col.LAYH 57th Battalion.	B.M.396	Enemy Tanks are reported in O.32.A. but this is unconfirmed. These are probably our tanks moving up. Get Light Horse to investigate.
43.	12.24 p.m.	G.O.C. 24th Inf.Bde.	G.O.C. 15th A.I. Brigade.		Our front line runs just West of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX then due East along North of Village to old line. Think 22nd D.L.I. are on your right. 1/5 Forresters are going to counter attack along whole front of village. Objective Eastern side.
44.	12.30 p.m.	Lieut.Col.LAYH	Brigade Major	Verbal	Acting on message from B.G.C. I have ordered the Horse Artillery attached to me to take up a position and to assist the counter attack on the right as much as possible.
45.	12.45 p.m.	5th Aust.Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 932	Your B.M. 383. G.O.C. directs that sentence in your message beginning all British troops and ending with the word shot is to be cancelled forthwith.
46.	12.50 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust.Div., 57th,58th,59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB, 8th A.I. Bde. 14th A.I.Bde.	B.M. 398	See B.M. 383. Cancel para which begins "All British troops" and ends "shot". Addressed all recipients of B.M. 383.
47.	1 p.m.	5th Aust.Div.	15th A. I.Bde.	G. 929	8th Div. Report. CACHY SWITCH is held. Some troops right Brigade still holding out in O.35.B. and C. O.35.D., O.36.C.. Some Germans in VILLERS BRETONNEUX mixed up with our troops. Left Brigade on approx. line O.28.D.8-8 (unconfirmed) O.23.D.2-8 O.24.D.5-5. Point 104 (P.19.C.1-8).
48.	1 p.m.	5th Aust.Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G. 928	The 13th A.I.Brigade Group complete is placed under orders of 3rd Corps and will move forthwith to LAMOTTE-BREBIERE reporting to a representative of 3rd Corps on arrival.

APPENDIX 1902

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
49	1.52 p.m.	5th Aust.Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 933	Reference G 928. Order 13th A.I. Brigade group to BLANGY TRONVILLE instead of LA MOTTE. 8th Division will send representative to meet them there.
50	1.52 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 927	Reference G 926 and in confirmation of verbal instructions. Objective of counter attack will now be eastern outskirts of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX from 0.36 Central. 0.32.D.2-2.
51.	1.56 p.m.	5th Aust.Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G.926	8th Div. report. Enemy has penetrated the Western Outskirts of Villers Bretonneux. 23rd Infantry Brigade will counter attack at once with Reserve Battalion against Western outskirts of VILLERS BRETONNEUX objective road running N. and S. through town from 0.35.A.8-2 to 0.29.C.5-9. 2/Devon Regiment will gain touch with right of 25th Infantry Brigade which has been thrown back to about 0.22.D.8-0. 2 Tanks are moving to 0.27.A. and will attack from there in an easterly direction objective road junction 0.29.A.5-3. Reserve Battalion of 24th Infantry Brigade (Less 1/Sherwoods) mis placed at disposal of 23rd Inf. Brigade for protection of right flank about CACHY and CACHY SWITCH. 24th Inf. Brigade less (1/Sherwoods) and 22nd D.L.I. will hold reserve line under G.O.C. 24th Infantry Brigade.
52.	1.5 p.m.	Verbal from G.S.O. 1 5th Div. to B.M.	Repeated all Units	B.M.400	Our line now runs U.5.B. and C. - 0.35.D. to Railway Station 0.36.C.. Our troops mixed with enemy in VILLERS line uncertain. Thence 0.28.D.8-8 (unconfirmed) 0.23.D.2-8 - 0.24.D.5-5. then to point 104. 14th Brigade front intact except right platoon which swings back to conform to British. 56th Battalion in Reserve hold from point 104 along the ridge through 24 Central down to cross roads in 24.A.
53	1.30 p.m.	59th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	R4/5	Lieut. CHRISTIAN reports his position now runs N. and S. through 0.28.B. and 0.28.D.. He has collected about 200 East Lancs. men and has them in line with him. Reports enemy to be about 100 yards directly in front of him holding Railway embankment also the right flank is back half way through Wood squares 0.33.B. and D.. Enemy were in full marching order.

APPENDIX

19163

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					Enemy tanks located approx. at 0.34.A.7-8.
54.	1.30 p.m.	LAYH 57th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	C.O 5	Pte RAND, 59th Battalion sent back from forward reports that Lieuts. CHRISTIAN and CALLENDER with patrol of 59th Battalion are with East Lancs. in 0.28.D.. They hold Railway bank with enemy in cutting immediately in front. Enemy tank is on Railway Line ahead. Enemy are in Wood on South of Road. Pte. RAND left about midday with message. Light Horse Patrol mentioned in B.M. 396 report they could find no information of tanks. They have gone out again.
55.	1.45 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.B de.	W. 1	Our approximate line not certain whether we hold CACHY then through U.4.Central. 0.35 Central then due North on Grid line 0.35. 29. then due East along bottom of Grid line 0.23.D. and 0.24.C. and D. thence to 54th Battalion through P.19.Central. Enemy massing in front of 54th Battalion sector.
56	2.25 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 3.	My Light Horse Patrol reports that English troops on Right of 14th Brigade very low as regards morale and Officers windy fell back from last position without firing a shot.
57.	2.53 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 6.	B.M. 24th Infantry Brigade (English) reports that 1/5th Bn. FORESTERS will counter attack VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Line of attack asked for but not supplied. Message proceeds if attack is impossible owing to position of enemy the FORESTERS will take up a position along edge of wood and prevent any move of the enemy out of the Village. What edge of wood not stated read it as Eastern edge.
58.	2.45 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde	W 5.	"A" Battery R.H. Artillery are dealing with enemy and tank in 0.28.D.
59.	-	15th A.I.Bde.	60th Bn.	B.M. 408	Please direct Major Cameron to report to C.O. 14th Aust. Inf. Brigade at once for duty.
60.	2.50 a.m.	G.O.C. 5th Aust.Div.	B.G.C. 15th 15th A.I.Bde.	Verbal	8th Division will attack astride the Railway advancing from West to East. We are to co-operate by a flanking attack from

APPENDIX 19104

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					the direction of about O.24.Central to O.25.Central.
61.	3.35 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 10.	Cpl. ROYAL BERKS 24th Brigade with party of 25 stragglers states they were told to fall back to next ridge from centre of village of VILLERS BRETONNEUX by their Major. His party had not suffered any casualties but shells had fallen close to them. Party sent back to H.Q. of 56th Battalion at O.17.C.3-7 for return to the line.
62.		15th A.I.Bde.	Report Centre	B.M.410	5th Aust. Div. come under 3rd Corps for purpose of counter attack operation. Signals will lay line to 15th Inf. Bde. Adv. H.Q. at O.8.C.8-8 the HAYSHED forthwith. Addressed 15th Inf. Bde. repeated Div. Sig. Coy. and all other Units 3rd Corps, 8th Div. 3rd Aust. Div. Aust. Corps.
63.	4 p.m.	5th Aust. M.G. Battalion	15th A.I.Bde.	-	Will support counter attack with 8 mobile guns four to each attacking Battalion. Guns to support right Battalion will be at O.17.D.5-3. Section Officers instructed to report to Battalion Commanders concerned. Attack will be covered by overhead fire from O.13.C. and D. Addressed 15th Infantry Brigade 5th Aust. Division.
64.	3.55 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	C.O. 5th Aust. M.G. Battalion	B.M.409	G.O.C. approves of your M.G. arrangements.
65	4.6 p.m.	59th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	I.O. 27	Lieut. CHRISTIAN in charge 59th Battalion patrol reports 3.15 p.m. holding line O.28.A.8-7 to O.28.C.7-9 with Lt.Col. of BASE BASE LINKS on left. Enemy west of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and in BOIS L'ABBE in O.33. and O.34. firing contact flares in this wood. Enemy tank located under bridge O.28.D.3-4. Tank Corps who have arrived here have been informed.
66	4.15 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lt.Col. LAYH 57th Bn., 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALPMB. 5th Aust.Div. 8th A. I.	S.G.16/12	The operations mentioned in B.M. 368 and 369 will be carried out in conjunction with 8th Division at time to be notified later. Following alterations to be noted: Attack to be made by 60th Battalion on left, 59th Battalion on Right with 57th Battalion in immediate reserve.

scw

APPENDIX 197

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
		Bde. 14th A.I.Bde. 23rd, 24th 25th Inf. Bdes. 5th M.G.Bn. 13th L.H. "A" Batt. R.H.A. Report Centre.			<p>The attack will be made in two bounds 1st Objective being the road running from road junction O.18.C.6-3 exclusive or sufficiently close thereto to be in close touch with 14th Brigade front line, which is stated to be about O.19.A. Cent. A reconnaissance will be made to ascertain definitely where this flank will rest.</p> <p>The right of the 60th Battalion will extend to road junction in O.24.A.5-2 inclusive. 59th Battalion will extend from last mentioned road junction to Northern edge of VILLERS-Bretonneux The inter Battalion boundary is subject to adjustment by Battalion Commanders concerned.</p> <p>When 1st objective is secured the left of 60th Battalion will swing forward until a point is reached about P.13.C.3-0 so as to bring the front parallel to road running from P.20.A. 3-6 to P.25.C.0-3, which will be the 2nd objective.</p> <p>Inter Battalion boundary is provisionally fixed at road junction in P.25.B.2-8 which is inclusive to 60th Battalion. This second movement will pivot on right of the 60th Battalion which will swing round so as to flank VILLERS BRETONNEUX. The object of the movement is to threaten the enemy's communications on the WARFUSEE-ABANCOURT Road and rejoin our front line.</p> <p>It may not be necessary to proceed entirely to the 2nd objective as our old front line is not so far forward, that is if the real objective, the recapture of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX can be obtained and our old front line restored without going so far.</p> <p>The 8th Division is attacking astride the Railway and will clear the village. The 57th Battalion will be in immediate reserve and will be ready to carry out similar duty in the event of the 8th Division not getting forward.</p> <p>Trench Mortar Battery will cooperate as in previous order. Four Mobile Guns have been allotted to each 59th and 60th Battalions. Position of Guns: Left Battalion O.18.C.. Right Battalion O.17.D. Section Commanders will report to Battalion Commanders concerned.</p> <p>Liaison Officer is reporting to Brigade Advanced Report Centre</p>

Machine

APPENDIX 19

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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					where Battalions concerned will get touch with him and issue instructions as to task of guns. Arrangements will be made for Mobile Horse Artillery Battery to cooperate closely. Advanced Brigade Headquarters will move to 57th Battalion Headquarters immediately operations are ordered. 59th and 60th Battalions will move to at once to positions of assembly, preparatory to attack on 1st objective, on receipt of this order. Medical arrangements will be notified later. ACKNOWLEDGE.
67.	4.45 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	Verbal	13th Brigade Headquarters coming to share BLANGY TRONVILLE CHATEAU with you.
68.	5.5 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde	5th Aust. Div.	Verbal	B.G.C. asked Div for some Engineers and 4 more Machine Guns Per Battalions (2 extra).
69.	5.30 p.m.	5th Aust. M.G. Battalion.	15th A.I.Bde.	M.G. 204	Machine Gun Officer will report at Advanced Headquarters with runner for G.O.C's instructions.
70.	5.10 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M. 601	Report from light horse patrol as follows. Situation as far as we know. 54th Report that the troops which were massing on their front are moving towards our right (towards P.25.). Morale of troops on our right does not appear to be good I have collected a number of Lewis Gunners and some Vickers and am using them scattered amongst my posts. Lack of morale seems due to the fact that there are no Officers with these men. Our original Brigade front remains unchanged. Line falls back from P.19.B.8 to O.29.A.7-3 (Approx). S to 35 Central from there obscure.
71.	5.20 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lieut.Col. LAYH, 57th Bn. 57, 58, 59, 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB, 5th	B.M. 410	Amendment No. 1 to Order No. S.G.16/12 of today's date. Attack will now be made in accordance with my original scheme B.M. 368 and 369. The 57th Battalion thus making an attack simultaneously by an enveloping movement along Railway South of VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Its final objective will be our original front

APPENDIX 19
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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
			Aust. Div. 8th A.I. Bde. 13th A.I. Bde. 14th A.I. Bde. 23rd, 24th, 25th Inf. Bdes. 5th M.G. Bn. 13th L.H.		line East of the Village junctioning with the 59th Battalion about its centre the road junction in P.25.C.O-3 its right right connecting with 13th Australian Infantry Brigade about the point of the Spur in O.36.B. 500 yards from left point. The 8th Division will make the attack with the 13th Australian Infantry Brigade attached to it who will move South of BOIS L'ABEE and BOIS L'AQUENNE on the monument. Troops will cross the line of the FOUILLOY -CACHY Road at 8 p.m. tonight 24th/25th. Attack will be carried out as a night operation and white arm bands will be worn. All rules for night operations will be enforced until dawn. Careful reconnaissance to be made as far forward as possible by all Officers and Compass Bearings to be taken to guide column. ACKNOWLEDGE. Addressed Lieut. Col. LAYH 57th Bn. 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B. repeated 5th Aust. Division, 8th, 13th, 14th A.I. Brigades, 23rd, 24th 25th Inf. Brigades, 5th M.G. Battalion, 13th Light Horse, Brigade Report Centre.
72.	6.15 p.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB, 5th Aust. Div. 8th, 13th, 14th, A.I. Bdes. 23rd, 24th, 25th Inf. Bdes. 5th M.G. Bn. 13th L.H.	B. M. 412	Re B.M. 410. Troops will cross the line on the FOUILLOY CACHY road at 10 p.m. and NOT 8 p.m. as therein stated. C.O's should endeavour to give men hot drink shortly before moving and make use of additional time for reconnaissance.
73.	6.50 p.m.	15th A.I. Bde.	59th, 60th Bns.		One guide per platoon from 14th Brigade will meet Officers from 59th and 60th Battalions at O.L.O.D. 5-8 at 8.30 p.m. tonight. Arrange meet and distribute as required.
74.	6.15 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I. Bde.	G 869	VILLERS BRETONNEUX will be captured by a converging attack on the North and South sides and joining in the old British front line system at P.31.B.6-0. The 15th Australian Infantry Brigade less one company will attack from the North. The 13th Australian Infantry Brigade will attack from the South. Jumping off line both Brigades will be the General Line of the road from CACHY to FOUILLOY. 15th Australian Infantry Brigade will attack in a

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
74.	6.15 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 869	S.E. Direction so that when the objective is reached their right flank will join up with the 13th A.I. Brigade at the point previously mentioned namely P.31.B.6-0. The line of the advance will be the old British Front line system. "A" Battery R.H.A. and 8 Vickers Machine Guns are allotted for the attack. Zero hour will be 10 p.m. Signals will synchronise watches with 15th A.I. Brigade, 3rd Corps, 8th Div. 13th A.I. Brigade and Artillery. There will be no Artillery barrage. Addressed 15th A.I. Brigade repeated 3rd Corps, 8th Div., 4th Aust. Div., Div. Arty., 13th A.I.Bde., and all Div. Units.
75.	7.40 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde. rptd. All Units	G 207	From dusk onwards until midnight artillery will fire bursts of fire 600 yards East of old line. Addressed 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. rptd. 3rd Corps, 8th Div. 3rd Aust. Div., 4th Aust. Div., 4th D.A., 13th A.I.Bde., and all interdivisional Units.
76.	7.45 p.m.	Right Liaison	15th A.I.Bde.	R.L.O 6.	Situation unchanged and quiet. I have just returned from the line through BOIS L'ABBE and that line appears quite firm. I have received your operation order also amendment No. 1.
77.	7.49 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 206	22nd D/L.I. (Pioneers) is placed under command of G.O.C? 15th Aust. Inf. Brigade to be used in conjunction with counter attack to mop up VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Addressed 15th Inf. Brigade repeated all recipients of Order plus 22nd D.L.I.
78.	8.50 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Report Centre, All Units, 22nd D.L.I. c/o 25th Bde. 5th Aust. Div. 8th Div. 14th A.I.Bde. 23, 24, 25th Inf. Bdes.	B.M. 415	Brigade Report Centre will advance from O.S.C.8-8 to Quarry in O.17.C. at Zero hour. Addressed Report Centre, 22nd D.L.I. and all Bde. Units. rptd. 5th Aust. Div. 8th Div. 14th A.I. Bde. 25th Inf. Bde. 24th Inf. Bde. 23rd Inf. Bde.

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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
79	8.55 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns.	B.M.416	Prisoners will be sent to advanced report centre.
80	9.5 p.m.	8th Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 0788	All troops taking part in the operation tonight vide 8th Div. Order No. 287 will be under the orders of G.O.C. 8th Div.. Addressed 13th and 15th A.I.Bdes. 54th Inf. Bde. 5th Aust. Div. 58th Div.
81	9.24 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 227	From receipt of this message 15th A.I.Brigrade and attached Units come under the command of G.O.C. 8th Div. whose H.Qrs. are at GLISSY (N.20.C.) addressed 15th A.I.Bde. rptd. Aust. Corps, 3rd Corps, 8th Div., 5th Div. Arty., and all inter divisional Units.
82.	9.30 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th 60th Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B.	B.M.417	Password BIMBO will be used tonight.
83.	10.10 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lieut.Col. WATSON c/o Report Centre	B.M. 418	Inform Mobile Horse Arty. Batty. that up to Zero plus one hour he will keep the cemetery and places in the Northern outskirts of the village which are likely to harbor M.G. under fire to prevent them stopping our advance. Wire location of Battery.
84.	10.15 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	22nd D.L.I. c/o 25th Inf. Bde., 5th Aust. Div. 8th Div. 14th A.I.Bde.	B.M. 419	Advanced report centre established at O.17.C.
85.	10.45 p.m.	Report Centre	Brigade Major	Verbal	59th and 60th Battalions are in position. No report from 57th Battalion.
86.	11.40 p.m.	G.S.O.3 5th	Brigade Major	Verbal	14th Brigade report 59th Battalion to have passed through O.24 A. Col. LAYH at our advanced Headquarters had stated 59th and 60th Battalions had passed him. No news of 57th Battalion.
87.		Report Centre	Brigade Major	Verbal	60th Battalion reported to be digging in behind 54th Battalion in P.19. 59th Battalion have gone forward but no details to hand.

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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
88.	11.45 p.m.	Brigade Major	14th A.I.Bde	Verbal	Rang 14th Brigade and stated it appeared 60th Battalion were not sure of their position. Asked that they be given every assistance and pushed forward.
89.	11.45 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	D.B. 83	Owing lost direction forward move did not develop till 11 p.m. All Battalions now report moving in close co-operation. Should be nearing first objective. In touch with All Battalion H.Qrs. Sent 15th Bde. reprd. 14th Bde. and 25th B de.
25.4.18. 90	1.45 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 21	BRACKET (60th Bn.) report 1st objective taken at 12.40 a.m.
91.	1.35 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust.Div.	B.M. 421	Verbal report from front states our troops past first objective at 12.45 a.m. Addressed 8th Div. rprd. 5th Aust. Div.
92.	2 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust.Div.	B.M. 423	Our left Battalion now officially report having passed first objective at 12.40 a.m.
93.	2.5 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 422	Following from forward report Centre. Prisoner taken in vicinity of BOIS L'ABBE 478 Regt. 243 Div. states his Battalion only came into line tonight. He thinks Germans intend renew attack tomorrow. 1st and 2nd Battalions attack North and South of VILLERS BRITONNEUX ABANCOURT Road. Two Battalions of each Regt. of Division also attack. On South of road Prussian Division attack. Sent 8th Div. and 5th Aust. Div.
94.	2.45 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 424	At 2.15 a.m. prisoner taken by our right Battalion in O.29.B. 48th I.R. 228th Division. This man one of a post of 20 men. Remainder found all killed.
95.	2.48 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 425	Three more prisoners captured AAA Wounded report our troops heavily engaged but killing enemy in large numbers. Addressed 8th Division repeated 5th Aust. Division.
96.	2.45 a.m.	8th Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 796	58th Division report objective gained but were counter attacked and since driven back about 200 yards where they are digging in They are in touch on left with 13th Aust. Inf. Brigade at

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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

g/g

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					MONUMENT. They have not touch on right with Battalion of 173rd Brigade. Machine Gun Fire from direction BOIS D'ARQUENNE is being directed on them. 58th Division are sending two tanks to BOIS D'HANGARD to reach them at dawn and close gap between 9th London Regt. and 54th Brigade.
97	3.15 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	G.O.C. 5th Aust. Div.	Verbal	B.G.C. asked G.O.C. Division if he could take his reserve Battalion to exploit success already gained. Permission granted.
98	3.20 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	58th Bn.	B.M. 426	Our attack is reported to have been very successful and practically all objectives achieved. Enemy reported in great strength but fighting poorly. Our men killing him in hundreds. You will move at once onto reserve line of our front system about 0.24. Central getting communication through to advanced report centre at Quarry at 0.17.C.. Report arrival. You will send patrols in advance to fully clear up situation for you on arrival. You will be prepared (1) to reinforce front line if heavily aounter attacked or (2) to further exploit success if conditions favorable by pushing along high ground towards WARFUSEE - ABANCOURT and turning woods in P.14., 21., and 22. It must be left to your discretion as to how far you consider it safe to advance as both flanks may be somewhat exposed and necessary to turn them back.
99	3.25 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde	Lieut.Col. WATSON	B.M.427	Am sending reserve battalion to reserve line of main system about 0.24. Central. Be prepared give C.O. full information about situation on arrival. Probably if situation is favorable he will be ordered to leap frog the front line and push forward our posts towards WARFUSEE ABANCOURT turning the woods in P.20., 21., and 22. Warn all Battalions to be prepared to counter attack.
100		G.S.O.1 5th Aust.Div.	Brigade Major	Verbal	14th Brigade report 60th Battalion 500 yards in front of their right posts. There is a slight gap between the 60th Bn. and 54th Bn. on our right. Parties of the enemy are wandering

APPENDIX

19 112

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
101					through and are being captured. No news of 57th Battalion.
101	3.30 a.m.	G.O.C., 5th Aust. Div.	Bde. Major	Verbal	Div. Commander asked was our H.A. Battery well supplied with ammunition also was it in a position where it could stay in daylight.
102	3.22 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M 428	Report Centre states. 2 prisoners 10th Coy. 48th I.R. 228th Div. outskirts VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Battalion was in support yesterday morning moving to line in evening? Had heavy casualties yesterday morning. sent 8th Div. reptd. 5th Aust. Div.
103	3.44 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	DB 86	30 prisoners to date and 1 light machine gun. Sent 15th A.I.Bde. repeated flank Brigades.
104	3.49 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	-	59th Battalion report timed 2 a.m.. We are established in old front line. Taken about 20 prisoners. our casualties very light estimated 20. Sent 15th A.I.Bde repeated flank Brigades.
105	3.50 a.m.	Report Centre	Brigade Major	Verbal	It appears that our advance was held up by M.G. fire from VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Boche was putting up a lot of flares but now dark and he appears to be quitting VILLERS BRETONNEUX.
106	4.10 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lt.COL. LAYH 57th Bn.	B.M.431	59th Battalion report timed 2 a.m. states we are established in old front line and taken about 20 prisoners. Message ends. G.O.C. thinks "old front line" must mean CAVALRY SWITCH running through P.19.D. and 25.A. because message is timed. Take necessary to secure your flank.
107.	4.16 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	D.B. 89	Right Company report timed 2.45 a.m.. Digging in along line 40 yards west of final objective road. Opposition easily overcome casualties extremely light. In touch with 59th on right and D Company on left. Ends. sent 15th Brigade repeated flank Brigades.
108	4.20 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	D. B. 90	59th Battalion report. Our line now runs cross roads O.30.D.9-0. along road to P.25.B.1-8. enemy casualties heavy our casualties moderate. We have two German Machine Guns in action. Am in

APPENDIX 19113

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

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Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
109	4.35 a.m.	15t			touch with 57th Battalion and 60th Battalion. Ends. sent 15th Brigade repeated flank Brigades.
109	4.35 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	8th Div. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 432	Left and centre Battalions in position on old front line. Total prisoners 60 also 3 M.G. addressed 8th Div. rptd. 5th Aust. Div.
110	5.10 a.m.	58th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	M 20	All companies on the move. Battalion Headquarters closing and moving to O.17.C.3-7. Engineer Officer and party accompanying.
111	5 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Rept. Cent. 57th Bns. 15th ALTMB Mob. H.A.Bty. 22nd D.L.I.	B.M. 434	13th Australian Infantry Brigade have been driven back to U.5.D.5-5 thence North to U.5.B.5-9 thence O.24.B.9-1. Strenuous fighting in this sector. 57th Battalion take steps to protect flanks and gain touch at first opportunity. Addressed 57th Bn. reptd. Report Centre, all Bns. A.L.T.M.B., H.A.Bty. 22nd D.L.I.
112	5.37 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	58th Bn. c/o Report Centre	B.M.435	You will at once place one company at disposal of 57th Bn. to be used as latter may direct for clearing up the East and South of VILLERS BRETONNEUX which is reported to be held and is preventing our 57th Battalion from joining with 13th Brigade.
113.	5.37 a.m.	8th Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G.S. 799	In confirmation of telephone conversation at 4.15 a.m.. 25th Infantry Brigade will employ 2nd R.BERKS Regt. as early as possible to attack and mop up the Northern portion of VILLERS BRETONNEUX as far south as the LONGUEAU-WARFUSEE Road inclusive. 2/R.BERKS will come under orders of 15th Australian Infantry Brigade as soon as attack is launched. Addressed 25th Infantry Brigade and 15th Australian Infantry Brigade.
114	6 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lieut. Col. WATSON C/o Report Centre	B.M.436	As soon as 58th Battalion arrive in forward area and have had something to eat hand B.M.435 to C.O. 58th Bn. for action.
115	5.57 a.m.	Report Cent.	15th A.I.Bde.	D.B. 92	Prisoners to date 66. Many light Machine Guns.

APPENDIX 1914

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
116	6.20 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 5th Aust.Div. 13th A.I.Bde.	B.M. 438	Following from 8th Division begins. 25th Infantry Brigade will employ 2nd Royal BERKS as early as possible to attack and mop up the Northern portion of VILLERS BRETONNEUX as far South as the LONGUGAU-WARFUSEE Road inclusive. 2/R. BERKS will come under orders of 15th Aust. Inf. Brigade as soon as attack is launched. Message ends. 58th Battalion will place one company and one section Stokes Mortars at disposal of C.O. 57th Battalion for co-operation. Addsd. 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB, repeated 5th Aust.Div. 13th A.I.Bde. 14th A.I.Bde. 25th Inf. Bde. Report Centre.
117	6.40 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lt.Col. WATSON, Report Centre	B.M. 439	One section of stokes mortars at present with 58th Battalion will be placed at disposal of C.O. 57th Battalion for mopping up VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Get in touch with 2/R BERKS and after they have satisfactorily cleaned up the village they are to be placed in the Reserve Line of the old front system distributed in depth. Make use of Light Horse to fully clear up situation to South of VILLERS BRETONNEUX particularly if necessary let them proceed down Western edge of BOIS L'ABBE until they get in touch with the 13th Brigade. Battalion Headquarters of 13th Brigade are all situated in U.3.Central. addsd. Col. WATSON Rptd. 58th Bn.
118.	5.45 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde. Rptd. 8th Div. 5th Aust. Div. 25th Inf. Bde. 13th A.I.Bde.	D.B. 92	59th Battalion latest report begins. A large number of the enemy is still in VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Am still advancing East of Villers Bretonneux - Hamel Road in direction of old British front line. Ends. 57th Battalion confirm this. They are in close touch with 59th Battalion on left and are patrolling to obtain touch with 51st Battalion on right. 57th Battalion expect no difficulty in clearing up VILLERS BRETONNEUX in the morning. 25th Brigade have received instructions to clear VILLERS BRETONNEUX North of main ABANCOURT Road. sent 15th Bde. rptd. Flank Bdes.
119.	6.48 a.m.	8th Div.	15th A.I.Bde.		23rd and 25th Inf. Brigades will dig in on general line 0.34.D.2-0., 0.34.C.8-7., 0.28.C.8-6., 0.28.B.8-8..

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					23rd Infantry Brigade will be responsible for Right Sector as far North as main LONGUEAU - VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Road exclusive. 25th Infantry Brigade from above road inclusive Northwards. Addressed 23rd, 25th Inf. Bdes. repeated 24th Inf. Bde. 13th A.I.Bde. 15th A.I.Bde.
120	6.20 a.m.	58th Battalion	15th A.I.Bde.	W 24	Battalion Headquarters established at 0.17.C.3-7.
121	7.21 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 25	Your B.M. 435 handed to C.O. 58th Battalion.
122	8.30 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Lt.Col. WATSON, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALTMB.	B.M.444	Four tanks now at AUBIGNY are being placed under my orders to attack VILLERS BRETONNEUX from the North and assist Col. LAYH. The 58th Battalion is now placed at his disposal for purpose of attack on village. No more troops however should be employed than absolutely essential. Get into touch with tanks and issue instructions for their employment in conjunction with Col. LAYH. Understand 2/BERKS now attacking village with other tanks and are sending back prisoners. Their Headquarters near yours. 13th Bde. report enemy in Arty. Formation near BOIS D'HANGARD advancing against VILLERS BRETONNEUX addressed Col.WATSON (Report Centre) reptd. 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns and 15th A.L.T.M.B.
123	8.30 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I Bde.	W 27.	VILLERS BRETONNEUX being mopped up. An additional 150 prisoners have already been sent back to cage. Light Horse are already out making reconnaissance set out in your message.
124	8.30 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 29	57th Battalions line approx. runs through 0.30.D.8-5, 0.36.D.8-9. 0.30.C.9-2.
125	8.50 a.m.	Col. WATSON Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	B.M.445	Please request C.O. 2/BERKS when he has completely mopped up Northern part of VILLERS BRETONNEUX to clean up the Southern half from the North which commands it. Congratulate him for me on his success to date.

APPENDIX 1916

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
126	9.15 a.m.	G.S.O.1 8th Div.	B.G.C, 15th A.I.Bde.	Verbal	Instruct 2/BERKS to push on in a S.E. direction with their right on the Railway to fill up the gap between 57th Battalion and the right Brigade. On being told of the success of the counter attack the G.I said he would leave the situation in the hands of the B.G.C.
127	9.40 a.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 347	15th Aust. Inf. Brigade reverts to command of 5th Aust.Division on receipt of these instructions. Addressed 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. repeated 8th Division, 5th Div. Arty. 14th Aust.Inf. Bde.
128	10.4 a.m.	8th Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	GO 814	From receipt of this message 15th Aust.Inf.Brigade will revert to command of 5th Aust. Division and 54th Inf. Brigade to command of 58th Division. Addressed 54th Inf. Bde. 13th Aust. Inf. Bde. 15th Aust. Inf. Bde.
129	9.46 a.m.	8th Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	GA 811	The 4 Tanks under Major HUNICAN have been placed at disposal of G.O.C. 8th Div. for an attack on VILLERS BRETONNEUX from North. These tanks will move at once via O.15. O.22. and will enter VILLERS BRETONNEUX on North Side and will mop up the village. These tanks will operate under orders of G.O.C. 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. H.Qrs. O.17.B.2-2. General line around VILLERS BRETONNEUX at present as follows P.19.B. and D., P.25.B. and C. O.36.B. then to U.5.B.4-8. Line runs thence U.5.D.4-2. U.11.Central U.16.D.. 23rd Infantry Brigade is on general line O.34.Central C.34.A.9-9. 25th Inf. Brigade on general line O.28.Central. O.24. Central. 2nd Royal BERKS of 25th Inf. Bde. now attacking VILLERS BRETONNEUX from North and have entered North outskirts of village. Major HUNICAN will report to 15th Australian Infantry Brigade Headquarters for more detailed instructions.
130	10.40	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 31	B.M. 445 complied with. 7 Officers and approx. 400 prisoners mopped up by 15th Australian Infantry Brigade and 2/BERKS now on road to cage.
131	10.45 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	B.M.446	13th Brigade report timed 10.15 a.m. reads left flank is being moved forward to junction with 15th Brigade right in 0.36..

APPENDIX

1917

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					Inform all concerned.
132	1.26 p.m.	8th Division	15th A.I.Bde.	G.I. 823	Ref. my GA 811 in the event of the tanks not being required for mopping up VILLERS BRETONNEUX the rallying point is N.34.Central.
133.	2.2 p.m.	Left Liaison	15th Bde. rptd. Artillery.	M.K.12.	Right Battalion 14th Brigade reports enemy advancing large numbers P.26.A. and C. P.25.D.
134	2.20 p.m.	15th A.I.B de.	8th Div.	B.M. 450	Approximate number of prisoners captured 7 Officers 320 Other Ranks.
135	2.40 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	D.B. 93	At 2 p.m. about 3 Companies enemy advanced through P.19. and 20 and along WARFUSEE ABANCOURT Road. Artillery fire dispersed parties and they sought cover. Now reported returning to their own lines.
136.	2.30 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 391	Right Battalion Centre Brigade report 2 p.m. enemy advancing in large numbers in P.26.A. and C. and P.25.D.. Addressed 3rd Corps. reptd Aust. Corps, 3 Brigades Div Arty. M.G.Bn. flank Divisions.
137	8.50 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 28	B Company 57th Battalion have taken 4 monenwerfer guns in mopping up VILLERS BRETONNEUX.
138	3.5 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 452	Approx. frontages held by Units of this Brigade. Right to left 57th Bn. from O.36.D.1-2 - O.36.B.5-9. - O.30.D.9-3. - 59th Battalion O.30.D.9-3 to P.25.B.2-6. 60th Battalion P.25.B.2-6 to P.20.A.4-5. 58th Battalion in reserveline of front system O.24.Central. Right Brigade flank not yet connected with 13th Infantry Brigade. Difficult to do this in daylight owing to enemy M.G. activity. 13th Infantry Brigade flank will come up tonight and connection established.
138	3.4 a.m.	left Liaison	15th A.I.Bde.	M.K. 13	Right Battalion reports Hun retiring from attack on BOOKS front. Artillery here using shrapnel on line P.20.Central to P.26.Central.

APPENDIX

1918

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
139	3.34 p.m.	8th Division	15th A.I.Bde.	GA 829	In confirmation of telephonic instructions to 25th Inf. Brigade 22nd D.L.I. and 2nd R. BERKS will co-operate in every way possible with the four tanks which are moving from the North into VILLERS BRETONNEUX to mop up the Southern portion of the village Addressed 25th Inf. Brigade reptd. 15th Aust. Inf. Bde.
140	3.36 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 406	Ref. my G 391. Attack broke down under our artillery and M.G. fire. Front line report 2.40 p.m. enemy seen to scatter and take cover. Guns making excellent shooting and inflicting casualties in P.25. Addressed 3rd Corps reptd. all recipients G.391.
141	4.27 p.m.	13th Aust. Inf. Bde.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 9.	Latest reports show enemy is still in southeast corner of VILLERS BRETONNEUX near Railway Bridge in O.36.C. but rest of village clear 3 Tanks are now on their way to mop up Railway bridge and go on to monument and MONUMENT wood. Afterwards while two of the tanks clear up MONUMENT wood one will go West towards our line and cover advance of 50th Battalion to join up with 15th Inf. Bde. addressed 50th, 51st, 52nd Battalions reptd. 49th, Bn. 13th M.G. Coy. 13th A.L.T.M.B. 15th Aust Inf. Bde.
142	6.4 p.m.	8th Division	15th A.I.Bde.	G 100	1 Tank accompanied by one company Pioneers will move at once and mop up S.E. corner of VILLERS BRETONNEUX about Railway Bridge O.36.C.4-4. When the place is clear party with one tank will move on Monument wood U.6.A.. 13th Aust. Brigade are co-operating with attack on Monument Wood. Staff Officer is proceeding now to H.Q. 22nd D.L.I. to order the move. Addressed Tank. 22nd D.L.I. 25th Brigade. Rptd. 13th, 15th Aust. Inf. Bdes.
143	6.56 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 428	Ref. G 412. No further development. Boche appears to have taken cover BOIS de VAIRE and HAMEL.
144	10.30 p.m.	13th A.I.B de.	15th A.I.Bde.	B 428	2 companies 49th Battalion will fill in line between Railway line at O.36.D.1-2 and right flank of 57th Battalion at O.36.D.5-8. 50th Battalion will link up with 49th Battalion at O.36.D.1-2. Head of 49th Battalion Companies to be at Cross roads O.27.D.3-4 at 11 p.m. where they will be met by guides from 57th Battalion. 49th Battalion Headquarters to remain with 50th Battalion H.Q.

APPENDIX 1919

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
145	12.40 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	LtCol. WATSON Report Centre 57, 58, 59, 60th Bns.	B.M.461	Instruct O.C. "A" Battery R.H.A. attached this Brigade that he is to deal with enemy tanks in addition to present tasks. Actual methods and positions for dealing with tanks to be left to discretion of Battery Commander. It has been definitely established that success of enemy attacks in VILLERS BRETONNEUX attack was largely due to Tanks. Addressed Lt.Col. WATSON for transmission to OC. "A" Battery R.H.A. reptd. 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. Lieut.Col. WATSON to report completion.
146	12.43 p.m.	5th Aust.Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 488	An attack is being carried out tomorrow 26th inst. on front the MONUMENT U.6.A.5-5) to U.10.C.2-0 to reestablish the line from the Southern edge of BOIS DE HANGARD (U.22.B.1-8) to the MONUMENT inclusive. Moroccan Division will have for their objective line from U.17.A.1-5 to MONUMENT inclusive. 8th Div. will conform and bring up their right flank so as to establish the line from the MONUMENT (exclusive) to the road about O.36.Central. Attack will be carried out under a creeping barrage advancing at rate of 100 yards in four minutes. There will be no preliminary bombardment. There will be no Infantry advance by 5th Aust. Div. 5th Aust. Div. Artillery will make a demonstration in form of a creeping barrage. Zero hour 5.15 a.m. Acknowledge. Addressed 8th, 14th, 15th Inf. Bdes. Div. Arty. M.G. Bn. Pioneer Bn. reptd. 3rd Aust. Div., 8th Div., Aust. Corps. 4th Aust. Div.
147	1.40 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 15th ALFMB, Report Centre, Mobile H.A.Batt. 22nd D.L.I. 13th L.H.	B.M.463	The French are attacking this morning 26th inst. from HANGARD Wood to the MONUMENT (U.6.A.5-5) Moroccan Division will have for their objective line from U.17.A.1-5 to MONUMENT inclusive. The 8th ZOUAVES Regt. will be on the left. Zero hour 5.15 a.m. 50th Battalion, 13th Brigade A.I.F. will conform to attack joining with French on right. 2 Companies 49th Battalion join with 57th Battalion on left about O.36.Central. Attack will be carried out under a creeping barrage advancing at rate of 160 yards in four minutes. No preliminary bombardment. There will be no Infantry action by 5th Aust.Div. 5th Div. Arty. are making a demonstration in form of a creeping barrage. All troops must be drawn clear of line O.36.C.8-3. D.9-9., P.31A.4

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APPENDIX 19 1906

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

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Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					25.D.4-6. 20.C.5-5. and B.5-5 before 4 a.m.. ACKNOWLEDGE. Addsd. Report Centre, All Bns. 15th A.L.T.M.B. "A" Bty. H.A. 13th L.H.
148	2.11 a.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde. pptd Lt.Col. Watson.	G 501	Troop of Light Horse reverts to Divisional Command from receipt of these instructions. Addressed 15th Inf. Bde. repeated Lt.Reid.
149	10.25 a.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 530	Reports received indicate objective gained on front of 8th Div. front. U.6.A.8-5 to O.36.D.3-9. Touch is being maintained with French on right and 15th Aust. Inf. Bde on left.
150	12.40 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 538	15th Aust. Inf. Bde. in co-operation with 13th Aust. Inf. Bde. will carry out reconnaissance to ascertain possibility of occupying old British front line, during daylight today. If it is not considered advisable to advance to it during daylight the advance will be made during darkness tonight. Details will be arranged by Brigadiers 13th and 15th Aust. Inf. Bdes direct. Boundary between 13th and 15th Aust. Inf. Bdes. will be road running through O.36.B. P.31.C. and D. This road will be inclusive to, 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. The right flank of 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. after the advance will rest where old British line crosses the road in vicinity P.31.D.3-6. ACKNOWLEDGE. Addressed 15th A.I.Bde. rptd. 5th Aust. Div. Arty. 8th Div. Aust. Corps. 3rd Aust. Div. 4th Aust. Div. 14th A.I.Bde.
151	4 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th Inf. Bde.	G 571	Reference my G 538 . Action of 13th Aust. Inf. Bde has now been cancelled. Action of 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. is postponed. Definite instructions will be issued later. Addressed 15th Inf. Bde. rptd. all recipients G 538.
152	4.25 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Report Centre, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns.	B.M.470	Re C.O's conference. Action of 13th Aust. Inf. Bde. is cancelled. Action of 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. is postponed. Definite instructions will be issued later. addsd. Report Centre, all Bns. ACKNOWLEDGE.
153	4.30 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Report Centre, all Bns.	B.M. 471	8th Div report that officers patrol returned from VILLERS-BRETONNEUX report all quiet in the town and no signs of hostile attack. Officer went as far as bridge over Railway O.36.B.4-3. Addsd all Bde. Units

APPENDIX 19
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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No	Text of message or telephone conversation.
154	4.31 p.m.	59th Battalion	15th A.I.Bde.	R4/34	One enemy plane has been shot down in O.31. Central by Lewis Gun fire of one of our posts.
155	4.45 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 54	Reference R4/34 map location should read P.25.D. Machine is a 3 seated biplane, and fell in enemy lines.
156	5.10 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde	Col. LAYH, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. 13.14th Aust. Bdes. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M. 474	Reference B.M. 470. If fresh instructions not issued in time for attack tonight would like you, but at your entire discretion to reorganise the line so that it will be held by 60th on left and 59th on right. Suggest boundary about P.25 Central. Also if any of present posts are apparently marked down by enemy or position can be improved instruct Battalion concerned to leapfrog forward with this object. 57th Battalion to be withdraw into suitable position in Reserve. If no other instructions received by 8 p.m. this message will be taken into effect. ACKNOWLEDGE. Sent Col. LAYH. repeated 58.59, 60th Bns. 13th, 14th Aust. Inf. Bdes.
157	6.27 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	57th, 58th, 59th, 60th Bns. Col WATSON.	B.M. 478	You will move your respective Battalions Headquarters to another position tonight. In case of 57th Battalion Col. LAYH will remain at present Brigade Report Centre to represent B.G.C. Major AITCHISON will establish 57th Battalion Headquarters. Col. WATSON will remain with Col. LAYH until change of Command.
158	7.23 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde	G 595	Reference my G570 AAA Line at present held to be consolidated tonight. G 538 is cancelled. Div. Commander approves Brigade frontage to be held with two Battalions line and two Battalions in Brigade Reserve in O.24.. Addressed 15th Inf Inf. Bde. rptd. all recipients G 570.
159	7.56 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 606	Following from 3rd Corps begins. Prisoner 9th Coy. 78th I.R. 19th Division captured about U.6. or U.11. 26th inst states relieved 419th I.R. early this morning.
160	10.20	C.R.E. 5th Aust Div	15th A.I.Bde.	N 664	Lieut. BEAT and party will be detached from 15th Aust. Inf. Bde.

APPENDIX 19

122

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					and will carry out Company duties. 8th Field Company will work with this Brigade. Addressed 14th Field Company repeated 15th Aust. Inf. Bde.
161	2.50 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	B 5.	Relief reported complete at 2.40 a.m.
162	4.5 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	B 8	Report from 59th Battalion received 3.45 a.m. relief complete. Bn. Headquarters situated in cellar in Chateau at O.30.C.3-4. Line with Brigade Headquarters has been cut for last half hour. Linesmen have gone along from this end.
163	4.56 a.m.	60th Bn.	15th A.I.Bde.	W 69	60th Battalion has pushed forward along whole front to P.19.D.8-9 along HAMEL - VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road to P.25.A.7-3. Exact line not definitely known but have gained road. Am in touch with Units on both flanks. Very heavy machine Gun fire encountered. casualties heavy.
164	6.25 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 71	C.O. 60th Battalion reports operations complete success and new position being consolidated. At least 6 heavy enemy Machine Guns captured also some light M.organs and a few Lewis Guns. Our casualties estimated at between 50 and 60.
165	7.5 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 25	Message from 60th Battalion front line timed 6.25 a.m. commences. Enemy about 1,500 yards away advancing in open order towards us. He is in string force and is coming direct on our front. Ends. Further message from same source states that enemy is massing in P.27. Our Artillery is dealing with the situation.
166	9.14 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust Div.	B.M489	Following from advanced Headquarters. Message from 60th Battalion front line timed 6.25 a.m.. Enemy about 1,500 yards away advancing in open order towards us. He is in strong force and coming direct on our front. Ends. Further message same source states enemy massing in P.27. Artillery dealing with situation.
167.	6.37 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 63	C.O. 57th Battalion reports his line now running from approx. O.24.C.

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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
					2-2 - O.29.B.9-9. - O.29.B.Central. - to road O.29.B.3-4. Battalion Headquarters approximately O.17.Central.
168	6.30 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 72	C.O. 59th Battalion reports his line is from O.36.B.1-4 - O.30.D.8-3. - P.25.A.8-8. Advances to close range
169	7.45 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 76	From Col. LAYH. All necessary steps taken for launching a counter attack if necessary. Bosche does not appear to have yet advanced to close range.
170	8.12 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 77	Wounded man from 60th Battalion front line informed Major KURING that Bosche never got nearer our front line than 400 yards and that they could deal with him effectively.
171	8.20 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 78	From Major KURING. Enemy digging in about 400 yards in front of 60th Battalion. Our artillery causing many casualties as he is approximately digging in our S.O.S. line. He advanced in mass and slaughter was terrible.
172	8.45 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div. 13th A.I.Bde. 14th A.I.Bde. 20 D.A.	B.M.498	Reports from front line timed 8.15 a.m. state enemy now digging in 400 yards in front of our left Battalion. Our artillery causing many casualties as he is approximately digging in on our S.O.S. line. The enemy advanced in mass and slaughtered caused by our artillery was terrible. All arrangements well in hand for counter attack by us if necessary addressed 5th Aust. Division, 13th A.I.Bde. 14th A.I.Bde. 20th D.A.
173	9.35 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 79	Situation now quiet. Bosche right is at P.20.C.6-8 and he extends S.W. 700 yards in a line parallel to line we hold.
174	11.15 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust.Div. 20th D.A. 13th A.I.Bde. 14th A.I.Bde.	B.M. 496	Re B.M. 490. Lieut.Col. LAYH returned from forward posts reports our line running North cuts VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road at P.25.A.9-5 and then runs North from there to P.20.A.4-0 in touch with 14th A.I.Brigade right post.

APPENDIX

19/124

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation
175	11.45 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust.Div.	B.M. 500	Enemy shelling 60th Battalion front line and his planes dropping flares evidently directing his artillery. Our artillery is replying.
176	11.47 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 81	Enemy planes flying low and dropping flares over our front line in P.25. Can our air squadron deal with them.
177	12.15 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Report Centre	B.M.501	Re W.81. Fighting patrols have been despatched to counteract.
178	12.14 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 82	Our planes have driven off enemy planes from our front line.
179	1.50 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	Report Centre 59th Battalion	B.M.504	59th Battalion will send an Officer to Report Centre at 4 p.m. today 27th with full particulars of dispositions to meet C.O. 46th Bn. and arrange details of relief. Addressed 59th Bn. repto. Report Centre.
180	1.50 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust.Div.	B.M. 505	60th Battalion report enemy barrage falling on their front and Infantry assembling in rear. Artillery informed.
181	2.15 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust.Div.	B.M. 508	Re B.M. 505. Front line report enemy troops scattered in square 27 by our artillery. May searching fire be arranged.
182	2.10 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	D.B.105	At 1.50 p.m. shelling was heavy on 60th Battalion. Enemy wave reported advancing in P.27.. Our Artillery opened dispersing them to cover. Our heavies then caused them further trouble. Situation now normal.
183	2.30 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust.Div. 13th A.I.Bde. 14th A.I. Bde. 20th D.A.	B.M. 509	Further to B.M. 508. At 1.50 p.m. shelling was heavy on 60th Battalion front and enemy advance reported in P.27. Our artillery opened dispersing them to cover. Our heavies then caused them further trouble. Situation now normal. addressed 5th Aust. Div. 13th and 14th A.I.Bdes. and 20 D.A.

APPENDIX 19

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15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
184	3.40 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	59th Bn? 5th Aust.Div. Report Centre, All Bns. 13th A.I.Bde. 14th A.I.Bde.	B.M. 512	59th Battalion will be relieved by 46th Battalion tonight 27th/28th April in area South of the VILLERS BRETONNEUX - WARFUSEE ABANCOURT Road. This road will be inclusive to 15th Brigade. Details of relief will be arranged between Battalion Commanders concerned. On relief one company of 59th Battalion may at the discretion of the C.O. be quartered in previous position in the AUBIGNY ZONE. ACKNOWLEDGE. Addressed 5th Aust. Div., 59th Battalion, Report Centre, All Bde. Units. 13th A.I.Bde.
185	4 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	15th ALTMB, 12th ALTMB, Report Centre, 59th Bn.	B.M. 513	Two mortars of 15th ALTMB at O.36.B.O-2 will be relieved by 12th A.L.T.M.B. tonight 27th/28th. Mortar teams on relief will be disposed as C.O. 15th A.L.T.M.B. may direct. Mortars will be mutually exchanged and rear guns collected by 15th A.L.T.M.B. from 12th A.L.T.M.B. at N.13.B.. ACKNOWLEDGE. addressed 15th and 12th A.L.T.M.B. reptd. Report Centre 59th Battalion.
186	4.59 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	D.B.107	In P.21. and P.27. enemy are dribbling forward in twos and threes. Apparently strengthening their line. Our artillery is going to search valley in P.21. Enemy appears to be holding trench P.26.A. O-O to P.26.C.O-O. strongly. Our low flying planes have been doing very good work in P.26. and 27. Enemy firing occasional salvos 5.9"s otherwise quiet. Situation satisfactory.
187.	5.20 p.m.	15th A.I.B de.	5th Aust.Div. 14th A.I.Bde. 13th A.I. Bde. 20th D.A.	B.M.517	In P.21. and 27. enemy are dribbling forward in twos and threes apparently strengthening their line. Have arranged for Artillery to search valley in P.21. Enemy appears to be holding strongly the trench in P.26.A. O-O. to P.26.C.O Our low flying planes have been doing very good work in P.26. and 27. Occasional salvos of 5.9's on our Reserve Line otherwise quiet. Addressed 5th Aust. Div. rptd. 14th A.I.Bde. 13th A.I.B de. 20th D.A.

APPENDIX 1912b

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

GENERAL STAFF OPERATION DIARY.

Serial No.	Time	From	To	Senders No.	Text of message or telephone conversation.
188	7.25 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div.	B.M.518	Our advanced Headquarters reports timed 6.50 p.m. our S.O.S. Signal fired about opposite MONUMENT WOOD. Our Artillery replying. Our own Brigade front quiet.
189	8.25 p.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div. 14th A.I.Bde.	B.M.512.A	58th Battalion relieve 60th Battalion tonight.
190	1 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div.	B.M.526	Relief complete 58th and 60th Battalion 12.35 a.m.
191	10.45 p.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 89	15th A.L.T.M.B. reports two mortars relieved by 12th A.L.T.M.B at 10 p.m.
192	1.35 a.m.	15th A.I.Bde.	5th Aust. Div.	B.M.527	Relief complete, 59th and 46th Battalions 1.15 a.m.
193	6.5 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	B 16	One prisoner 8th Company 2nd Battalion 35th Regt. 228th Inf. Division brought in wounded. Has been buried in cellar VILLERS BRETONNEUX since night 24th/25th.
194	9.15 a.m.	Report Centre	15th A.I.Bde.	W 91	Two prisoners 4th Company 1st Battalion 48th Regiment 228th Division brought in. Found in cellar VILLERS BRETONNEUX states our counter attack was a complete surprise. The 228th Infantry Division was to be relieved night 24th/25th April. 228th Div. made first attack on VILLERS BRETONNEUX from trenches after occupying the trenches for three or four days. Situation unchanged.
195	10.55 p.m.	5th Aust. Div.	15th A.I.Bde.	G 796	You will detail forthwith two sections to be under the orders and at the disposal of the G.O.C. 15th A.I.Bde. Acknowledge. Addressed Lieut. REID rptd. 15th Brigade.
196	11.50	15th A.I.Bde.	4th Aust. Div. 5th Aust. Div.	B.M.536	Relief of 15th Brigade by 4th Brigade complete. Addressed 4th and 5th Aust. Divisions.

APPENDIX

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App. XXII

APPENDIX

22

Lieut. Col. LAYH, 57th Battalion,
57th Battalion,
58th Battalion,
59th Battalion,
60th Battalion,
15th A.L.T.M.B.,

War Diary 3 Copies.
File
Staff Captain,
B.G.O., 15th A.I. Brigade.

Copies to:
5th Aust. Division,
8th A.I. Brigade,
14th A.I. Brigade,
24th Inf. Brig. Co.,
25th Inf. Brigade,
23rd Inf. Brigade,
5th W.G. Battalion,
13th Light Horse,

1. The operations mentioned in B.M. 363 and 369 will be carried out in conjunction with 8th Division at time to be notified later. Following alterations to be noted.
2. Attack to be made by 60th Battalion on left, 59th Battalion on right, with 57th Battalion in immediate reserve.
3. The attack will be made in two bounds, 1st objective being the road running from road junction O.18.C.6-5, exclusive or sufficiently close thereto to be in close touch with 14th Brigade front line, which is stated to be about O.19.A. Central.
4. A reconnaissance will be made to ascertain definitely where this flank will rest. The right of the 60th Battalion will extend to road junction in O.24.A.5-2, inclusive. 59th Battalion will extend from last mentioned road junction to Northern edge of VILLERS BRETONNEUX. The inter-Battalion boundary is subject to adjustment by Battalion Commanders concerned.
5. When 1st objective is secured the left of 60th Battalion will swing forward until a point is ~~reached~~ reached about P.15.J.3-0 so as to bring the front parallel to road running from P.22.A.5-6 to P.25.C.0-3, which will be the 2nd objective. Inter-Battalion boundary is provisionally fixed at road junction in P.25.C.0-3 which is inclusive to 60th Battalion.
6. This second movement will pivot on right of the 60th Battalion, which will swing round so as to flank VILLERS BRETONNEUX.
7. The object of the movement is to threaten the enemy's communications on the WARFUSEE AGANCOURT Road and regain our front line. It may not be necessary to proceed entirely to the 2nd objective as our old front line is not so far forward, that is if the real objective, the recapture of VILLERS BRETONNEUX can be obtained and our old front line restored without going so far.
8. The 8th DIVISION is attacking astride the Railway and will clear the village. The 57th Battalion will be in immediate reserve and will be ready to carry out similar duty in the event of the 8th Division not getting forward.
9. Trench Mortar Battery will cooperate as in previous order. Four Mobile Machine Guns have been allotted to each 59th and 60th Battalions. Position of Guns: Left Battalion O.18.C., right Battalion O.17.D. Section Commanders will report to Battalion Commanders concerned.

(29).

- 10. Liaison Officer is reporting to Brigade Advanced Report Centre, where Battalions concerned will get touch with him and issue instructions as to task of guns.
- 11. Arrangements will be made for Mobile Horse Artillery Battery to cooperate closely.
- 12. Advanced Brigade Headquarters will move to 57th Battalion Headquarters immediately operations are ordered.
- 13. 59th and 60th Battalions will move at once to positions of assembly, preparatory to attack on 1st objective, on receipt of this order.
- 14. Medical arrangements will be notified later.
- 15. A C K N O W L E D G E.

[Handwritten signature]

Captain,
A/ Brigade Major,
15th Australian Infantry Brigade.

Issued at 4.15 p.m. 24th April, 1918.

Lieut. Col. LAYH, 57th Bn. 57th Bn. 58th Bn. 59th Bn. 60th Bn.
 15th A.L.T.M.B., Tools, 8th A.I.Bde. 13th A.I.Bde., 14th A.I.Bde.,
 23rd Inf. Bde., 24th Inf. Bde., 25th Inf. Bde., 5th M.G.Battalion,
 13th L.H.,

B.M.410

24th

AAA

Amendment No. 1 to Order No. S.G.16/12 of today's date AAA Attack will now be made in accordance with my original scheme B.M.368 and 369 AAA The 57th Battalion thus making an attack simultaneously by an enveloping movement along the Railway South of VILLERS BRETONNEUX AAA Its final objective will be our original front line East of the Village junctioning with the 59th Battalion about its centre the road junction in P.25.C.0-3 its right connecting with 13th Australian Infantry Brigade about the point of the spur in O.36.B. 500 yards from left point AAA The 8th Div. will make the attack with the 13th Australian Infantry Brigade attached to it who will move south of BOIS L'ABBEE and BOIS L'AQUENNE on the monument AAA Troops will cross the line on the FOUILLOY - CACHY Road at 8 p.m. tonight 24/25 AAA Attack will be carried out as a night operation and white arm bands will be worn AAA All rules for night operations will be enforced until dawn AAA Careful reconnaissance to be made as far forward as possible by all Officers and Compass Bearings to be taken to guide column AAA ACKNOWLEDGE AAA Addressed Lieut. Col. LAYH, 57th Bn., 57th Bn. 58th Bn., 59th Bn., 60th Bn., 15th A.L.T.M.B., repeated TOOLS, 8th A.I. Brigade, 13th A.I. Brigade, 14th A.I. Brigade, 23rd Infantry Brigade, 24th Infantry Brigade, 25th Infantry Brigade, 5th M.G. Battalion, 13th Light Horse, Brigade Report Centre.

BOOK 5.20 p.m.

J. J. Golla
 Captain,
 A/ Brigade Major,



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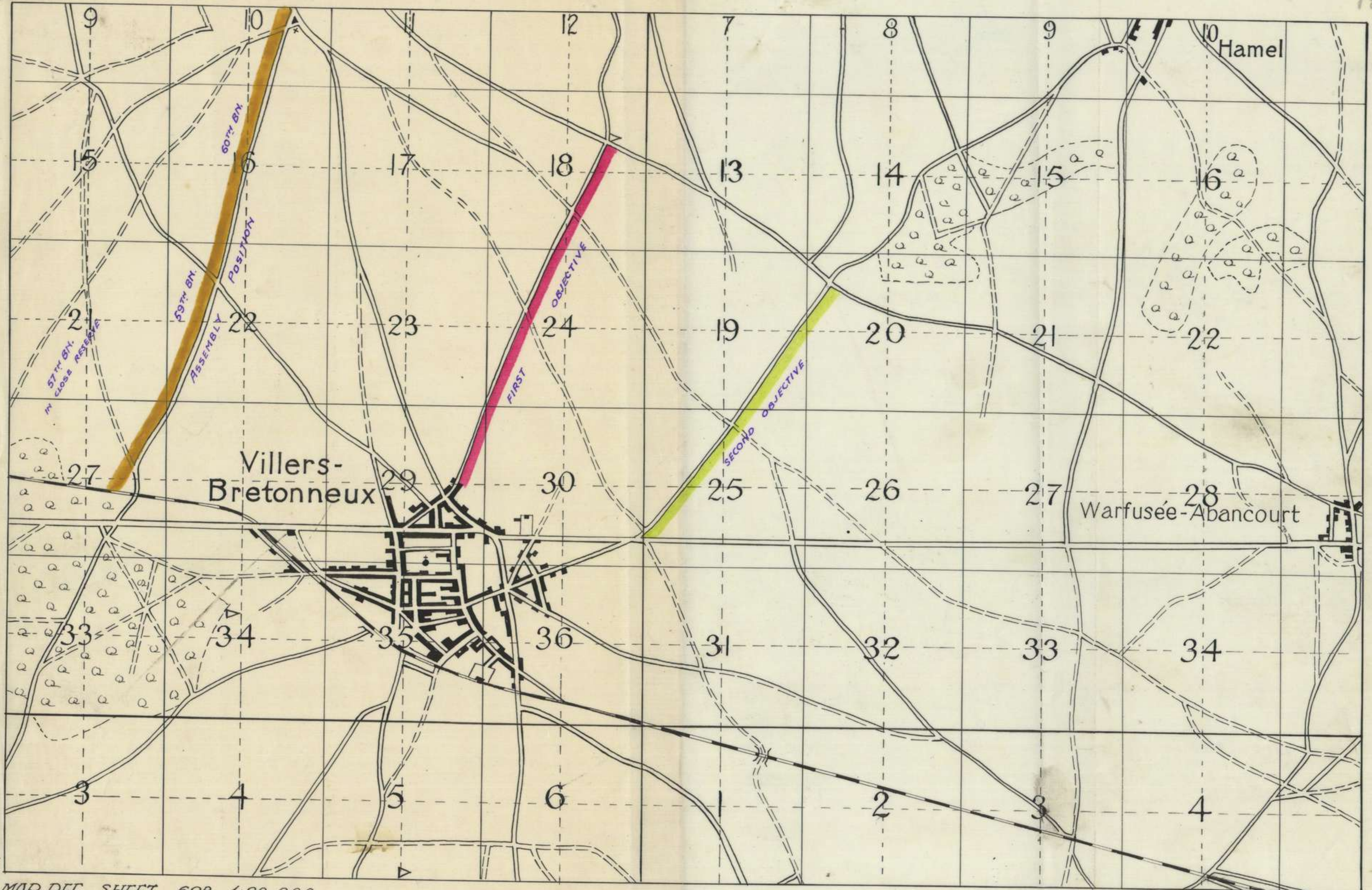
APPENDIX

22

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MAP REF. SHEET 62° 1:20,000.

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APPENDIX

22

Headquarters,
15th Australian Infantry Brigade,
29th April, 1918.

Headquarters,
5th Aust. Division,

As requested, I herewith submit a report on the action of the 22nd Durham Light Infantry during the operations on night 24th/25th April and during the 25th.

At 7.47 p.m. on 24.4.18. the following signal message was received at these Headquarters:

To 15th A. I. Brigade.

22nd D.L.I. (pioneers) is placed under command of G.O.C. 15th Infantry Brigade to be used in conjunction with counter attack to mop up VILLERS-BRETONNEUX AAA addressed 15th Infantry Brigade repeated all recipients of order plus 22nd D.L.I.

5th Aust. Division.

On receipt of this message steps were at once taken by my Brigade Major to get into touch with the 22nd D.L.I. but he was unsuccessful until about 9 p.m. when the C.O. (Lt. Col. JAMES) was discovered to be at the Headquarters of the 25th Infantry Brigade at the Quarry in O.17.C. Lieut. Col. JAMES came to these Headquarters at 9.30 p.m. at BLANGY TRONVILLE and had fully explained to him the situation also what action was required of him and his Battalion. These orders were taken down by Lieut. Col. JAMES in writing and were as follows:

Zero plus 1 heavy barrage on VILLERS-BRETONNEUX will lift. On barrage lifting Battalion will move into VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and mop it up. When thoroughly mopped up hold the VILLERS LINE from main VILLERS BRETONNEUX - WARFUSEE ABANCOURT road northwards approximately. At zero hour 2 Battalions 15th Australian Infantry Brigade will advance FOUILLOY-CACHY Road and by zero plus 1 hour will make good the line of the road from O.18.D.2-9. 22nd D.L.I. will be prepared to advance at zero plus 1 and mop up the village as abovementioned as far as the road running from O.34.D. to O.36.B. 2nd North Hants will be responsible for mopping up village to South of above mentioned road. Hold line O.30.D.1-4 through O.30.B.

Lieut. Col. JAMES expressed the opinion that he was doubtful whether he could get his Battalion ready in time and twice returned to tell me of this. I impressed upon him that providing he mopped up the village during the night it really did not matter what time he moved. He did not seem to know where his Battalion really was at the time.

Since then I have not received any messages nor received a visit from any representative of the 22nd D.L.I. No organization of this Battalion in the operation can be verified.

Today I despatched an Officer to ascertain the movements of the Battalion on the day in question. The C.O. was not available but the adjutant gave the following information:

24.4.18: C.O. returned from 15th Infantry Brigade H.Q. at 10.45 p.m. and the following order was issued at 11.15 p.m.:

"At zero plus one hour Barrage on VILLERS-BRETONNEUX will lift. On barrage lifting 22nd D.L.I. will move into VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and mop it up. When thoroughly mopped up Battalion will hold VILLERS BRETONNEUX line from Main VILLERS-BRETONNEUX - WARFUSEE-ABANCOURT Road Northwards approx. 1000 yards. At zero hour 2 Battalions of 15th Australian Infantry Brigade will advance on FOUILLOY-CACHY Road and by zero plus 1 hour will make good line of road O.18 and O.29. 22nd D.L.I. will be prepared to move at zero plus 1 hour and mop village as above mentioned as far as Road running from O.34.D. to O.36.B. 2nd NORTH HANTS will be responsible for mopping up Village to SOUTH of abovementioned road and Battalion will hold line O.30.D.1-4 through O.30.B.2-9. "B" Company will mop up from O.29. to O.30 Central Northwards.

(2)

"C" Company from road running parallel to main road running in O.34. 35. inclusive.

"A" Company will mop up and get into touch with 2nd HANTS from Southern Boundary inclusive to C Company's boundary. Companies will take special precautions that none of the enemy are left in the village on arrival at their objective.

"B" Company will hold left of line and "A" Company right.
"C" Company will be in reserve on road running from O.30.A. through O.34.C.

At about same time that order was issued Companies were also informed that zero hour was to be 10 p.m.

No messages reporting progress were received from companies during night 24th/25th.

The only report bearing on operations was a report from "A" company. Extracts from this read as follows:

24th April: Company moved forward and took up position on line approx O.27.D.6-8 to O.28.B.0-0.

25th April: In morning Company moved forward to mop up village of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. In this operation they captured 4 M.G. 6 Officers and 70 Other Ranks. After clearing part of village allotted to them they returned to line running from O.27.D.6-8 to O.28.B.0-0 about 6 p.m. About 6 p.m. Company received orders to proceed in conjunction with a tank to clear and hold MONUMENT WOOD. Owing to tank breaking down orders were cancelled, and company remained in position above mentioned.

26th April: Took up position in close support approx. from O.35.D.4-4 to O.36.A.3-2 until relieved by 12th Australian Infantry Brigade on night 27th/28th April.

sgd. S. ANDERSON 2/Lieut.
for O.C. "A" Company.

Adjutant of 22nd D.L.I. reports that other companies did much the same thing but did not get as many prisoners as "A" Company. He estimates total prisoners taken by D.L.I. at 100.

The following report from C.O. 57th Battalion is submitted:

During the operations which the 57th Battalion took part in on the night 24th/25th inst. no parties of the 22nd D.L.I. were met with. On the morning of the 25th inst. at 6 a.m. "B" Company 57th Battalion entered the village of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX for the purpose of clearing the enemy from the village. The right flank being the HAMELET-VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road. Left flank along road from O.30.Central. A party of the Royal BERKS was met with at O.29.B.7-2. "B" Company then pushed forward into the village working in a southerly direction. Several small parties of the enemy were either killed or despatched under escort to the rear. At about 9 a.m. "B" Company cornered and forced to surrender a party of 2 Officers and about 60 O.R., who then threw away their equipment and gave themselves up without fighting. As the company were considerably weakened by casualties and supplying of previous prisoners escorts, this party of the enemy was handed over to a party of 30 or 40 D.L.I. who we found on the main VILLERS-BRETONNEUX - WARFUSEE-ABANCOURT road at about O.29.C.7-4, their instructions being to escort these prisoners to the rear for us. This party of D.L.I. did not move forward but remained in this position, taking ~~and~~ over and providing escort for prisoners sent back to them by us. Total number handed over to them was about 150. After this nothing further was seen of the D.L.I. until "B" Company had moved through and cleared the village and were in position at O.36.B.. An Officer of the D.L.I. saw Lieut. D. FALCONER of "B" Company at 12 noon at about O.36.A.9-4. and told him that they were going to link up on our right. "B" Company saw nothing further however of this party but heard that they were in the southern end of the village near the Railway Bridge at about O.35.Central. Next day after the 49th Battalion was in position at O.36.D. a Company of The D.L.I. dug themselves in

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(3)

in rear of our line along the edge of the village from about O.36.A. Central towards X Roads in O.36.C.5-7.

Sgd. H.T.C.LAYH Lieut.Col.
C.C. 57th Battalion A.I.F.

The following orders issued by the G.O.C. 25th Infantry Brigade seem to indicate that the 22nd D.L.I. did not accomplish the task set them; this task being subsequently assigned to the 2nd Royal Berkshire Regiment:

2nd Royal Berkshire Regiment

In accordance with instructions received from 8th Division you will move your Battalion forward into VILLERS BRETONNEUX and clear the northern portion of the town as far as the main WARFUSEE-ABANCOURT road of the enemy. The N.E. corner of the copse in O.29.A and B. should be dealt with first and your first advance should be South with your right about the N. & S. grid line through O.29. Central. The N.E. portion of the town is the most important to clear. The 22nd D.L.I.(P) were originally ordered to clear this area but it is not known where they are and they do not appear to have started. You must be on the look out for them as they may have got into the town. Move on receipt of this order. If on arrival at the main road you find you are able to clear of the town do so but look out for the Battalion clearing that portion, the North Hants. The positions now occupied by you will be left without a garrison. Inform 2nd Royal Berks and 25th T.M.B. Send back at least hourly reports of progress. Acknowledge.

Sgd. C.COFFIN

Brig.General.
Commanding 15th Australian Inf.Brigade.



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APPENDIX

24/137

SECRET.

Copy No. 10

8TH DIVISION ORDER No. 287.

24th April, 1918.

1.(a) The line held by the III Corps now runs U.22.d. and b.- U.15.cent. - U.9.a.8.0. - U.3.c.5.0. - U.3.b.7.3. - O.35.b.5.0. - O.28.d.0.0. - O.22.d.8.0. - O.23.c.9.9. - P.19.cent. - to original line at P.13.d.0.0.

(b) The III Corps is to counter-attack tonight with the object of capturing the VILLERS BRETONNEUX PLATEAU and re-establishing the original front line.

(c) The attack is to be carried out by the 58th Division on the Right, the 8th Division in the Centre, and the 5th Australian Division on the Left.

2.(a) 58th Division is attacking with 54th Inf. Bde.

(b) 8th Division will attack with 13th Aust. Inf. Bde. (less 1 Battn.) with 2nd Northamptonshire Regt. (8th Division) attached.

(c) 5th Aust. Division is attacking with 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. (less 1 battn.) to which 22nd D.L.I. (Pioneers) 8th Division is attached.

3. Boundaries and objectives, together with mopping up areas for 2nd Northamptonshire Regt. and 22nd D.L.I. (Pioneers) are shown on the attached map.

4. Forming up places are approximately as under:-

58th Division. - East of OACHY with their Left at U.3.d.0.7.

8th Division. - North of OACHY in U.3.a. and c. North of Divisional boundary.

5th Aust. Division.- O.16. and 22.

5. Zero hour for the attack will be 10.0 p.m.

6. ARTILLERY.

(a) There will be no preliminary bombardment.

(b) There will be no creeping barrage.

(c) A Field Arty. standing barrage will be placed on the following localities:-

(i) Square U.6.a. and c.

(ii) Railway embankment O.28.c.5.4. - O.28.d.8.0.

(d) A Heavy Arty. standing barrage will be placed on the town of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and on railway in O.35.a. and d. Barrages (c) and (d) above will lift at Z. plus 60 minutes exactly and will be placed as a protective barrage beyond final objective.

(e) O.R.A. 8th Division will arrange to provide barrages for the attack of 5th Aust. Division.

/7. ...

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APPENDIX

24

2.

7. 1 Battn. 53rd Inf. Bde. will come under orders G.O.C. 24th Inf. Bde., and will occupy that portion of the Reserve Line vacated by the 2nd Northhamptonshire Regt.

8. The password "BIMBO" will be used by all attacking troops of 58th, 8th and 5th Australian Divisions.

9. ACKNOWLEDGE. *[Handwritten initials]*

[Handwritten signature]

Lieut.-Colonel,
General Staff.

Issued at 8 p.m.

Copies to:-

- No. 1 G.O.C.
- 2 23rd Inf. Bde.
- 3 24th Inf. Bde.
- 4 25th Inf. Bde.
- 5 13th Aust. Inf. Bde.
- 6 22nd D.L.I.
- 7 C.R.E.
- 8 A.D.M.S.
- 9 Signals.
- 10 15th Aust. Inf. Bde.
- 11 54th Inf. Bde.
- 12 58th Division.
- 13 5th Aust. Division.
- 14 8th Bn. M.G.C.
- 15 20th Div. Arty.
- 16 69th Bde. R.G.A.
- 17 2nd Northhamptonshire Regt.
- 18 War Diary.
- 19 File.

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APPENDIX 24

"A" Form
MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.

Army Form C. 2121
(in pads of 100).

No. of Message.....

Prefix.....	Code.....m.	Words	Charge.	This message is on a/c of	Recd. at.....m.
Office of Origin and Service Instructions.		Sent		 Service.
		At.....m.		From.....	
		To.....		By.....	
		By.....		(Signature of "Franking Officer.")	

TO { 15th Aust by Bde

Sender's Number. * 995 Day of Month. 24 In reply to Number. AAA

Herewith copy of order
for tonight's operation
am please acknowledge
on slip attached

From 5th Aust Divison
Place
Time 7:30p

The above may be forwarded as now corrected. (Z)
Censor. Signature of Addressor or person authorised to telegraph in his name

* This line should be erased if not required.
Wt. W492/M1647 100,000 pads. 4/17. W. & Co., Ltd. (E. 1187.)



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File

APPENDIX 24 ¹⁴⁰

URGENT OPERATIONS PRIORITY

W. J. Fuller
B.G.G.S.

4th Army. 8th, 58th, 5th Aust Divs.
18th Div. Aust. & 31st Fr. Corps. 5th Bde. RAF
Corps H.A. R.A. 35th Sqn. R.A.F.

G.596. 24.

The 3rd Corps will carry out a counter-attack tonight in order to recover the VILLERS BRETONNEUX Plateau and the original front line aaa The attack will be carried out by the 15th Aust. Bde. (under 5th Aust. Divn.) on the North, by the 13th Aust. Bde. (under 8th Divn.) on the West, and by the 54th Bde. (under 58th Division) on the West but South of the 13th Aust. Inf. Bde aaa 15th Aust. Inf. Bde. will assemble about 0.16 and 0.22 and attack in a S.E. direction through P.24 towards P.25 with the object of re-establishing the front line, and connecting with the attack of the 8th Division at a point 200 yds. N. of the road in P.31.D aaa The 13th Aust. Bde will assemble N. of CACHY and attack South of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and re-establish the old line between point 200 yds. N. of the road in P.31.D and the Divisional boundary at the Cross Rds. in U.6.G exclusive aaa The 54th Bde. will assemble east of CACHY and South of the 13th Aust. Bde. and with their Left at U.3. d.0.7 with a view to establishing the line from the Cross Rds. in U.6 e. inclusive to the old line as far South as the BOIS DE HANGARD inclusive about U.22.B aaa

^ and attack

Hour...

Four

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-2-

Hour of attack will be communicated later
 aaa Field Arty. support for the attack will
 be arranged by the Divisions concerned aaa
 There will be no preliminary bombardment
 aaa Corps Heavy Arty. will arrange and
 co-ordinate the Heavy Arty. programme aaa
 The Tanks are placed at the disposal of the
 58th Division with the exception of three,
 which are at the 8th Division's disposal
 for mopping-up VILLERS BRETONNEUX aaa Two
 Battns. will be detailed by the 8th Divn.
 for mopping-up VILLERS BRETONNEUX aaa

These Battns. will be under
 the orders of the Brigadiers Commanding
 the 15th and 13th Aust. Bdes respectively
 aaa 8th Divn. will arrange for the Battn.
 Commanders to report to the respective
 Brigadiers aaa 58th Division will arrange
 to replace one of these Battns. in the
 Reserve Line by a Battn. of the 53rd Bde
 aaa Troops on reaching their final positions
 will be re-organised in depth aaa ACKNOWLEDGE
 aaa Adsd. all Divs, H.A., R.A., flank Corps,
 35th Sqn. and 5th Bde. RAF.

From 3rd Corps.
 Time 5.30 p.m.

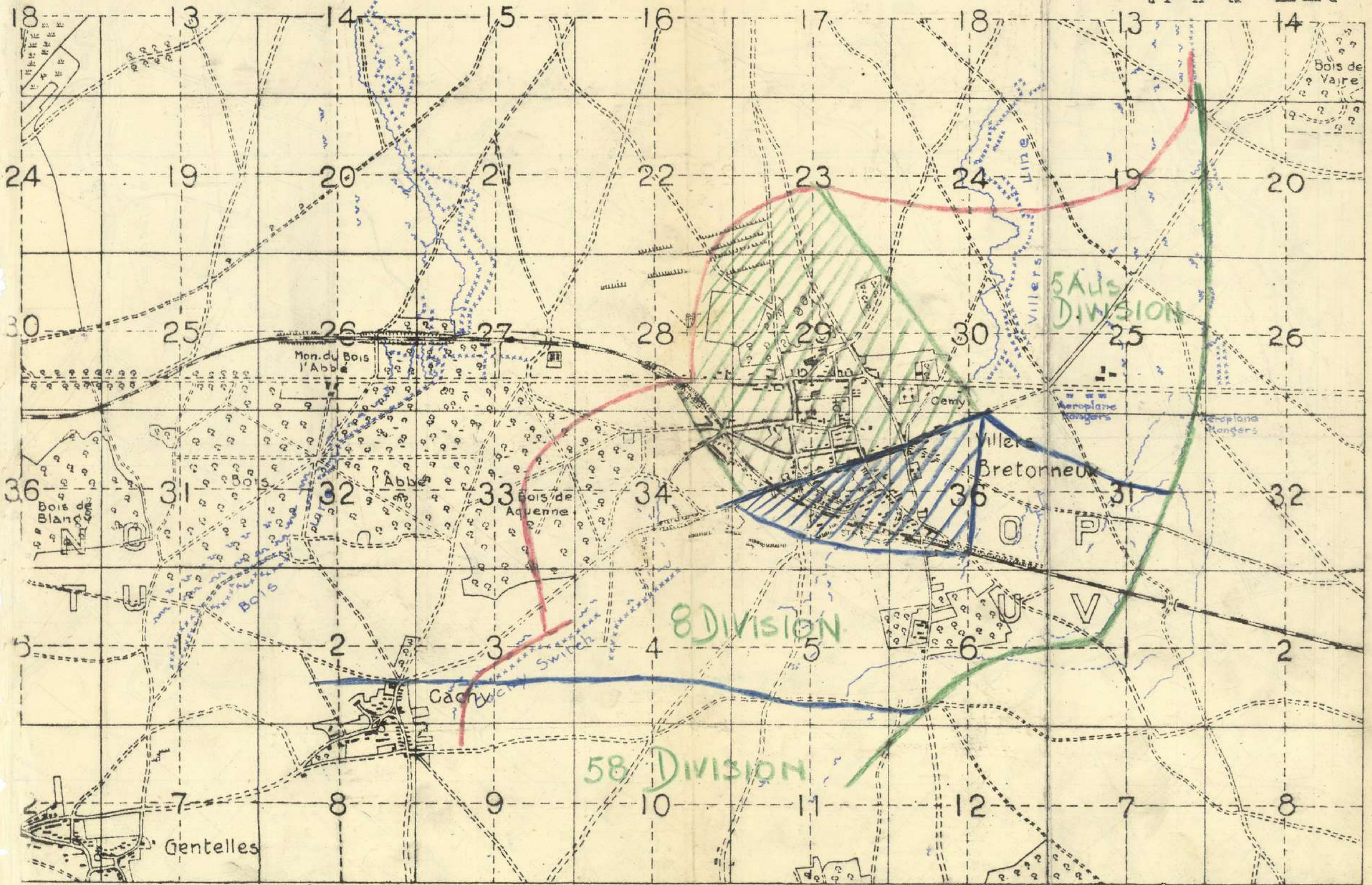
C. J. Fuller
 B.G., G.S.

SECRET

ISSUED WITH 8th DIVISION ORDER NO 287

APPENDIX 24¹⁴²
24.4.18

MAP E2



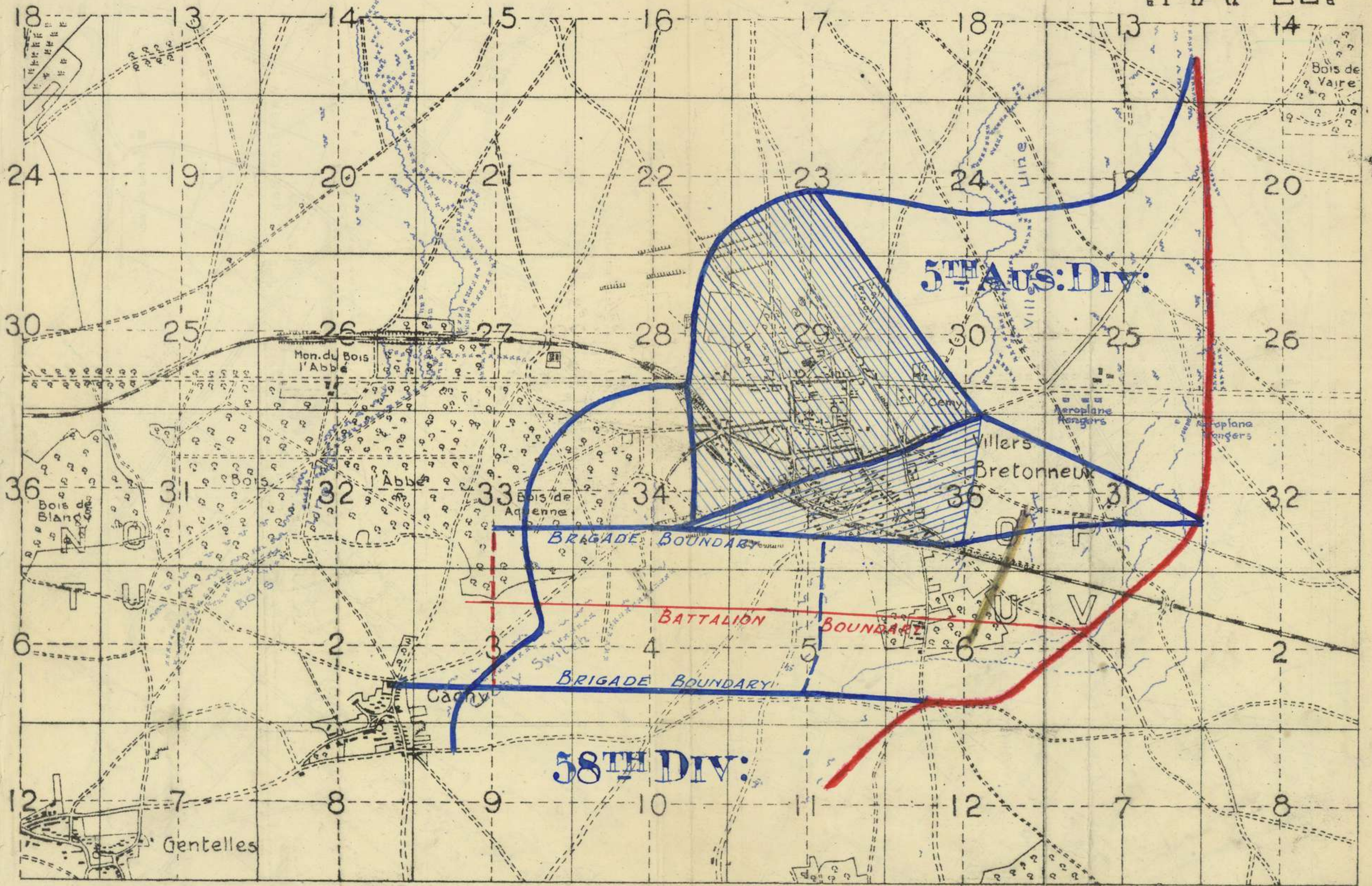
REFERENCE
 — Front Line
 — Objective
 — Boundary

SCALE 1:20,000

Area to be mapped up by 13th Aus Bde
 Area to be mapped up by 15th Aus Bde
 DIVISION 21-4-18

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MAP E2



SCALE 1:20.000

□ DIVISION 21-4-18



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"How the Australians treat their Prisoners -

"English Officers publish the following incidents
"witnessed by them while in the trenches next to the Australians:
"As several German prisoners passed with their escorts,
"one of the prisoners was suddenly torn to pieces. Soon after
"that another shared his fate. The English Officers observed
"how, on approach of someone in authority, the Australians
"quickly concealed hand grenades into a bag. Another man carried
"on as though nothing had happened and went on quietly smoking
"his pipe. The Australian had simply thrown hand grenades
"amongst the unsuspecting German soldiers".

I am keeping the papers mentioned in case they may be
required.

4.30 p.m.
23.4.18.

H.E. BAENSON Lieut.



To 15th Aust. Inf. Brigade.

APP



The following is an extract from two German Provincial papers of 13.4.18, the PRENZLAUER ZEITUNG and FLATOWER ZEITUNG. Two articles are given underneath, and as they are identical in both papers, are evidently inspired.

"The light-hearted employment of Portugese troops -

"The defeated Portugese divisions south of Armentieres were totally ignorant as to the British tactical situation. They had been entrusted to defend that important sector North of LA BASSE SANAL, as a result of the threat to both the SOMME fronts. During the surprise German attack of 9th and 10th April they were obliged to bear the brunt of it owing to the total collapse of the British Command.

"The result of this new thrust will be that the French will again have to take over various portions of the front to relieve the British. This will cause to divert more and more of the French reserves from what they were originally intended for and they will be bled, solely to restore the British situation, which was imperilled by the British themselves.

"The Portugese Officers are unanimous in making the gravest of charges against the British Command who alone are responsible for the crushing defeat on this front."



The Brigade (less 58th Bn.) moved off from the point of assembly at 11 p.m. Our Battalion in close support to the 59th Battalion. Disposition of Battalion. "D" Coy. 300 yards in right rear of 59th Bn., "A" Coy. 300 yards in left rear of 59th Battalion, "B" Coy. in close support of "D" Coy. "C" in rear of "A" Coy.

The Brigade reached the first objective at 12.45 a.m. 25th inst. after difficulty as regards keeping direction. Our Battalion passed the first objective at 1 a.m. and "A" and "D" Coys. moved forward then turned slightly off to the right to come up ~~and~~ on the right of the 59th Battalion and take up the final objective (original old line) "D" and "A" Coy. reached objective and consolidated along line from O.30.D. Central to O.25.A. Central at 2.15 a.m. 59th Battalion were consolidating on left. "B" and "C" Coys. dug in and consolidated hill protecting right flank from O.30.D. Central to road at O.30.A.0.8. at 2.30 a.m.

At 6 a.m. 25th inst. "B" Coy. on right and "C" Coy. moved forward wheeling on the pivot of left flank at O.30.D. Central and attacked east portion VILLERS-BRETONNEUX along grid line running N and S through O.29 and U.35 reaching objective and consolidating line from O.30.D. Central to road at O.36.B.2.3. at 10.30 a.m.

Approximately 200 prisoners were captured also 8 Machine Guns. Total approx. Casualties 4 O.R. killed, 2 Officers. 53 O.R. wounded.

11.45 a.m.
26.4.18

John B. LAING Capt. & Adjt.
57th Battalion A.I.F.



57th Battalion A.I.F.

26.4.18

APPENDIX

26

To H.Q.

15th Aust. Inf. Brigade.

B./35

26th

B.M.449.

Report on operations up till 6 p.m. 25th inst.

The enemy launched an attack at VILLERS-BRETONNEUX at 6.15 a.m. 24th April 1918. The Battalion was "standing to" from 4.15 a.m. and received a report at 6.15 a.m. that the enemy was attacking VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and making round the flank of same. The Battalion was in the Reserve Line and two (2) patrols were immediately sent forward to get in touch with the forward troops. Two patrols of 59th Battalion went forward and took up a position near the bridge at O.28.D.2.4. astride the railway. Reports were received that the enemy had pushed through the outskirts of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Our Company Officers went forward to make a reconnaissance after receiving word to "Stand to" and be prepared to counterattack on the South side of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. The order to counterattack was cancelled and the Battalion was ordered to stand fast and await orders. At 5.15 p.m. C.O. went to Brigade Headquarters and received orders that the 59th and 60th Battalions with 57th Battalion in close Support would counter-attack on VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. Zero hour was fixed at 8 p.m. About 6.30 p.m. Lt. Col. LAYH DSO was called to Brigade Headquarters and word was sent through to the Battalion that zero hour was changed to 10 p.m. Dispositions of Brigade on the assembly point was as follows. 59th Battalion on right, 60th Battalion on left on the FOUILLOY - VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Road, 57th Battalion in close support in rear of the 59th Battalion.

Report by C.O. 60th Battalion on Operations carried out by the 60th Battalion A.I.F. 24th/25th April 1918:

Ref.
Sheet
62D.

The Battalion moved out of Camp at 9 p.m. for a place of Assembly (main FOUILLOY - CACHY Road).

On arrival there the Battalion took up position, viz. "B" and "D" in Front line "C" Coy. in support and "A" Coy. in reserve.

The 59th Battalion were on our right. The intention was to re-establish our old FRONT LINE and to threaten his communications.- WARFUSEE-ABANGCOURT Rd.

Before leaving the Camp the men were served with a hot meal. They were in excellent spirits.

Sixteen guides were supplied by the 56th Battalion and were met at O.L.D.5-8. and remained with the Battalion throughout the action.

During the afternoon of 24th inst. the ground, over which attack was made, was reconnoitred by most officers of the Battalion and the necessary compass bearings taken.

At 11 p.m. the whole line moved forward, very little opposition being encountered up to the first objective which was passed at 12.40 a.m. Immediately after this the left lost touch and the direction of attack drifted gradually to the right. The front line Companies finally dug in about 2.45 a.m. and immediately began lateral patrolling. On account of the sameness of the country and the absence of any distinctive features it was indeed most difficult to maintain direction. Numerous patrols were sent out to locate the 54th Right post but without success. This flank was therefore swung back and protected.

Just before daybreak Lieut. J.L. SIMPSON went out with a party of four men to locate a known enemy post. It was successful in locating it and surprising the six occupants of this post. These had just surrendered to him when he was compelled by hostile Machine Gun fire to take cover in the end of this post. One of his men was killed and two badly wounded by this enemy fire. He got the wounded in and then killed the occupants of the post. As it was now daylight it was impossible for him to move back so he made the wounded comfortable and prepared his post for enemy attack. During the day he shot one officer and at least two other ranks of the enemy. At dusk his unwounded man returned to line and guided back stretcher parties for the wounded. Lieut. SIMPSON returned to front line at 9.30 p.m. after getting wounded and killed back.

Several light enemy Machine Guns were captured and were made use of in our line and on the left flank.

The enemy appeared to have little idea of the position of his forward posts and small parties frequently wandered into our line.

Our left Company encountered the enemy apparently in the act of relieving these forward posts. They killed the majority taking the remainder prisoners.

During the day (25th inst.) the enemy was quiet and much good sniping was carried on during the morning.

Our own artillery shelled the line intermittently, and our own planes dropped a few bombs.

The spirit of the troops was excellent and a good line was completed by 8 a.m.

Communication was kept with the 59th Battalion on the right throughout the operations.

Sgd. N. MARSHALL Lt. Col.
C.O. 60th Battalion A.I.F.

865
Headquarters,
15th Aust. Inf. Bde.

APPENDIX

26
149

Ref. Sheet FRANCE 62D 1/40,000

R4/12

B.M. 449

25.4.18

At 3.45 a.m. 24th inst. enemy put down a barrage extending back to Brigade's Reserve position.

At 6 a.m. acting under orders from Brigade Headquarters two reconnoitring patrols were sent forward to make good the line - GRID LINE running NORTH and SOUTH through squares O.28 and O.29. Strength of each patrol, 1 Officer 1 Lewis Gun Section and 1 Rifle Section. No. 1. Patrol O.C. Lieut. CHRISTIAN, No. 2 Patrol Lieut. CALLANDER M.M. These patrols reported coming under M.G. fire from direction of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX on passing the FOUILLOY - CACHY Road. Patrols succeeded in pushing as far forward as GRID LINE running NORTH and SOUTH through O.28 Central. By this time English stragglers were coming through along the railway line on our front. These men were collected and a line was formed astride the railway in O.28. and O.34. Shortly afterwards the RIGHT of this line retired leaving CHRISTIAN's Right flank resting in the air but still resting on the railway. Later in the day he succeeded in collecting 200 men of an East LANCS Regiment including a Lieut. Col. and several junior officers. He was thus enabled to reestablish his Right flank swinging WEST along the railway embankment, and so prevented the enemy making any further headway WEST of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and NORTH of the railway cutting.

Meanwhile orders had been received from Brigade and plans were immediately prepared for a counterattack by the 59th Bn. in cooperation with the 60th Battalion with the object of restoring the old British Line NORTH and EAST of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX.

Plans were completed and arrangements made for attack to take place at 10.30 a.m. At 10.15 a.m. orders to stand fast were received from Brigade Headquarters. At 5 p.m. C.O.'s conference with Col. LAYH, DSO and it was then decided to attack at 8 p.m. 57th Battalion were to cooperate by attacking VILLERS-BRETONNEUX along the line of the railway and making good the MONUMENT at U.6.A.5.5. The 13th Brigade operating in cooperation from the SOUTH of BOIS L'ABBE'.

At about 6.30 p.m. zero hour was advanced until 10 p.m. A personal reconnaissance of the ground was made by all officers and bearings for direction were taken and checked.

At 8.30 p.m. Battalion moved out into assembly point - FOUILLOY-CACHY Road. After some delay, caused through loss of direction in the haze which was then down, the attack was successfully launched at 11 p.m.

By midnight the first objective HAMELET - VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Road was made good without opposition. Considerable amount of enemy shelling was experienced up to this point. From here forward the enemy was encountered in posts and trenches strongly held with Machine Guns. Enemy were either killed or made prisoners and our line was established along the road through P.25.A. and C. From road Junction in P.25.C.0.3. the Right Flank was turned in a Sutherlandly direction resting on O.30.D.1.0. Our Left Flank then ran from cross roads P.25.B.2.8. to P.19.A.5.5. During the morning the Left Flank of the 60th Battalion was advanced to the VILLERS-HAMEL road and contact made with 14th Brigade. The 57th Battalion on the Right are endeavouring to get in touch with 13th Brigade and establish a line EAST of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX running through O.36.B. and D. Our Casualties estimated at 3 Officers 50 O.Rs. Number of German M.G.'s captured not yet definite.

Estimated number of prisoners taken 200.

Battalion Headquarters established at Quarry O.17.C.3.7. and Forward Headquarters at O.24.D.3.0.

Time 5.15 p.m.
Place O.17.C.3.7.
Date 25.4.18.

J. J. SCANLAN Lieut. Col.
C.O. 59th Battalion

265
Headquarters,
15th Aust. Inf. Bde.

Reference your BM449.

58th Battalion occupying left sector of Reserve Brigade Line (AUBIGNY LINE) "stood to" when enemy barrage opened at 3.45 a.m. on 24th inst. This line and vicinity was severely shelled with 5.9's and gas shell was freely used - a few casualties were sustained - the barrage slackened at 6.30 a.m. and enemy practically finished shelling at 6.40 a.m. - The Battalion remained prepared to move at a moments notice throughout the day. At 11.50 a.m. Col. DENEHY assumed command of the Battalion and Lieut. Col. WATSON reported to Brigade Headquarters for special reconnaissance duty. - Approaches forward to VILLERS BRETONNEUX were reconnoitred by all available officer during the afternoon. At 8 p.m. 2 Coys. of 58th Battalion moved to occupy the right sector of AUBIGNY line vacated by 57th Battalion - Companies reported in position at 9.30 p.m. Received order at 4.10 a.m. on 25th to move forward and occupy the Reserve Line of Forward Zone. Coys. reported line occupied from O.18.B.3-0 to O.24.B.3.0. at 7.30 a.m. - Battalion H.Q. established at O.17.C.3-7. - This line was still held at 6 p.m. 25th inst. without change.

Estimated Casualties to 6 p.m. 25th inst.

2 Killed
30 Wounded

10 a.m. 26.4.18

Chas. A. DENEHY Lt. Col.
C.O. 58th Battalion.



265
XIC 17457
26
APPENDIX
Headquarters,
15th Australian Infantry Brigade,
28th April, 1918.

Headquarters,
5th Australian Division,

The following report from C.O. 60th Battalion on the pushing forward of the line on 60th Battalion front on the night 26th/27th April also on the advance of a body of the enemy towards our line at 6 a.m. on 27th inst. is forwarded:

"Failing a larger operation which was to be carried out on the night 26th/27th April, it was decided to carry out a minor operation by this Battalion to advance our line from the positions held on the morning of the 26th inst. running through P.19.B.3-7 Southwest to road at about P.19.C.4-3. thence S.E. to P.25.A.7-6 thence again S.W. to about P.25.A.4-3. where we joined up with the 59th Battalion. It was decided to carry the line forward to run along the East of HAMEL - VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road, using the right flank as a pivot.

"At a conference of Company Commanders held at 3 p.m. on the 26th inst. it was decided that for the purpose of this operation "B" Company on the right and "D" Company on the left would be employed to form the front line with "C" Company in Support, "A" Company to remain in their position of reserve in reserve Line in O.24.D. and O.30.A. & B... Having failed on the previous night to actually link up with the front line of the 54th Battalion on our left, it was decided that Lieut. GANNON and Lieut. PIZZEY, who had previously reconnoitred this ground in company with Capt. PLOMLEY of the 56th Battalion, would be responsible for the extreme left flank and they were charged with the responsibility of placing our left post in position in close touch with the Battalion on our left. It was arranged for the advancing of our line that no artillery preparation would be required, but a Stokes Mortar was to be used for the purpose of blowing out a known enemy position at approximately P.19.Central. Capt. NICHOL was charged with the responsibility of the whole line, zero time for the operation being left to his discretion. As far as possible, reconnoitring patrols were to be pushed out at dusk to make good as much as possible of the country on our immediate front.

"As a commencement, it was decided to get touch with the Battalion on our left by working forward a post and getting it into position before the remainder of the line attempted to advance. This was done with entire success and without casualties under the personal direction of Lieut. GANNON. A covering party was pushed out in front and our left post established at approx. P.19.D.9-8 by about 1.30 a.m.. On receipt of the information that this had been done Capt. NICHOL was able to carry on with the work of advancing the rest of our line. He ordered the Stokes Mortar party, who had already been placed in position and given their target, to open fire, and at 2.20 a.m. our line commenced to advance.

"The formation adopted was skirmishing order with small patrols in front, most of the work being done by Compass Bearings. Almost immediately the enemy opened up very heavy Machine Gun Fire and started firing flares of various colours. The enemy also put down an Artillery Barrage which fortunately mostly fell in rear of our advancing men, most of the casualties in the actual advance being from rifle and M.G. Fire. Considerable opposition was met with, particularly from P.19.D., enemy M.G. Posts being echeloned about this area, and also heavy M.G. Fire was brought to bear from the high ground approx. along the grid line running N. and S. through P.20. and P.26.Central. Notwithstanding very considerable casualties not the slightest hesitation was displayed by our men, who went forward most gallantly, passing through several enemy wired posts, bayoneting the occupants and capturing several machine guns. Our objective was gained at zero plus 20 without any pause, and our line immediately started digging in under covering parties along the East side of the HAMEL VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road at a distance from the road varying from 10 to 80 yards.

"Communication with the 59th Battalion on the right was kept throughout the operation and our left flank conformed to the post already placed in position on our left.

P.T.O.

Headquarters
15th Australian Infantry Brigade
27th Inst.

" We undoubtedly inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy as we have since found enemy posts in rear, which were dealt with during our advance, to contain many enemy dead and at least 60 bodies have been counted excluding those lying out in front of us. We captured several heavy and light Machine Guns which were of great use to us, some of which we eventually handed over to 58th Battalion on being relieved. More than one was blown out by enemy Artillery fire which was intermittent throughout the day and caused many casualties. It is estimated that our casualties in holding the line were greater, particularly in Officers, than in the actual advance during the morning. Our casualties during the operations were:-

Officers: 4 killed 8 wounded,
and approximately 80 P.Rs.

" Owing to the enemy fire communications from front to rear were very difficult but were fairly well maintained by the really splendid work of signallers and runners.

Enemy aeroplanes were active during the day and at one period flew over our line dropping colored lights which were apparently to direct their artillery fire which increased greatly in accuracy.

" Enemy morale was fair, but they ran in some cases before our men got up with them. Others kept their guns in action till the last. I would like to say that the courage and determination of our men was beyond all praise and many individual acts of gallantry by both Officers and men have been recorded. Our thanks are due to the 58th Battalion who rendered us great help particularly through the medium of Capt. PLOMLEY who gave us the greatest assistance in reconnoitring our front and giving information of posts etc. which we would be likely to come in contact with. The work of our stretcherbearers was magnificent and all ranks are very high in their praise of their great work.

=====O=====

" At 6.10 a.m. on the morning of the 27th inst. a strong body of the enemy was seen to be advancing towards our line in open order. Word was at once sent back to the artillery and our barrage which was dropped caused very great losses in the enemy ranks. The threatened counter attack never actually developed on this account although our men were able to bring fire to bear on advancing parties about 400 yards in front of us. One Officer estimated the enemy casualties through our artillery fire as not under 300 and all are agreed that they must have been very heavy.

(Sgd.) N. MARSHALL Lieut. Colonel,
C.O. 60th Battalion A.I.F.

Brig.-General,
Commanding 15th Australian Infantry Brigade.

App. ~~XXVII~~

Report by O.C. 15th A.L.T.M.B. on use of Stokes 3" Mortars during recent operations, 24th - 28th inst.

The counter-attack on VILLERS BRETONNEUX was carried out by three battalions, with one battalion in reserve.

Two mortars, with fifty rounds of ammunition each, were allotted to each Battalion, and Battalion Commanders were consulted as to disposition of mortars allotted to their respective battalions. In the case of one battalion the mortars and ammunition carrying parties went forward with the attacking companies. In the case of the other two battalions the mortars and carrying parties were held at Battalion Headquarters and sent forward as soon as our line was established. This latter arrangement proved much the more successful of the two.

In the case of the first battalion a number of the carriers became casualties and of those who reached the objective nearly all dropped their loads and took part in the final charge. The result was that these two mortars arrived with only ten and six rounds of ammunition respectively.

As against this the mortars attached to the other Battalions, which went forward after our line was established, arrived in position with the full quota of ammunition. Two of these mortars did good work later on in dealing with sniper's posts which were causing our infantry considerable annoyance.

During the advance the enemy put up a poor resistance, our troops were not held up at any point, and no occasions arose where our mortars could have been called upon.

In future night operations of a similar nature I would suggest that mortars and carrying parties with ammunition be held at Battalion Headquarters until objective is reached and guides then sent back to conduct them forward.

In operations conducted by daylight conditions are different, confusion is less and targets could be picked up which it would be impossible to locate at night.

In all operations the main difficulty is in getting sufficient ammunition forward.

Sgd. E.K. KEYS Capt.
O.C. 15th A.L.T.M.B.



Headquarters,
5th Australian Division

I beg to forward herewith a brief summary of the operations in which this Brigade has been engaged on the 24th and 25th of April.

In anticipation of an enemy attack on VILLERS-BRETONNEUX on the morning of the 24th, the Brigade stood to arms in readiness for instant action at 3.45 a.m. Though it was known that infantry action had been developed on the front, the Brigade was not called upon to move until 8 o'clock that night.

The following warning order was, however, issued at 4.50 a.m.:-

To 59th Battalion: 59th Battalion will be prepared to counter-attack along the spur running through O.27., 28, 29 and 30. Send forward independent patrols as far as Grid Line running North and South between squares 28 and 29. They should have communication with 57th Battalion Forward Companies. You will reconnoitre the shortest route with gaps in the wire at once.

To 60th Battalion: 60th Battalion will be prepared to counter-attack along the spur running through O.18.C., O.18., O.5., thence along the track running through O.24.B., P.19.C., P.25.B. Send forward independent patrols as far as Grid Line between O.18. and O.24. You will reconnoitre shortest route with gaps in wire at once.

The 57th and 58th Battalions were ordered to be prepared for assembly and to support the attacks of the 59th and 60th Battalions respectively.

At 6.30 a.m. the Brigade not having been required to move, Unit Commanders were ordered to rest and feed the men, but to remain in a state of readiness. Liaison Officers were despatched early in the morning to the Reserve Brigade of the Right Division and the Right and Left Line Brigades. A Brigade Forward Command Post and Report Centre was established at O.8.C.8.8.

At 3.15 p.m. the B.G.C. was informed verbally by the G.O.C. 5th Australian Division that the Brigade would assist in the counter-attack to be launched by the Third Corps that night, having for its object the recapture of the VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Plateau and the re-establishment of the original front line.

Orders were accordingly issued for putting into effect those orders which had been previously issued to Battalions in the morning, with the following alterations.:-

(a) Attack to be made by the 60th Battalion on the left and 59th Battalion on the right, with 57th Battalion in immediate reserve. (This was subsequently altered by placing the 57th Battalion on the right and allowing them to participate in the attack on a narrow frontage to the North of the village of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX.)

(b) The attack was to be made in two bounds, the first objective being the road running from Road Junction O.18.B.6.3. exclusive or sufficiently close thereto to be in close touch with the 14th Brigade front line. The second objective was the road running from P.20.A.3.6. to P.25.C.0.3.

The object of the movement was to threaten the enemy's communications on the WARFUSEE-ABANCOURT road and to regain our front line.

Troops were ordered to cross the line of the FOUILLOY-CACHY Road at 10 p.m.

Instructions were given that the attack would be carried out as a night operation and all tracks and the road over which the troops were to pass were to be thoroughly reconnoitred.

The first objective was gained at 12.40 a.m. Our troops were subsequently reported to be closely engaging the enemy to the North of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. The first prisoner was one of a post of 20. The remainder were found to have been all killed. It was reported that our troops were suffering few casualties and were killing the enemy in large numbers.

At 3.15 a.m. it was apparent that the attack had been very successful. The Brigadier asked the G.O.C. Division if he could take his Reserve Battalion to exploit the success already gained.

2.

On permission being granted, the 58th Battalion was at once ordered to move to the Reserve Line of the Forward Zone in O.24. Central. This move was completed by 5.45 a.m. In the meantime, it appears that the advance was held up between the first and second objectives by the Machine Gun Fire coming from VILLERS-BRETONNEUX. The enemy put up a lot of flares, but the supply of these evidently ran short towards 3.50 a.m., when the advance again proceeded with small opposition.

At 3.17 a.m. the 59th Battalion reported having captured 30 prisoners and 1 Light Machine Gun. At 3.20 a.m. the same Battalion reported having established in the old front line (CAVALRY SWITCH).

At 4.35 a.m. the 59th and 60th Battalions reported that they were consolidated in the CAVALRY SWITCH, the total prisoners then being 60 and 3 Machine Guns captured, with another 2 in action turned against the enemy. No word was received of the 57th Battalion, though the 59th Battalion stated that they were in touch with the 57th left flank.

The spirit of the men throughout the operation was excellent and all ranks were determined to oust the enemy from the positions he had gained earlier in the day.

The 57th Battalion reported that VILLERS-BRETONNEUX was still occupied by the enemy, but the Battalion Commander felt confident that they could be driven out in the morning. It was notified that the 2nd Battalion of the Berkshire Regiment had been detailed to attack the village, clear the enemy out and "mop up" until the village was clear.

This attack was put into execution promptly and word was soon received that they had captured 150 prisoners and 11 Machine Guns. Meanwhile patrols of the 57th Battalion had pushed down the Western end of the village towards O.36. Central and were cutting off the retreat of the Bosche, who, when he saw this, was in many instances only too willing to surrender.

By 12 noon it was reported that the village was clear of the enemy, though his Machine Guns were still active in O.36.C. and D. This prevented the 13th Australian Infantry Brigade from linking up with the left of the 57th Battalion and forming a continuous line. Movement was difficult in daylight and it was deemed advisable to defer movement for swinging the flank of the 13th A.I. Brigade Eastward to consolidate with 57th Battalion until nightfall.

Patrols of the 57th Battalion meanwhile pushed down into O.36.D. and consolidated the line.

The enemy's casualties throughout were very heavy, and it is estimated that there was 1 German killed for every prisoner taken. Up to the time of writing this report the estimated number of prisoners taken by this Brigade is 7 Officers and 400 Others, and batches of prisoners are still coming in. It was noted that during the morning that the enemy sniped and intentionally shelled his own men who had been taken prisoners.

Those captured were, on the whole, of good physique and it was noted that there was an exceptionally large number of the 1919 class.

To date no Officers of this Brigade are reported killed, but 1 Officer is reported missing. It is estimated that there are about 6 Officers wounded and Other Casualties in the Brigade would not exceed 150.

The Officers and men of the Brigade are greatly heartened by the success attending their efforts. This strengthening of their morale will have a wonderful effect on any future operations.

At the present stage it is difficult to give a detailed report, as Commanders and Staffs are somewhat exhausted; but a detailed and accurate report will be submitted at the earliest opportunity.

Brig.General.
Commanding 15th Australian Infantry Brigade.

Prefix *11* Code *11* Words *4*
 Received *11* Sent, or *11* Office Stamp
 From *11* At *11* m.
 By *11* To *11*

Charges to Collect
 Service Instructions
 Handed in at *11* Office *11* Received *11* m.

TO *Book (15th Inf Bde)*

*Sender's Number *11* Day of Month *15* In reply to Number *AAA*

The determined fighting of yesterday which arrested the enemy's advance the successful night attack and the clearing of Villers Bretonneux today are achievements of which all ranks may well be proud and please convey my congratulations to all ranks which took part

FROM *Genl Butler*
 PLACE & TIME

*This line should be erased if not required.
 (27802) Wt. W14832/M1523. [E 930]. 100,000 Pads-3/17. M.R.Co.,Ltd. Forms/C.2123.

Prefix *11* Code *11* Words *4*
 Received *11* Sent, or sent at *11* Office Stamp
 From *11* At *11* m.
 By *11* To *11*

Charges to Collect
 Service Instructions
 Handed in at *11* Office *11* Received *11* m.

TO *Book*

*Sender's Number *11* Day of Month *15* In reply to Number *AAA*

Following from Army commander's report that the 15th and 18th Divs were successful in their counter-attack against Villers Bretonneux last night and it was a difficult operation and was carried out with a dash and determination which does them greater credit and General Hawley

FROM *11*
 PLACE & TIME

*This line should be erased if not required.
 (27802) Wt. W14832/M1523. [E 930]. 100,000 Pads-3/17. M.R.Co.,Ltd. Forms/C.2123.

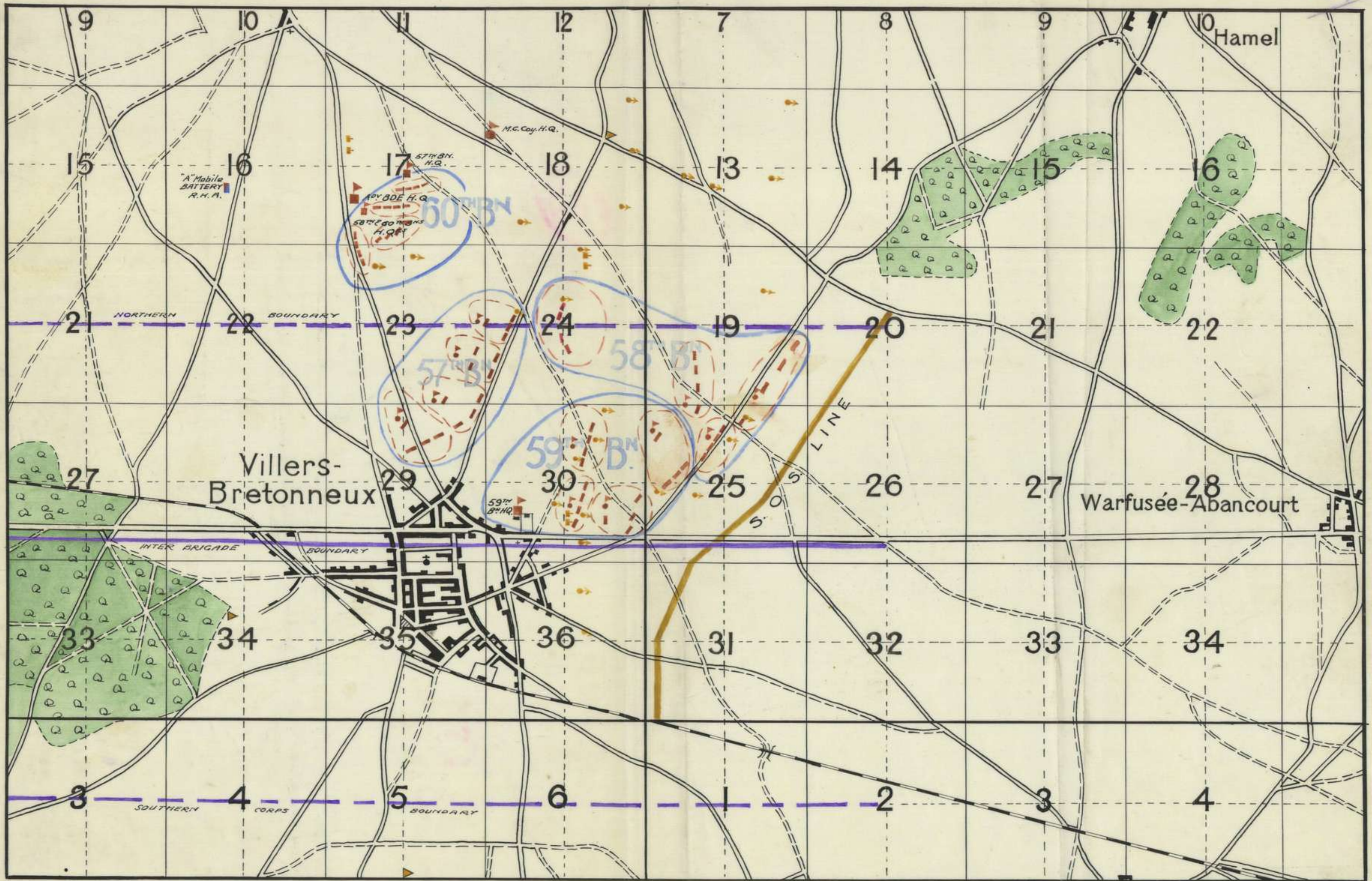
APPENDIX

28

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265.

APPENDIX 29/157



MAP REF. SHEET 62° 1:20,000.

DISPOSITIONS of 15TH AUST. INF. BDE.
ON NIGHT OF RELIEF 28TH APRIL 1918.

LEGEND

BN. H.Q.
 COY. H.Q.
 TRENCH MORTAR
 MACHINE GUN

ANTI TANK GUN
 ONE PLATOON

46/XXIX