

AWM4

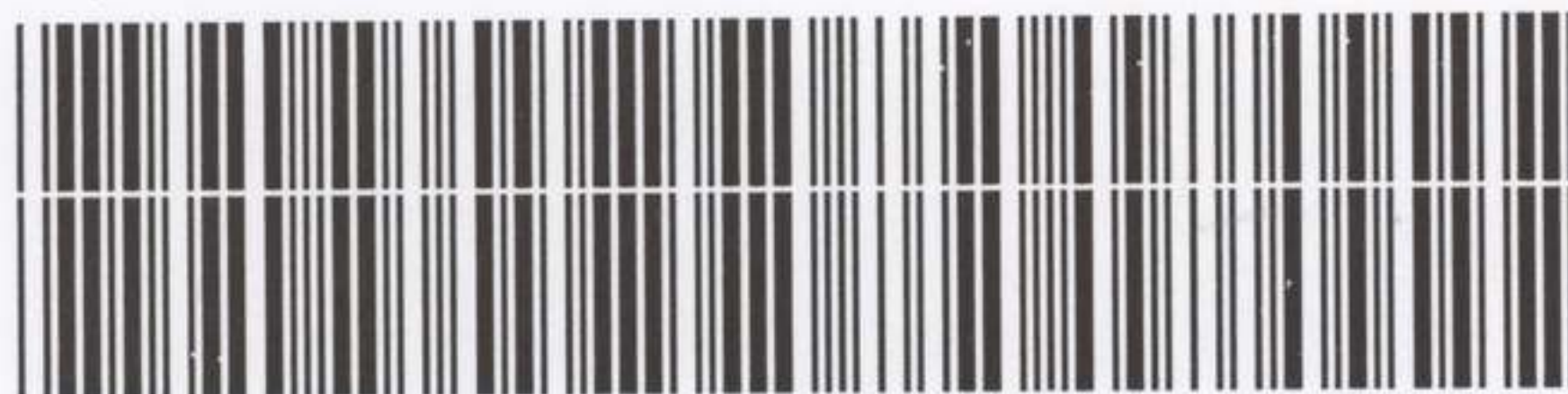
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Artillery

Item number: 13/39/24

Title: Headquarters, 12th Australian Field
Artillery Brigade

April 1918



AWM4-13/39/24

H. Q.
12TH ARMY BDE.
AUST. F.A.
No.
Date

War Diary

320

Time & Date
1.4.18
2-5.4.18
6.4.18
7.4.18
8.4.18
9.4.18

Still at VERDREL in G.H.Q. Reserve and administered by Canadian Corps.
Prepared to move at an hour's notice.
Still at VERDREL as above. Nothing to report.
At 8 p.m. orders were received from Canadian Corps RA. that "Brigade would probably relieve the 56th Divisional Artillery on the 7th." C.O. and Battery Commanders to proceed to 4th Canadian D.A. to arrive there at 11 a.m. on the 7th. Orders would be given to the Batteries, to follow the reconnaissance party, immediately the orders for the relief were confirmed by Army H.Q. on the 7th.
C.O. and Battery Commanders reported to 4th Canadian D.A. at 11 a.m. as instructed they were then given instructions to proceed to Groups under 280th & 281st Brigades R.F.A. at ROCLINCOURT, from ROCLINCOURT the Battery Commanders went on to reconnoitre the Battery Positions they were taking over, and the C.O. arranged the take over from the 281st Brigade R.F.A.
In the meantime the Batteries had received instructions to move from VERDREL in the direction of ARRAS, this was done and the entire relief completed by 8 p.m.
Batteries settled down in their new positions and checked regulations during the day. During the night they fired in support of a raid by the 10th Canadian Infantry Brigade.
At 12 noon the C.R.A. 4th C.D.A. rang the C.O. and instructed that the Brigade would pull out of positions at once to Wagon lines from whence they would move north to BARLIN as soon as they were all collected. The C.O. was to go ahead to BARLIN where a car would pick him up and take him to XI Div. Ctry. The C.O. arrived at BARLIN at about 5 p.m., there was no car at BARLIN so he got into communication with XIth D.A. who said arrangements had been changed and that he should report to Ist Corps RA. Staff Captain Ist Corps RA. said that the Brigade would go into billets at MAISNIL to RUITZ and await orders from 1st Army H.Q.

WAR DIARY

H. Q.
12TH ARMY BDE.
AUST. F.A.

War Diary

320

Time Date

10.4.18

By 1 a.m. ~~the whole~~ ^{No.} Brigade had moved into MAISNIL les RUITZ. At 2 p.m. orders were received from ~~1st Corps P.A.~~ ^{Date} for the Brigade to move to LONGLET area. That evening the Brigade was billeted in LA VALLEE and L'ECLÈME. When moving along the road in the direction of LONGLET the C.O. was met by a Special Despatch Rider who handed him directions to meet a car in L'ECLÈME which would take him to 51st P.A.H.Q. at ROBECQ. The C.O. and the Adjutant reported to the CRA at about 7 a.m. Orders were received to bring the Batteries into action on the road in Q.17. central about 300 yds. East of the ROBECQ-CALONNE Road on the following morning. The C.O. ~~then~~ returned to L'ECLÈME and issued the necessary orders to Battery Commanders for the move forward into action next morning.

11.4.18

The Brigade moved off from L'ECLÈME at 9 a.m. 2nd line transport was left behind with the BAC Commander. Batteries in column under the charge of the Battery Captains. The Battery Commanders being ahead of the main column, ready to make their reconnaissance before the Batteries came on their prospective positions. The C.O. ~~had~~ had gone on ahead, in the direction of ROBECQ, before they reached the latter however, they were met by a special Despatch Rider with instructions that, the enemy having advanced again during the night was holding a line approximately on our ^{prospective} Battery Position in Q.17. central, and that Batteries should be halted on the south side of LA BASSEE CANAL. These instructions having been sent back to the column, the C.O. ~~reported~~ reported to D.A.H.Q. where orders were received to reconnoitre and occupy positions along the ROBECQ-CALONNE Road with the least possible delay. The C.O. proceeded direct to the Headquarters of the Infantry Brigade (in Q.27 a & which our guns were to cover. The Adjutant returned to the CANAL and took Battery Commanders up to the ROBECQ-CALONNE Road area to reconnoitre. Positions were quickly decided upon and Batteries followed into action at the trot. The first Battery was ready to open fire shortly after 10.30 a.m., an SOS line in the vicinity of LE BOUZATEAUX Farm was given to the Batteries and Harassing fire carried on throughout the day, on L'EPINETTE and LESTREM. 3500 Rounds were fired during the day, and about the same number during the night.

WAR DIARY

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H.Q. War Diary
12TH ARMY BDE.
AUST. F.A.

Time Date

11.4.18.

One the morning when the Batteries were coming into action Captain AL. RICKARD M.C. and Lieut L.C. SETON M.C. had volunteered for service in the line with the Infantry, who were at the time very short of officers and NCO's. They each reorganised the scattered personnel of a Battalion of the 51st Division along with any other Infantrymen who were about, helped to have them fed and rested, and in the evening moved them up into close support. Their men took part in the operations of the next morning.

12.4.18.

5.10am Counter preparation was ordered and at 5.20am S.O.S. by the C.O. from 153rd Bde. HQ. at 5.45am an R.F.A. Officer who was Liaison Officer with an Infantry Battalion got into communication with the 112th Battery and said that the enemy had broken through at about 9.23. That our Infantry were retiring and would form up somewhere in front of the Batteries which were on the ROBECQ-CALONNE Road all Batteries and Wagon Lines were immediately advised, and Guns limbers ordered to be held in readiness. The Brigade Major 51 DA. was also advised, but he expressed the opinion that the report was exaggerated and had probably emanated from an Infantry relief which was supposed to be in progress. at 5.55am Machine Gun and Rifle Fire was heard close in front of Brigade HQ. on the Eastern side of the ROBECQ-CALONNE Road. At 6am the 112th Battery rang up to say that patrols could see the enemy advancing towards the guns and that there were apparently none of our own infantry between the guns and enemy skirmishers. Gun limbers were ordered up and the withdrawal of guns commenced. The 46th and 112th Batteries which were the farthest South withdrew without interference or casualties, but the withdrawal of the 45th & 47th Batteries who were a three quarters of a mile near CALONNE was a more difficult task. Whilst limbering up they were under rifle and Machine Gun fire, but were extraordinarily fortunate. Casualties amounted to 5 wounded and one missing, and six horses killed or wounded. Lieut DODDEMEADE (47th Bty) and DE TUETY (45th Bty) had their horses shot under them. All guns and material however were extricated mainly owing to a stand made by seven of the WARWICKS and a number of the battery personnel with rifles & Lewis guns. Batteries crossed the CANAL independently 45th 47th & 112th Btys moving to BUSNES (45th & 47th by road North of CANAL and the 112th through L'ECLERME)

WAR DIARY

H. O. War
12TH ARMY BDE.
AUST. F.A.

Diary.

Date
12.4.18.

They were collected here by the Brigade Commander. The 46th Battery in company with the Adjutant and the Orderly Officer crossed the CANAL at GUAR BECQUE and proceeding Eastwards along the canal came into action near canal banks in P.M. The Adjutant rode into BUSNES to 51st D.A.H.Q. to report the Battery in action. A message was subsequently received from the C.O. who had reported to the C.R.A. and Batteries were ordered to rendezvous at a point N.W. of BUSNES. The C.O. was, when the attack was launched still with the 153 Inf. Brigade H.Q. (Q. 27 a). The Infantry Brigadier had been holding a very extended front with much attenuated Battalions, fighting had been continuous and the Boche seemed to have developed the habit of advancing well before dawn behind a screen of skirmishers, throwing out brilliant bluish-white rockets, and well equipped with light machine guns. He had pushed our line back during the afternoon of the 4th, and at dusk. At about 5.45 a.m. the cracking of rifles and the arrival of bullets showed that he had again penetrated somewhere. The Batteries were turned on. The flares, rifles, and machine guns grew steadily nearer, till the Brigadier of 152 & 153 Infantry Brigades decided to withdraw their Headquarters to the CALOXNE-ROBECQ Road. Collecting charts, maps, and papers took some time. The Staff being cleared the Brigadier 153 Infantry Brigade and the C.O. left the front door as the Boche approached the back. 152 Infantry Brigade Headquarters on the opposite side of the road however were mopped up complete as they were on the point of leaving the house. The Boche crossed the road between Infantry Brigade and the Battery Positions, so the C.O. moved towards the Canal where the rest of the hour was spent, in helping to organize bridgehead parties etc. The C.O. then moved round the bulge in the advance towards the Battery Positions to see that all were clear. Seeing that all the guns had got clear he ordered all the Wagon Lines out of the fighting area and rendezvoused the Batteries N.W. of BUSNES and reported to the C.R.A. 51st Div. who disposed the Brigades and that night we fired harassing fire from L'Ecleme.

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I. Q.
12TH ARMY BDE.
AUST. F.A.

War Diary

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Time & Date	
13.4.18	" Still in action at L'ECLEME. At 5 p.m. message was received from 51 DA, that the Brigade should move into action in the vicinity of P.20.d. on the S.W. side of the Canal. Batteries were therefore withdrawn and positions were ultimately taken up at P.20.d & P.27.a. near the ROBECQ-BUSNES Road. Headquarters moved to HAMET Billet with the 180 Brigade R.F.A., on whose front the fire of the Batteries was super-imposed for defensive purposes.
14.4.18	Some firing done out of these positions, but the long range to the front line prevented anything extensive being done in Harassing Fire.
15.4.18	On the night ^{evening} of the 15th ^{18 hrs.} coming Batteries were moved forward to positions in P.28. b. in rear of ROBECQ. Brigade Headquarters moved to a house in P.28. a. 30.05.
16.4.18	Heavy Harassing Fire maintained throughout the day and night on the enemy line.
17.4.18	Harassing Fire was again maintained, and special shoots on targets asked for by Infantry. 9 p.m. Enemy shelling heavily on our left. Brigade Major rang up to say that the enemy showed signs of making an attack. Barrages to be put down in the early morning. 47th Battery received orders to report to C.O. 177th Brigade R.F.A. for attachment.
18.4.18	Enemy activity continued in the early morning, several attempts to attack were made by the enemy, but the vigorous counter preparation with Harassing Fire put down by the Field Guns, broke up these attacks. 8.30 a.m. Brigade H.Q. was moved to a house on the BUSNES-ROBECQ Road about 200 yds from the S.W. side of the Canal.
19.4.18	Harassing Fire still maintained. 8.25 p.m. S.O.S. ordered by the 180 Bde. R.F.A. 8.34 p.m. stop.
20.4.18	1250 Rds fired throughout the day.
21.4.18	Lieut le FEVRE moved forward along the CALONNE-ROBECQ Road to a point at P.24. b. 50.30. fired 70 Rds. and obtained 25 hits. 1400 Rds were fired throughout the day.
22.4.18	How's fired special concentration on Q 20 b 25.50 for 10 mins at 2 rds per how per min. 4 a.m. How's fired concentration as above on LA PIERRE AU BEUR. 18 pds usual Harassing Fire. How's to pull up to a position from which to gas PARADIS. Decided to pull up to positions used by 256 Bty. Gas Ammunition to be carted to the site, 18 pds Btys carrying out special registrations for the operation tomorrow morning. 1000 Rds. Fired.
23.4.18	00/1 carried out. Infantry operations a complete success.

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H. Q. War
12TH ARMY BDE.
AUST. F.A.

Diary.

Time & Date	No. Description
23.4.18.	Colonel WARD 18 th Brigade has grouped 47 th Bty with his Brigade. How Bty fired on Q.8.c 9.1-9.8.d 9.9 for 10 min at rapid rate from 4 p.m. Enemy shelling Q.14.c all afternoon planes also active over this area, which is that taken by us this morning. Concentrated fire maintained all day and in the night on areas in rear of that taken by us this morning. Creeping and draw net Barrages put down by 18 hrs at intervals to breaks, if any, mowing of Koskor 300 Rounds fired.
24.4.18.	Counter preparation from 4 a.m till 6 a.m. 6.15 a.m S.O.S. The enemy attacked on the front of our advance of yesterday morning. The few who got through before the Barrage was put down were killed or captured by the Infantry. Attacks completely rebuffed our line intact right through. Instructions were received for the 112 th How Battery to move into vicinity of Q.23.c. and Q.29.d. 3600 Rds fired.
25.4.18.	C.R.A. came round the Batteries. S.O.S. superimposed on 255 & 256 Bde. Front. 9.40 p.m. S.O.S. ordered by C.R.A. 9.45 p.m. reduced to 1 rd per gun per minute. 10.3 p.m. Stopped all quiet. 2100 Rds fired. 112 th Bty moved up across the canal to Position at P.26.a.
26.4.18.	4 p.m. all guns, that could reach, fired on PARADIS at 4 rds per gun per minute for 15 mins, 3 rds per gun per min for 5 mins, 2 rds per gun per minute for 10 mins. 1279 Rds fired.
27.4.18	Nothing happened excepting usual amount of firing from our guns. 1400 Rds fired.
28.4.18	300 Rounds fired including 280 Gas.
29.4.18	From 12.20 - 2.30 p.m. the enemy shelled the area from ROBECQ & BUSNES heavily with 77 m.m., 4.2 Hows & 5.9 Hows. 1200 Rds fired during day.
30.4.18.	1500 Rds fired including Gas.

F. Mountford Lieut
for Adjutant, 12th Army Brigade Aust. F.A.

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12th ARMY BRIGADE.

A.F.F.
APRIL 1918

List. of APPENDICES.

Original

APPENDIX TO WAR DIARY FOR APRIL 1918.

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No.

Subject.

- 3
- 1 Extract from Brigade Diary.
 - 2 Extract from Diary of 45th. Battery
 - 3 Extract from Diary of 46th. Battery
 - 4 Extract from Diary of 47th. Battery
 - 5 Extract from Diary of 112th. Battery.

12th ARMBde.

APPENDIX 1

12TH ARMY BRIGADE AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY

— EXTRACT FROM DIARY —

Reference Map Sheet 36A 1/40000

On the evening of the 10th inst. the brigade was continuing its move by road from ARRAS to billets in LENGLET area when a despatch was handed to the C.O. directing him to meet a SIst D.A. car in L'ECLEME and proceed to DAHQ at ROBECQ for orders. The C.O. and the Adjutant immediately rode on to L'ECLEME and reported to the CRA at about 7 pm.

Orders were received to bring the batteries into action on the road in Q17 central about 3000' East of ROBECQ - CALONNE Road the following morning. The C.O. and Adjutant then returned to L'ECLEME in the vicinity of which the batteries were bivouaced and issued the necessary orders to Battery Commanders for the move forward into action next morning.

While the C.O. and the adjutant were proceeding to ROBECQ at head of Brigade next morning they were met by a Special D.R. from DAHQ. The message contained instructions that, the Bossche had advanced during the night, was holding a line which ran through our prospective battery position and that batteries should be halted on the south side of LA BASSEE CANAL.

These instructions having been sent back to the column, the C.O. and Adjutant reported to DAHQ where orders were received to reconnoitre to occupy positions along the ROBECQ - CALONNE Road with the least possible delay.

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 The Co. proceeded direct to the Headquarters of the Infantry Brigade (Q27a) which our guns were to cover. The adjutant returned to the CANAL and took Battery Commanders up to the ROBÈCA-CALONNE Road area to reconnoitre. Positions were quickly decided upon and batteries followed into action at the first.

The first battery was ready to open fire shortly after 10.30 am, an S.O.S. line in B11a in vicinity of LE BOUZATEAUX FARM. was given to batteries and harassing fire carried on throughout the day, particular attention being paid to LEPINETTE and L'EPINETTE-LESTRIEM Road. Approximately 3500 rounds were fired during the day and about the same number throughout the night.

At 5.20 am. S.O.S. was ordered by the Co. from 153 Infantry Bde HQ. At 5.45 am. an R.F.A. officer from a Battalion HQ of the 153 Infy Brigade rang up from the 112th Battery to say that the Bosche had broken through at about Q23a. ~~at~~ and that our retiring Infantry were forming up in front of the guns. Batteries and wagon lines were immediately advised and guns timber ordered to be held in readiness. At 5.50 am. D.A. were advised, but the B.M. expressed the opinion that the report had emanated from an infantry relief which was supposed to be in progress.

At 5.55 am. machine gun and rifle fire was heard close in front of Brigade HQ. on the Eastern side of the ROBÈCA-CALONNE Road. At 6 am. the 112th Battery rang up to say that patrols could see the enemy advancing towards the guns and that there were apparently none of our own infantry between the guns and the enemy ~~positions~~.

APPENDIX I

(3)

Gun limbers were ordered up and the withdrawal of guns commenced. The 46th + 47th Batteries which were the furthest south withdrew without interference or casualties but the withdrawal of the 45th + 47th Batteries who were a three quarters of a mile nearer CALONNE was a more difficult task. Whilst limbering up they were under rifle & M.G. fire, but ^{were} extraordinarily fortunate. Casualties amounted to five wounded and one missing and six horses killed or wounded. Lieut. DODDEMEADE (47th Bty) and de TUETY (45th Bty) had their horses shot under them. All guns and material however were extricated, mainly owing to a stand made by seven of the WARWICKS and a number of the battery personnel with rifles and Lewis guns.

Batteries crossed the canal independently. 45th, 47th + 42th Btys. moving to BUSNES. (45th + 47th by road north of Canal + the 42th through L'ECLÈME) They were collected here by the Bde. Commander. The 46th Bty in company with the Adjutant and the orderly officer crossed the Canal at GUARBECQUE and proceeding eastwards along the canal came into action near canal bank in P.I.G. The Adjutant rode into BUSNES to 51st DAHQ to report the battery in action. A message was subsequently received from the CO who had reported to the CRA and batteries were ordered to rendezvous at a point N.W. of BUSNES.

On the morning of the 11th while the batteries were coming into action Capt. A. L. RICKARD M.C. and Lieut. L. C. SETON M.C. volunteered for service with

APPENDIX |

(H)
 the infantry on the line, who were at the time very short of officers and N.C.O's. They remained with them until the evening of the 13th.

A letter was subsequently received from the Infantry Brigade Commander expressing his thanks for very valuable work done by these officers.

The Infantry Brigadier had been holding a very extended front with much attenuated battalions. Fighting had been continuous and the Bosche seemed to have developed the habit of advancing well before dawn behind a screen of stormtroopers throwing out brilliant bluish-white rockets and well equipped with light machine guns.

We pushed our line slightly back during the afternoon of the 11th and at dusk but at about 5.45 on the cracking of rifles and the arrival of bullets show that he had penetrated somewhere. The batteries were turned on. The flares, rifles and machine guns grew steadily nearer till the Brigadiers of the 152nd. The 153rd Inf Bde, decided to withdraw their Headquarters to the CALONNE-ROBECCA Road. Collecting maps, charts & papers took some time. The sky being clear the Infy Brigadier & the CO. left the front door as the Bosche approached the back

The 152nd Bde. H.Q. on the opposite side of the road however were mopped up complete as they were on the point of leaving the house the Bosche crossed the road between Inf. Bde. & the battery positions so we moved towards the canal and the next hour was spent in help to organize bridgehead parties etc.

APPENDIX

(3)
 The Co. then moved round the bulge in the
 advance towards the battery positions through
 ROBECQ to see that all were clear. Finding
 that all the guns had got clear he ordered
 all the wagon lines out of the fighting area
 and rendezvoused the batteries N.W. of BUSNES
 and reported to the C.R.A. ~~at~~ 51st DIV. who
 disposed the batteries + that night we fired
 harassing fire from L'ECLÈME moving west
 evening to the canal and the following day
 to under the lee of ROBECQ.

Men in excellent fettle and everything
 entirely satisfactory. Plenty of ammunition and
 good food.

12th ARMY BRIGADE AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY

APPENDIX. 2.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY

of

45th BATTERY

Reference Map: Sheet 362 1/40000.

On 11th April 1918 the Battery marched from wagon lines in L. Ecluse under orders to take up a position on or near road in Q17 central - due East of ROBECQ-CALONNE Road. When approaching the LA BASSEE CANAL due south of ROBECQ Battery commanders were met by the Adjutant and instructed to halt columns on south side of CANAL and await fresh orders - the Boche has advanced during the night to the road which had been selected by SIDA. The previous evening for the guns to come into action on the Brigade Commander and Adjutant went to SIDA HQ - ROBECQ and about 9.30 am the Adjutant returned to the column and took Battery Commanders forward to select positions on either side of ROBECQ-CALONNE Road in or about squares Q13-14. A position was quickly decided upon and the battery came into action in Q7d and opened fire at about 10.30 am. At 11 am an order to move forward was received and a position occupied in Q8d on the East side of the road. Harassing fire was commenced and sustained throughout the remainder of the day and through the night at an increasing rate towards dawn.

At 6.15 am 12/4/18 machine gun and rifle fire were heard approaching the Battery from the right flank and bullets commenced to fall on the position, followed by barrage from 77mms and enfilade fire from a 5.9 gun. The guns

APPENDIX 2

(2)

teams were parked about 400' from the Battery and Sgt GEORGE who was in charge with Bar RICHARDSON grasping the situation, with promptitude brought the gun teams lumbering up at a gallop under shell machine gun and rifle fire. The Bosche infantry were at this stage between 200' and 300' from the guns and a number of rounds were fired at them as our gun teams approached. The battery then succeeded in withdrawing in good order through ROBECQ. During the final stages in action highly commendable and valuable work was performed by Gun W PARKINSON with battery Lewis Gun and Gun TW KELLY with a rifle who joined a small body of retiring infantry and materially assisted in checking the advancing Bosches while the guns were withdrawn. On the road into ROBECQ the Adjutant directed Battery Commanders to cross the CANAL and report at earliest possible moment to C.R.A. 51st DIVⁿ.

Upon reaching BUSNES a message from Brigade command was received for the Brigade to rendezvous at a point N.W. of BUSNES. Subsequently a position was occupied in front of L'ECLENE and harassing fire on enemys communications maintained throughout the night.

During the ~~retirement~~ ^{retirement} on the 12th inst. Lieut F B SHARP and a party of 20 gunners with rifles remained at the canal to assist in defending the Drawbridges.

APPENDIX 3

12TH ARMY BRIGADE AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY

Reference Map Sheet 36A.

EXTRACT FROM DIARY.1/40,00046TH BATTERY

On the night of 10/11th April the Battery bivouacked at CENSE-LA-VALLÉE
V. 10. d. 9.7.

at 9.30 p.m. the O.C. was sent for by the C.O. who was at
L'ECLÈME. The O.C. received instructions that on the morning of
the 11th April he would move the Battery forward with a view
to taking up a position in Q. 17. central, with liaison lines
in the neighborhood of Q. 7.

at 9 a.m. on the morning of the 11th, the Battery moved off from
LA VALLÉE with Capt. LANCE RICKARD M.C. in charge of the Column,
the O.C. having gone on to the head of the Brigade.

The Battery moved through L'ECLÈME in the direction of a point
near ROBERT, from whence it was to be guided to its position.
The Battery Commander, with Lieut SMITH and a portion of the
Battery Staff at the head of the Brigade were met by the Adjutant,
on the road at V. 4. c., in company with the other Battery
Commanders. The O.C. was informed that orders were changed,
the enemy having advanced during the night. Orders were
then received to reconnoitre and take up a position in Q. 13. c.
O.C., after giving necessary orders to Capt. RICKARD then
proceeded ahead with all possible haste to the vicinity of
battery position, which was ultimately selected in
Q. 13. a 20. 10. the Battery brought into action, and

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APPENDIX 3.

Telephonic communication established with Pongade Headquarters which was established at a house in P.24. 6.50-90.

The Battery position was very accurately and easily located by means of CHURCHES at ST. VENANT, CALONNE and ROBECQ. Lines were laid out on the crossroads at L'EPINETTE - R.9C 65.78.

Under instructions from BTLG fire was opened on L'EPINETTE and vicinity. 1200 rounds were fired during the day on the above target, BOUZETUZ FERME, G. 11. C. 58.85, and Roads in R.13. art. 6.

Harassing fire was carried out during the night - about 1200 rounds being fired.

Counter preparation was put down at 5.10 am on the 12th and at about 5.30 a.m. a SOS.

About 10 minutes later information was received from the Adjutant that the enemy had broken through and that gun teams should be kept in readiness.

At about 5.45 am. orders were received to retire. This was done in an orderly manner in the direction of ST VENANT.

The guns were sent across the canal, brought into action at P.20. a. 4. 1, and the fact reported to 51st D.A. No firing was done from this position. On the evening of the 12th the

Battery came into action near L'ECLÈME at V.3.E.4.5.

where harassing fire was maintained all night.

On the morning of the 11th April Captain LANCE RICKARD M.C. had volunteered to assist the Infantry of the 51st Div. who had been badly handled and were short of officers & N.C.O.s.

He gathered up the remainder of a regiment of Black Watch,

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APPENDIX 3.17

organized them, had them fed, and in the evening moved them up into close support. His men did some very good work in stemming the force of the enemy rush on the morning of the 12th, and ultimately were amongst those who manned the new line, and held on until reinforcements arrived.

12th ARMY BRIGADE AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY

Map Sheet 36th SE-36 SW. Extract from, D.M.S.

1:40,000.

4th BATTERY

from 11th to 12th April 1918

11.4.18. At 2 a.m. on the morning of the 11th while the Battery was in billets at CENSE LA VALLEE, west of BONNEHAM, V. B. A., all Battery Companies were summoned to Headquarters at 4.15 a.m. Information had been received that the Boches were then holding a line along the main road and railway from LESTRACQ R. B. 4, south towards VIEILLE CHAPELLE R. B. 32. Our orders were to move at 7 a.m. the morning to Battery position on G. 17 central.

At 6.30 a.m. the Battery moved with guns leading the column to LECLAME where 45 weapons were handed over to the C.P.S. The Battery then proceeded along the main road, from LECLAME to KOBELCO where the head of the column arrived at 9 a.m. central and were met by the Adjutant and were informed that the enemy had advanced and was then holding a line from G. 20 a along road to G. 11 a and G. 5 a, and the Battery was ordered to come into action at 9.15 a.m.

At 8.30 a.m. our position was occupied at G. 10. 14 and fire opened on roads on G. 10. 12 to road to G. 7. 12.

At 9 a.m. orders were received, and a position was occupied at G. 7. d. 5. 7 a.m. finally ordered to be guns brought. In the meantime all sections had emptied at guns and refilled at 10.15 a.m. F. 16. 4.

At 11.30 a.m. orders were received to move further forward and a position was occupied in an orchard on G. 5. d. 05. 25, south of CARONNE. (Guns) proceeded on G. 6. d. 9. 12. 4, R. 7. 12. 4.

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APPENDIX 4

were kept under constant shell fire and road from L'EPINETTE R.7c. to R.8 central was continually searched.

at 7.30 p.m. (about 100) enemy was seen approaching through L'EPINETTE; heavy fire was opened, and reports afterwards stated that heavy casualties were inflicted.

Twelve hundred rounds had now been expended, and assisted by the B.A.C. Ammunition was brought up to 300 rounds per gun. Intermittent fire was kept up through the night. No information was available as to the location of the enemy, but there appeared to be very few of our own infantry in front of us.

Patrols were sent out to patrol the CALONNE area.

13. At 5.45 am the Battery was subjected to intermittent shelling with shrapnel of heavy calibre, this was followed shortly afterwards by fairly heavy rifle ~~fire~~ and machine gun fire apparently from the direction of Q. 9.d. and Q. 15.a.

Reports of a few ~~of~~ Infantry drifting down the road from CALONNE stated that we were holding north of CALONNE but that he was advancing from the EAST. This information was verified by our patrols - Limbers were brought to the guns which still kept in action.

At 6.30 am rifle fire was discernable and came from the direction of Q. 14.d & Q. 15.a. and one man and two horses were hit. As our only line of retirement was the main road through ROBECQ, through H and C, and apparently none of our infantry in front to cover us, orders were given to limber up and withdraw. The Battery moved down at fifty yards between guns, and when near road junction in Q. 14.e. came under heavy rifle

-(3) -

APPENDIX 4

and machine gun fire from a very short range. Numerous German infantry were observed marching in skirmishing order in Q. 14. d. and southern portion of Q. 14. c. One man and four horses were wounded and Lieut. DODDMEADE'S horse was shot from under him; but as machine gun fire was low, and rifle fire erratic, no further casualties were inflicted. The withdrawal was assisted at this junction, by seven infantrymen of the WARWICKS, assisted by several of the gunners of the Battery, who lined the hedge along the road to Q. 14. e. S. 8.

at this juncture, Gunner A. MEDCALF rallied a scattered party of retiring infantry and by his splendid example and individual endeavours helped very materially in checking the enemy advance until the guns were clear of the position; and having accomplished this he remained with the Infantry until nightfall only retiring to the Battery when a new line had been established.

Throughout the foregoing period, whilst the Battery was in action, Gunner O. COHEN, the Battery Medical Orderly, maintained a R.A.P. on the CALONNE Road, and throughout the night of 11/12th inst, he dressed innumerable wounded Infantrymen and in this way saved a number of the lives of those waiting to be removed in ambulances, and remained at his task until after the Battery had withdrawn, when he was forced to move back with the last of our own retiring Infantrymen.

-(4)-

APPENDIX ~~H~~

The Battery Commanders reported to CRA 51st Division at Q. 23. C. 11. and was told to proceed across the canal and select a position to cover line ST-VENAN - ROBECC road east along canal.

At 10 am the Battery Commander reported to the C.O. 12th Army Brigade Avel 24, at BUSNES, where it was decided to occupy positions at V.I.A. 1.7.

12th ARMY BRIGADE AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY
of
112th BATTERY

Reference Map Sheet 36A: 1/40000 (Edition 6).

By was ordered into action on morning of 11th April - position taken Q 14 C 25
wagon line P 24 B 2 2 - line of fire due east. Firing of timbers (from 11.30 AM)
fire was brought to bear on L'Abbaye and LESTREM (R 7 R 4) this
was maintained through out day & night intermittently - 2500 rounds being
fired.

At 5 AM on 12th April an artillery shoot took place. at 5.10 AM S.O.S. was sent out
on our front on both flanks. This signal (gun very light) was repeated
at 6 AM (that the line was retreating - we were ordered
to fire on order. message was sent to BATT ~~1~~ of the situation
to prepare to withdraw the Battery was given

As the fire was still further announced timbers sent for, flames
to the ~~enemy's~~ advanced tracks could now be seen falling about
50 to 300 yards in front and the situation was somewhat serious
at about this time firing of the Hows had expended all their
ammunition the remaining two having only 17 rounds between them.
The timbers ~~now~~ being on ^{the} position cease firing was ordered & the
battery withdrew.

The enemy patrols had now advanced to about Q 14 C 5 2 along
the banks of Clarence River the withdrawing guns came under
machine gun & rifle fire. Suddenly the ^{hedges} ~~hedges~~ on either side of the road
secret the teams and the Battery withdrew with only one casualty.

APPENDIX 5

-(2)-

At the time of withdrawal and again afterwards fine work was done by P.O. 15222 SIG CORP DANIEL S.T.S in getting all Battery staff equipment away and also No 2725 GNR WHITE C-T in charge of Lewis Gun. This gunner moved forward with his gun and opened fire on advancing enemy - no doubt holding up his load a time or two temporarily.

Orders were received at ROBECQ that the line of retirement was BUSHES LILWERS also that one section was to come into action about 3500 x from ROBECQ to cover the drawbridge.

The Bty Coht was sent with Bty less one section to rear, Battery Commander & one section's commander remained with rear section. Positions at V 3.6.9.7 and V 3.6.1.6 observations being obtained from these in the vicinity - 190 rounds were fired on roads etc in RE 12 on VINAWE on 9.26.0 and 0. Having fired all ammunition the section rejoined the remainder of the Battery.

Defence position was taken up at O.6.0.28 wagon lines O.6.0.1.7. Advance ordered from this position to V 2.0.6.4 - line laid out from (about) ROBECQ Church.

This position was maintained until 16/4/18 then to P 26 0.4.9 in (at) 16/4/18 then P.35.0.4.9 to date.

On 11/4/18 Lt G. B. Selton volunteered for service with the Infantry and was attached to 1st Bn Black Watch entering good service with them until he rejoined the Battery on the 15th.

- (3) -

APPENDIX 5

In the morning of the 12th Lt R V. WHAFF with 20 gunners mounted
 as mounted Infantry acted as rear guard patrol and detailed
 to hold bridges along the canal (LA BASSE).

Headquarters Canteen, 12th (Army) Brigade
Balance Sheet as at 30th April, 1918.

<u>Liabilities</u>	F.	C.	<u>Assets</u>	F.	C.
Loans made for initial Capital		300 00	Stock in hand 30/4/18	739	45
Net value of assets	478	85	Cash in hand ..	39	40
	<u>778</u>	<u>85</u>		<u>778</u>	<u>85</u>

I ~~do~~ certify that the above Balance Sheet is a true and correct one as per the vouchers and books produced for our inspection.

R. J. Watt, Lieut
 President Commt.

E. L. Lee } Auditor

28/5/18.

45th Battery Canteen, 12th (Army) Brigade
Balance Sheet as at 30th April, 1918

<u>Liabilities</u>		<u>assets</u>	
Capital	1500 00	Stock on hand	486 80
appropriation of	886 10	Cash	1839 30
	<u>2386 10</u>		<u>2326 10</u>

I ~~do~~ certify that the above Balance Sheet is a true and correct one as shown by the books and vouchers produced.

[Signature] Auditor

[Signature] Capt
 President

28/5/18

46 Battery 12th Aust. I.A. Bde

Balance Sheet.

<u>Liabilities</u>	Francs Cts	<u>Assets</u>	Francs Cts.
Contributions still to be repaid	175 00	Cash in hand as per Cash Book	505 95
Balance	927 85	Stock in hand	461 90
	<u>1102 85</u>	Owing by Brigade Reg ^t Funds	135 00
			<u>1102 85</u>

30/4/18.

[Signature]
 President Bankers Com^{ty}

Audited and found correct }

[Signature]
 W. J. Harrison
[Signature]

Auditors }

112th Howitzer Battery Canteen, 12th (Army) Brigade
Balance Sheet as at 30th April, 1918.

<u>Liabilities</u>		<u>Assets</u>	
Capital	2000 00	Stock in hand	566 35
Sundry Creditors	8 50	Cash " "	1206 05
Appropriation of	21 20	Sundry Debtors	187 30
		Officers Mess	70 00
	<u>2029 70</u>		<u>2029 70</u>

I certify that the above Balance Sheet is a true and correct one as shewn by the books and vouchers produced.

W. H. [Signature] } Auditor

J. [Signature]
President

22/5/18.

B. A. C. Canteen, 12th (Army) Brigade,
Balance Sheet as at 30th April, 1918.

Liabilities	F.	C.	Assets	F.	C.
Capital	2000	00	Stock on hand	783	35
Appropriation of	406	60	Cash " "	16	23 25
	<u>2406</u>	<u>60</u>		<u>2406</u>	<u>60</u>

I certify that the stock is as per
 Canteen Managers Stock Sheet of 30/4/18, and
 the Cash on hand is correct as per
 Balance shown in Cash Book at 30/4/18.
 The Balance Sheet is therefore correct as
 far as the Books are concerned, but is
 subject to my report on same.

J. L. Lee Auditor

Approved by Committee 28/5/18

J. P. Beattie Capt. President