AWM4

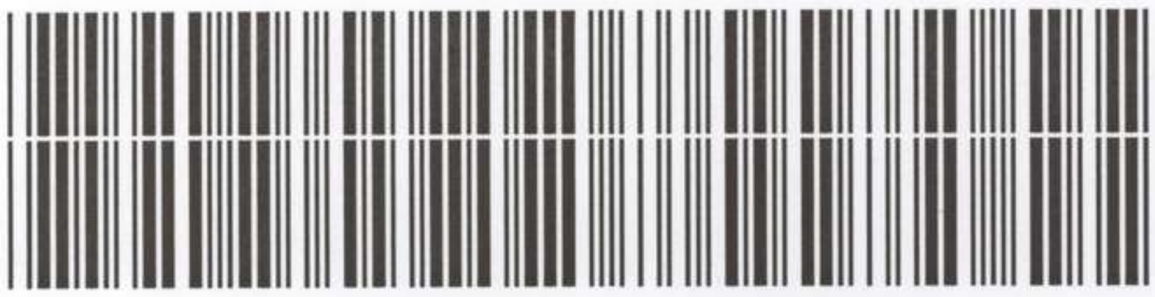
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/40/30

Title: 23rd Infantry Battalion

March 1918



AWM4-23/40/30

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

23rd Bn A.I.F.

WAR DIARY
or
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(*Erase heading not required.*)

VOLUME XXXV PP. I

Army Form C. 2118.

Place	Date 1918 March	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Strength O.	ORs	Remarks and references to Appendices
GUESQUES	1	–	Training for day was cancelled owing to snow – In afternoon			App. 1.
CALAIS F4 1/100,000			Raiding Party – 10 volunteers per coy – left for B'de training – Lt. W.			MW.
			a Martin in charge of B'de, and Lt. Sto. Griffen of Bn. party.			
	2.	–	Band party visited No 2 Genl. Hospital Boulogne – Major D Beith	47	1028	
			in charge party.			MW.
	3	–	Rain necessitates cancellation of Church Parade. – C.O. Lt. Col. W. Brayne			
			D.S.O. returned from temporary command of 6th A.I. B'de.			MW.
	4	–	Transport left Verval this day			App. 2.
	5	–	After making usual preparations for leaving billeting area –			
			ie Returning of surplus gear, cleaning of billets, and obtaining of			Do.
			clearance vouchers from Billet owners, for ground used – Bn.			MW.
	6		moved out to Starting Point by Coys at 6.30 am. – LOTTINGHEN			
			station was left at 9 am – 21st Bn A.I.F. accompanying – Thence			Do.
			for STEENWERCK SIDING at 2 pm and route marched to			
CANTEEN CORNER.			CANTEEN CORNER where 39th Bn A.I.F. were relieved.			
			Lt J A Lorimer, an original officer, who has returned after being			

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A7883) Wt. W809/M1672 350,000 4/17 Sch. 52a Forms/C/2118/14

Original Compiler

23rd Bn A.I.F.

VOLUME XXXV

Pp 2

Army Form C. 2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
(*Erase heading not required.*)

Place	Date 1918 March	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			Strength O. ORs.	
CANTEEN CORNER			invalided to Australia in 1915 - was evacuated to base for Med. Board	Mrs.
	7		C.O., Adj. (Lt. L. Maddrell MC) Maj. W. Beith (O.C. C Coy.) + Capt. W. J.	
			Galbraith (O.C. D Coy) reconnoitred forward - 36th Bn AIF took over from	
			us at CANTEEN CORNER which we left at 4 pm. - On relief of 35th	
CATACOMBS			Bn AIF, completed by 6.30 pm. dispositions of Coys were. H.Q. + A + B.	App. 3
			CATACOMBS. C + D PROWSE POINT area.	Mrs.
	8		Capt C G Templeman, RMO. returned from hospital sick. Col. Bennett	
			attached for 24 hours left today. B Coy (Capt L Hinchcliffe MC)	
			moved to PROWSE POINT at 2 pm, to fall in with the general	
			scheme of having reserves available in a forward position - Fatigue	
			Parties went forward to work on VICTORY SP + UNEVEN SUPPORT.	Mrs.
	9	-	Usual parties were despatched forward by Coys. 165 1005	Mrs.
	10	-	Chap. Edmondson conducted service at TRANSPORT LINES ROMARIN.	Mrs.
	11	-	Red LODGE Baths allotted to Bn and freely availed of.	Mrs.
	12	-	Still fine weather. Today a German propoganda balloon was brought	Mrs.
	13		down near CATACOMBS - Enemy shelling in vicinity of PROWSE PT.	

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A7883) Wt. W809/M1672 350,000 4/17 Sch. 52a Forms/C/2118/14

Original Copy

23rd Bn. A.I.F.

VOLUME XXXV pp. 3

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
(*Erase heading not required.*)

Army Form C. 2118.

Place	Date 1918 March	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Strength O. ORs		Remarks and references to Appendices
CATACOMBS			resulted in the death of C.S.M. Cox of D. Coy. Deceased has been through Pozieres with Bn & was mentioned for services in Gazette 1st Jan/18			mw.
	14		H.Q. & D. Coy moved from Annscroft Av. (PROWSE PT area) to ADVANCED ESTAMINET			mw.
	15	-	Advance party 33% Specialists went up to line. Lt W.O. Summers in charge B (Right relieving Coy) Lt Morrison A (Left relieving Coy) D. Coy in anticipation of enemy attack on left Bn. Sector moved in evening to Position in USEFUL Lane. Lt. A.H. Rogers evacuated sick.			aff 4 " 12 mw.
Ugt 35.	16	-	24th Bn A.I.F. were relieved by Bn. at 9.30 pm. Dispositions of Coys. after relief Right to Left. B Coy. (Capt Hinchcliffe) A Coy. (Lt. R. Lenaton) - Front line. C. Coy (Maj. D. Beith) Support - Reserve Coy Capt W.J. Galbraith - On left 30th Bn. A.I.F. - Right 21st A.I.F. - No casualties suffered. C.O. & Adj visited line in morning while Maj. Bateman & Maj. Beith reconnoitred POTTERIE Fm area.	45	999	aff 5. " 6 mw 2 mw.
	17					
	18	-	C.O. went to Transport lines en route for School. Maj. G.J. Bateman taking command.			mw.

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A7883) Wt. W809/M1672 350,000 4/17 Sch. 52a Forms/C/2118/14

Brigade Pamphlet

23rd Bn. A.I.F

VOLUME XXXV pp. 4

Army Form C. 2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

WAR DIARY
or
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~.
(*Erase heading not required.*)

Place	Date 1918	Hour	Summary of Events and Information — Strength O. ORs	Remarks and references to Appendices
	March.			
U9b35	19	.	Raided fairly heavily - Trenches being in fairly good repair not much inconvenience was experienced.	nil.
	20	.	Capt. C.B. Templeman, Rec'd, left today. - Capt. H.J. Cox returning from hospital sick - Inter Coy. relief of line. D. Coy replacing B & C. replacing A. completed by 9.45 p.m.	app 7. nil.
	21	-	Lively morning. Gas shells on Battery areas behind BHQ at 4 a.m. caused some inconvenience, but very few casualties ~~semi~~ alarm was given promptly.	nil.
	22	-	Intense shelling by enemy at 3.5 a.m. Posts 8 & 9 suffered - 7 men killed including Sgt. V. King, an original man. - It transpired later that enemy had raided Bn. on our right (21st A I F) under cover of this bombardment.	app 12. nil.
	23	.	Capt. Galbraith O.C. D. Coy. was relieved by Lieut. W. W. Anderson. 44 973 On night 22nd Bn. relieved 21st Bn. A I F	nil.
CATACOMBS	24	-	Bn. was relieved by 24th Bn. A I F. - Owing to their weak strength A Coy. (Lt. Morrison) remained as support to B Coy.	app 8.

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A7883) Wt. W809/M1672 350,000 4/17 Sch. 52a Forms/C/2118/14

Orig. Copy

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

23rd Bn A I F

WAR DIARY
or
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~.
(*Erase heading not required.*)

VOLUME XXXV pp. 5.

Army Form C. 2118.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			Strength O. ORs.	
CATACOMBS			(left Strichelyffe) as Reserve Coys. Dispositions, after relief	
			which was completed by 9.45 pm, in addition to these were	
			Hq. CATACOMBS. (Lt. Col. Brayenor C.O. & Lt. Gen. Elliott adj.)	app. 9.
			D Coy. ONLY WAY C Coy. AVENUE FARM. On left 17th Bn.	" 10
			A.I.F. relieved 30th Bn. A.I.F. Maj. W J Bateman & Lt. L Maddell	
			returned to ROMARIN. after relief	mw.
	25.		Leave and school personnel returned on account of German	
			SOMME offensive. Details attached to B'de also reported back	mw.
	26.		Usual fatigues by forward Coys. & 27th Officers from Transport	
			lines returned to Coys. – after which O.C.s were. A. Coy. Lt Lenaton	
			B. Lt. Roxburgh. C. Maj. Beith D. Lt. Anderson.	mw.
	28		D Coy. - ONLY WAY - shelled fairly heavily 4 - 7 am. 2 Killed.	mw
	29	-	Lt. C. H. Jorode evacuated sick. Rain in morning; B'de conference attended by C.O.; Details of	
			Situation on SOMME, as stated by Genl. Sir H Plumer to Div &	
			B'de commanders, passed on by C.O.s & Coy. Officers, for transmission	mw.
			to men.	
	30.	-	D. Coy. moved to vicinity ELGAR HOUSE on account of renewed shelling 42 918	mw.
	31	-	Usual routine duties and preparation for relief.	mw.

W Brayenor Lt. Col
C.O. 23rd Bn

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A7883) Wt. W809/M1672 350,000 4/17 Sch. 52a Forms/C/2118/14

93

18,000-12/17-872

6

APPENDIX

Original Confidential

WAR DIARY

OF

23rd Bn A.I.F.

FOR

MARCH. 1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1	Syllabus of training 4-6 March incl.
2.	Bn. Operation Order No 94. - Move from GUESQUES forward.
3.	Provisional Defence Scheme C. Bn.
4.	Bn. Operation Order No. 95 — Relief of line 15. 3. 18.
5	Map relating to 4.
6	Defence Scheme. - Left Bn.
7.	Bn. Operation Order No. 96 - Inter. Coy. relief.
8.	Bn. Operation Order No. 97. Relief by 24th Bn.
9.	Defence Scheme. C. Bn.
10.	Map relating to 9.
11.	General Report.
12.	Summary of Intelligence 16 - 24 March. 18 incl.
13.	Quarter Master's Summary
14.	Transport Officers Report.

APPENDIX 1

App 1 Original

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

23rd Battalion - 6th Infantry Brigade.

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR PERIOD 4.3.18 to 6.3.18.

Date	"A" Coy.	"B" Coy.	"C" Coy.	"D" Coy.
Monday 4.3.18	Marching-out Parade and General Clean Up.			
Tuesday 5.3.18	Route March			
Wednesday 6.3.18.	Entrain			

2nd March, 1918.

S. Wardwell Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion.

APPENDIX 2

SECRET. BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 94. Copy No 2

Ref. Maps	HAZEBROUCK. 5a.	1/100,000.	
	CALAIS. 13.	1/100,000.	
	Sheet 28.	1/40,000.	
	Sheet 36.	1/40,000.	4th March, 1918.

1.- The 6th A.I. Brigade Group will move to Australian Corps Area between 4th and 6th of March.

2.- Marching Portion of Transport and Baggage, with accompanying personnel, will entrain on the 6th inst.
N.C.O. in charge of 23rd Battalion Transport to report to Major REID, 21st Battn., A.I.F., at DESVRES at 5.45 a.m.
Detraining Point, BAILLEUL.

3.- The 23rd Battalion, A.I.F., less Transport, will entrain at LOTTINGHEM Station on the 6th inst.
STARTING POINT.- Cross Roads 600 yards North of LOTTINGHEM Church.
Time.- 6.45 a.m.

4.- No Troops will enter Station Yard until permission of R.T.O. is given.

5.- Entraining Officer for this Battalion - Lieut. W.A.E. BRAGG; to report to Battalion Headquarters at 4 p.m. on the 5th inst. : thence to Lieut. BAZLEY M.C., ½ hour before arrival of Troops.

6.- DETRAINING POINT.- STEENWERCK and Route March to CANTEEN CORNER.

7.- On the Night 7th/8th March, the 23rd Battalion, A.I.F. ("C" Battn.) will relieve the 35th Battalion, A.I.F., at "CATACOMBS".

8.- Advance Billeting Party under Lieut. H.C. HOLLAND will move to "CATACOMBS" at 9 a.m. on the 7th inst.

9.- Coys. will be ready to pass STARTING POINT in CONNAUGHT ROAD 200 yards North of CANTEEN CORNER, at 4 p.m. in the following order-

"H'Qrs", "A", "B", "C" and "D" Coys.

100 yards distance to be maintained between Platoons.

10.- All Defence Schemes, Maps etc. will be taken over and receipts obtained, 2 copies being forwarded to Battalion Headquarters by 8 a.m. on the 8th inst.

11.- Relief to be complete by 4 a.m. on the 8th inst., when G.O.C. will take command of the Left Brigade Sub. Sector.

12.- Advanced Brigade Headquarters at BIG SAM, U.20.a.7.8.

13.- On the 7th inst. Train Supply Waggons draw from Railhead and deliver to Units.
Commencing on the 8th inst., supply arrangements are normal.
Refilling Point - ROMARIN B.10.b.1.7.

APPENDIX 2

SECRET BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 94. (Contd) Copy No 2

13.- Contd Each Unit will send their own personnel to load the Trucks and push them up.
O.C., "A" Coy., will detail 1 Sergt. and 4 O.Ranks who will be responsible for having Trucks ready.
These men will live at Railhead at U.20.b.4.6. and will report for duty at 10 a.m. on the 7th inst.
Rations for the Support and Reserve Battalions are delivered by 1st Line Transport.

14.- COOKING.- "C" and "D" Battalions have the use of their Field Cookers at "CATACOMBS" and RED LODGE respectively.

15.- SANITATION.- Latrine accommodation must be improved by all Garrisons and the whole system closely supervised.
Small pieces of Trench must not be used. As many Box Seats as possible are to be put in.
Excreta must be buried each night at least 10 yards from post and locality marked.
A regular supply of cresol or chloride of lime must be maintained in the line and wherever men are located.
All refuse is to be buried and localities marked.

16.- The Divisional Dump is situated at DOU DOU B.5.c.75.65.
Brigade Dumps.- DEAD HORSE CORNER U.21.a.4.9.
PROWSE POINT. U.14.b.9.3.
Battalion Dumps are already formed and will be taken over by relieving Units.
ALL Dumps will be clearly marked by direction and Notice Boards.
All Ammunition must be kept dry and clean, and examined frequently.
Men will only use Ammunition from their pouches as a last resort.
Coys. will furnish a daily return of Ammunition expenditure by 7 a.m.
The following establishments of Ammunition will be maintained in addition to what is carried on the man :-

SUPPORT BATTALION, "CATACOMBS".

S.A.A.	.....	50,000.
" L.G.	.....	50,000.
" Tracer	.....	1,000.
" A.P.	.....	1,000.
Grenades Mills No.5	..	2,000.
" " No. 23	.	250.

17.- SALVAGE.- The Support Battalion will salvage Area from line N. and S. through Bn. H'Qrs. in the line back to the "CATACOMBS" and dump near Railway at HYDE PARK CORNER.
In all cases the Dump will be formed close to Railway or Tramline or Main Road.
All Parties coming back from the line must bring back some article of Salvage and place in a dump.
A return of all material salved will be rendered to Battalion Headquarters by 8 a.m. daily giving location of Dump.

SECRET BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 94.(Contd) Copy No 2

18.- GUM BOOTS.- The Brigade Gum Boot Store and Drying Room is situated at the "CATACOMBS" - HYDE PARK CORNER. Boots will only be issued on the production of an Order from C.O's., or Adjutants, and Officers of the Field Companies of Engineers.
400 pairs of Gum Boots will be available for the two line Battalions by NOON on the 7th inst.

19.- FOOT TREATMENT.- The utmost attention must be paid to prevention of Trench Feet and supplies of powder and soap will be available from Brigade Headquarters, ROMARIN, and sent to the line by all Units and used under direct supervision by Officers.
Foot Washing Troughs are installed in the Support and Reserve Lines.

20.- SOUP KITCHEN.- These are established at HYDE PARK CORNER and RACINE and will be taken over by Chaplain F.T. CLEVERDON by NOON on the 8th inst. In addition there is a Y.M.C.A. Kitchen at the Left R.A.P. in the DOUVE VALLEY.
O.C., "B" Coy., will detail 1 Corpl. and 8 O.Ranks to report to Chaplain F.T. CLEVERDON by NOON on the 7th inst.

21.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion.

DISTRIBUTION.-

Copies to.-

No.1.-	File.
" 2/4.-	War Diary.
" 5.-	C.O.
" 6.-	Adjutant.
" 7.-	6th A.I. Brigade.
" 8/12.-	O.C's., Coys.
" 13.-	Transport Officer.
" 14.-	Lieut. W.A.E. BRAGG.
" 15.-	Q.M.
" 16.-	Spare.

93

SECRET

23rd Battalion - 6th Infantry Brigade. APPENDIX 3 Copy No 2 11

PROVISIONAL DEFENCE SCHEME - RESERVE "C" BATTN.

Ref. Maps. BELGIUM. Sheet 28 S.W..and S.E. 1/20,000.

1.- The Divisional Front extends from the RIVER LYS on the South, to the RIVER DOUVE on the North, both inclusive.
This Front is held by two(2) Infantry Brigades.

2.- The Boundaries for this Brigade are .-

LEFT.- RIVER DOUVE.
RIGHT.- Line running B.4.d.2.8. - C.1.central. - U.26.b.8.3. - U.21.d.7.0.- U.22.a.5.9. - U.23.b.4.9.

3.- There are three (3) Lines of Defence .-
(a) FORWARD.- covered by a line of connected Strong Posts.
(b) Corps Defensive Line.
(c) Army Defensive Line.

4.- The Divisional Artillery plus a certain amount of "HEAVIES" cover the Divisional Front.

5.- MACHINE GUNS cover the First ZONE.
Emplacements are dug in 2nd Line for 12 Guns for Barrage Fire forward of Firing Line of 2nd ZONE and 28 Emplacements for Direct Fire.

6.- In case of attack the action of Coys. will be :-
(a) On the message "STAND TO" being received, "B", "C" and "D" Coys. will "STAND TO" in the Trenches and prepare to move by Platoons.
"A" Coy. will prepare to move.
Coy. Sergt.-Majors will issue the following ammunition.-
(i) 100 rounds S.A.A. per man.
(ii) 2 Bombs per man.
(b) The 2nd in Command and I.O. will report to Bgde. H'Qrs.
(c) The Transport will harness up but not "Hook-in", and await orders.
(d) On the Command "MOVE" being received by "A" Coy. they will move forward and occupy "ANNSCROFT AVENUE".
Detailed instructions regarding the action of each Coy. will be issued as they become available.

7.- "A" and "B" Coys. will be Flank Coys., and O.C's. "A" and "B" Coys., will detail 1 Officer to keep in touch with Flank Battalions.

8.- In the event of moving forward to the LEFT BATTALION, the route will be Emergency Route running from U.14.c.9.1. - U.8.d.9.3. - U.9.d.9.7.
If to RIGHT BATTALION, Route starting at U.14.d.4.8. - through PROWSE POINT to U.15.central, near Right Battalion Headquarters.
Officers and N.C.O's. will reconnoitre ALL Emergency Routes on the Brigade Area - as soon as possible.

9.- In the event of an attack, unless special orders have been issued, ALL Working Parties will report to the nearest Headquarters, whether Coy., Battalion, or Brigade, for instructions as to how to act.

10.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

H. Haddrell Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion.

9th March, 1918.

Hold-fire

N O T I C E S.

When Working Parties are dispersed the men must be instructed to report to a "RENDEZVOUS" which will be shown to them by Officer in charge when moving to the work. This will stop men from being lost and work being left unfinished.

DISTRIBUTION.- Overleaf.

DISTRIBUTION.-

copies to.-

No.1.- File.
" 2/4.- War Diary.
" 5.- C.O.
" 6.- Adjutant.
" 7.- 6th A.I. Brigade.
" 8/12.- O.C's., Coys.
" 13.- Transport Officer.
" 14.- 21st Battalion.
" 15.- 22nd "
" 16.- 24th "
" 17/18.- Spare.

93

APPENDIX 42 13

SECRET.- BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 95. Copy No. 12

Ref. Map. A. Sheet 28. 1/40,000. 15th March, 1918.

1.- The 23rd Battalion, A.I.F., will relieve the 24th Battalion, A.I.F. on the Night 16/17th March.

2.- DRESS.- Fighting Order.
1 Blanket rolled in Waterproof Sheet and carried on Back.
Water Bottles filled.
Iron Rations.
Sandbags will be worn in lieu of Puttees.
ALL Steel Helmets to be covered.

3.- One Blanket per man to be rolled in bundles of 10, securely tied in three places, and dumped at HYDE PARK CORNER at 10 a.m. on the 16th inst.
PACKS, containing Hats and Puttees, to be dumped at same place and at same time as Blankets.

4.- Routes to be taken and order of march.-
"B", "A", "H'Qrs", and "C" Coys. -- DOUVE DUCKWALK.
"D" Coy. -- Emergency Track.
Coys. to be ready to pass ADVANCED ESTAMINET at 7 p.m.

5.- Coys. will relieve as table.-

"A"	Coy.,	23rd	Bn.	-	"D"	Coy.,	24th	Bn.
"B"	"	"	"	-	"C"	"	"	"
"C"	"	"	"	-	"A"	"	"	"
"D"	"	"	"	-	"B"	"	"	"

6.- Coy. Commanders will mutually arrange details, re Guides.

7.- Advance Parties from "A" and "B" Coys., consisting as under, will proceed to and remain in Front Line on Night and Day prior to the arrival of their Units.-
1 Officer Per Coy.
1 N.C.O. per Platoon.
Nos. 1 and 2. of Lewis Gun Teams.
33% of Specialists.

8.- All Defence Schemes, Maps, Sketches, Air Photos, Log Books, Intelligence connected with the Front, Trench and Area Stores, will be taken over on Relief and receipts obtained, duplicate copies being forwarded to Battn. H'Qrs. on the day following relief by 8 a.m.

9.- Works Policy will be taken over from the 24th Battalion, A.I.F.

10.- Gum Boots and Socks will not be taken over.

11.- Ammunition and "Area" Stores, including A.P. Ammunition in Lewis Gun Magazines, will be taken over and two copies of receipts forwarded to Battn. H'Qrs. 12 Hours after relief.

12.- Attention of all Officers and N.C.O's. is directed to the necessity of the most complete precautions to combat Trench Feet. Also the strict supervision of Water and Sanitation.

13.- All Trucks after use by any Working Party, must be returned to RACINE DUMP.

14.- R.A.P.- U.10.a.3.6.
Battalion Headquarters.- U.9.b.55.30.
Brigade Headquarters.- BIG SAM. U.20.a.7.8.

15.- Completion of Relief to be wired to Battn. H'Qrs. in CODE.

16.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

S. Maddrell Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion.

DISTRIBUTION. P.T.O.

APPENDIX 4

SECRET.-

Copy No 2

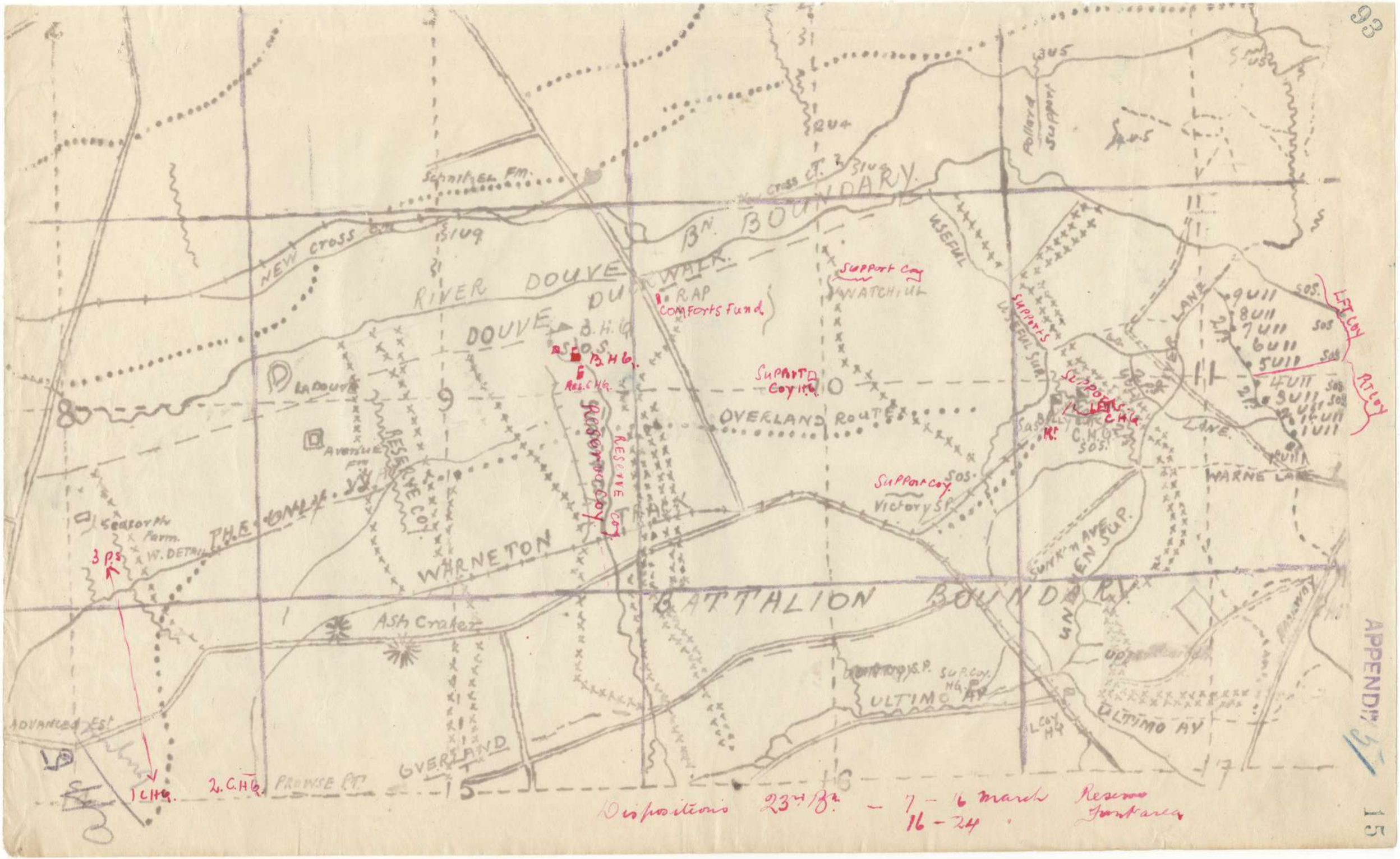
BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 95.

DISTRIBUTION.-

Copies to.-

1.- File.
2/4.- War Diary.
5.- C.O.
6.- Adjutant.
7.- 6th A.I.Brigade.
8.- 24th Battalion, A.I.F.
9/13.- O.C's., Coys.
14.- Transport Officer.
15/16.-.Spare.

----------ooo----------



Dispositions 23rd Bn. – 7 - 16 March Reserve
16 - 24 " Front area

93 APPENDIX 6/3 16

SECRET.- NOT TO BE TAKEN BEYOND BATTN. H'QRS. Copy No 3

App 6.

LEFT BATTALION - PROVISIONAL DEFENCE SCHEME.

Ref. Maps.- Sheet 28 S.W. 4. and Sheet 28 S.E. 3. - Parts of Edition 1a. - 1/10,000.
"A" BAS-WARNETON. 1/10,000. 17th March, 1918.

1.- The Battalion Frontage extends from U.11.d.65.00. to the RIVER DOUVE.
The Battalion Area is bounded on the SOUTH by a line running due West from U.11.d.65.00., and on the NORTH by the RIVER DOUVE.

2.- The Dispositions are.-
(a) The Firing Line is held by a connected line of Strong Posts.
(b) A Support Line.
(c) A Reserve Line.

3.- Coy's. Frontages and Dispositions are.-
(a) 3 Platoons of each of the two Front Coys. in the Front Line.
(b) 1 Platoon of each of the two Front Coys. in WALLY SUPPORT.
(c) 2 Platoons of the SUPPORT Coy. in WALLY SUPPORT.
(d) 1 Platoon of the SUPPORT Coy. in WATCHFUL S.P.
1 Platoon of the SUPPORT Coy. in LA POTTERIE FARM.
(e) RESERVE Coy. in GREY TRENCH.

4.- The RIGHT Coy. will establish four (4) Posts in the Front Line at.-

U.11.d.55.63.	known as	1.U.11. Post.
U.11.d.40.75.	" "	2.U.11. "
U.11.d.35.85.	" "	3.U.11. "
U.11.d.25.95.	" "	4.U.11. "

The RIGHT Coy. will also Patrol the GAP on its Right and be responsible for the covering of the Right Flank of the Battalion from that Gap.
A Standing Patrol of 1 N.C.O. and 9 men established at vicinity of U.11.d.50.47., hourly patrols GAP to Standing Patrol established by RIGHT Battalion at vicinity U.11.d.65.10.

The LEFT Coy. will establish five (5) Posts in the Front Line at.-

U.11.b.90.05.	known as	5.U.11. Post.
U.11.b.12.14.	" "	6.U.11. "
U.11.b.10.25.	" "	7.U.11. "
U.11.b.10.33.	" "	8.U.11. "
U.11.b.09.42.	" "	9.U.11. "

5.- Principles of Defence are.-
(a) Organised in Depth.
(b) Maximum use made of Vickers and Lewis Guns, Trench-Mortars, and Wire Entanglements.

6.- The MAIN Defensive System must be held at ALL COSTS.
O.C's. Coys. in the Front Line will prepare schemes of defence to meet any eventuality and will ensure that ALL Officers and O.Ranks are thoroughly conversant with such schemes.
They will also be prepared for immediate Counter-attack should the enemy at any time gain a FOOTING in our Line.

7.- Action in case of attack will be.-
(a) On the S.O.S. Signal going up or on the order "STAND-TO" being given by Battn. H'Qrs., all Coys. will "STAND-TO" fully equipped, and hold the MAIN Defensive System at ALL COSTS.
(b) On the word "MOVE". 2 Platoons of the SUPPORT Coy., will immediately move to USEFUL SUPPORT and act as Nucleus Garrison to that line, and 1 Platoon each of SUPPORT Coy. to act as Nucleus Garrison to WATCHFUL S.P. and LA POTTERIE FARM respectively.

P.T.O.

SECRET.- NOT TO BE TAKEN BEYOND BATTN. H'QRS Copy No 3

7.- Action in case of attack (Contd).-

Contd. (b) These Nucleus Garrisons will not move forward but will remain in their allotted positions as Rallying Posts in case Counter-attacks are unsuccessful.

8.- TRENCH MORTARS.-

Trench Mortar Positions are at the following points.-

(a) 6" Mortars.-
U.10.d.88.07.
U.10.b.90.60.

(b) 3" Stokes (S.O.S. Positions only).-
U.11.c.60.68.
U.11.c.50.75.

9.- S.O.S. STATIONS.-

The following Posts have been allotted as S.O.S. Stations.-

Five (5) Posts in Front Line at Posts 2,3,5,7, and 9.
RIGHT Company Headquarters.
LEFT Company Headquarters.
M.G. Post at U.10.d.87.60.
Battalion Headquarters.

The above Posts will be continuously manned. On the S.O.S. Signal being sent up by any Post from the Front, the Signal will be immediately repeated by the Post in REAR.
Battalion H'Qrs. will repeat the Signal and will inform Brigade H'Qrs. by wire.
There will be no "STOP" S.O.S. Signal, but the duration of Artillery Fire, when called for on S.O.S. Line, will be regulated by the following method.-

(1) When "S.O.S." Signal or Message is received, the Barrage will be put down at the rates of fire of.-

18 Pndrs.- 3 rounds per Gun per minute for the first 5 minutes.
2 rounds per Gun per minute for the second 5 minutes.
1 round per Gun per minute for the third 5 minutes.

4.5" Hows.- 2 rounds per Gun per minute for the first 5 minutes.
1 round per Gun per minute for the second 5 minutes.

and will then cease.

(2) If the "S.O.S." Signal or Message is repeated after the opening of fire, the initial rate of fire will be reverted to at once, and the whole procedure carried out de novo. Each successive Signal or Message will be answered by 15 minutes fire at above rates.

10.- PATROLS.-

The RIGHT Coy. will patrol the GAP on its RIGHT at irregular intervals during the Night, and get in touch with the RIGHT or "A" Battn.
The LEFT Coy. will patrol the GAP on its LEFT at irregular intervals and get into touch with our Troops NORTH of the RIVER DOUVE.
Other Patrols will be as directed from Battalion Headquarters.

11.- WIRING AND WORKING PARTIES.-

Every available man must be employed on imrpoving and strengthening the Defensive Position of the Battalion. WIRING of the Front Line and to the Flanks, and the keeping open of Front Communication Trenches must be particularly attended to.

P.T.O.

SECRET.- NOT TO BE TAKEN BEYOND BATTN. H'QRS. Copy No 3

11.- WORKING AND WIRING PARTIES (Contd).-

In the event of an attack - unless special orders have been issued - Working Parties will report to Battn. H'Qrs. or to the nearest Coy. H'Qrs., if nearer.
This does not mean that the WHOLE Party will so report, but that the leader of the Party will so report, by RUNNER, his whereabouts, and will hold his party in readiness for immediate action.

12.- TERMS - NAMES TO BE USED.-

The Terms "SECTOR" or "SUB-SECTOR" are not to be used, but the Term "AREA" is permissable.
When it is desired to describe the exact limits of an operation, the Post No., Name of Trench, Defended Locality or Map Reference, must be given, e.g., -

"Enemy attempted to raid our Lines between Posts.....
and ....."

13.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

S Haddrell
Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion.

DISTRIBUTION.-

Copies to.-

No.1.-	File.
" 2/4.-	War Diary.
" 5.-	C.O.
" 6.-	Adjutant.
" 7.-	6th Brigade.
" 8.-	Transport Officer.
" 9/13.-	O.C's., Coys.
" 14.-	Right Battalion.
" 15.-	Left Battalion.
" 16.-	Support Battalion.

-----oO-----

93

APPENDIX 19

App 87. Original

SECRET.

Copy No 2

BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 96.

Ref. Map.- Sheet 28 S.W. 1/20,000. 19th MARCH, 1918.

1.- The 23rd Battalion, A.I.F., will carry out an Inter-Coy. Relief on Night 20/21st March, 1918.

2.- "C" Coy. will relieve "A" Coy. on the LEFT Coy. Front.
"D" Coy. will relieve "B" Coy. on the RIGHT Coy. Front.
"A" Coy. to move to SUPPORT Coy. Positions.
"B" Coy. to move to RESERVE Coy. Positions.

3.- Coy. Commanders will make all necessary arrangements subject to this order.

4.- Hot Meals before leaving the SUPPORT and RESERVE Positions, will be given to "C" and "D" Coys.
Hot Meals for "A" and "B" Coys. after relief.

5.- All Trench Stores, etc., to be taken over and receipts forwarded to Battalion H'Qrs. 12 Hours after relief.

6.- Disposition Report to be at Battalion H'Qrs. 12 Hours after relief.

7.- Covering Parties for the relief will be provided by "A" and "B" Coys., and withdrawn after relief is complete.

8.- Completion of relief to be wired to Battn. H'Qrs. in CODE.

9.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

H Gadsden Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion.

DISTRIBUTION.-

Copies to.-

1.- File.
2/4.- War Diary.
5.- C.O.
6.- Adjutant.
7.- 6th Brigade.
8/12.- O.C's., Coys.

33

SECRET

APPENDIX 8 Copy No. 2 20

BATTALION OPERATION ORDER NO. 97

Ref. Map.- Sheet 28 S.W. 1/20,000. 23rd MARCH 1918.

1.- The 24th Aust. Inf. Battalion will relieve the 23rd Aust. Inf. Battalion in the LEFT Battalion Sector on the night 24th/25th March 1918.

2.- The usual Advance Parties will be in the Line on the night prior to arrival of Relief.

3.- Guides per Platoon of FORWARD and SUPPORT Coys. to be at Battalion Headquarters at 7 P.M. on night of relief, and guides per POST to meet Platoons at USEFUL LANE.

4.- All Defence Schemes, Works Policies, Maps, Sketches, Log Books, Aeroplane Photographs, Intelligence connected with the Front, and Trench Stores to be handed over, and two copies of receipts handed to Battalion Headquarters 12 hours after Relief.

5.- Completion of relief to be wired to Battalion Headquarters in CODE.

6.- After relief Coys. will move -
"C" Coy. to CATACOMBS.
"A" " " position previously occupied by "C" Coy at PROWSE POINT.
"B" and "D" Coys positions as last tour in Support at PROWSE POINT and ONLY WAY.

7.- Gum Boots and soiled Socks must NOT be handed over, but Coys will make arrangements to have same sent to Gum Boot Store, CATACOMBS, and receipts obtained.

8.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

S. Gaddell
Lieut.
Adjutant, 23rd Battalion

DISTRIBUTION :-

Copies to -

1. File
2/4 War Diary
5. C.O.
6. Adjutant
7. 6th Brigade
8/12 O's C. Coys.
13. T.O.
14. Q.M.
15. 24th A.I.Battalion
16. Spare

931

app 9 Brigade

SECRET.- NOT TO BE TAKEN INTO FRONT LINE. APPENDIX "C" Copy No. 2

21

2nd ZONE DEFENSIVE BATTALION - "C" BATTN.

PROVISIONAL DEFENCE SCHEME.

Ref. Maps.- PLOEGSTEERT. 28 S.W. 4. 1/10,000.
BELGIUM. 28 S.W. and S.E. 1/20,000.

1.- The "C" Battalion Front extends over the Brigade Boundaries as follows.-

LEFT.- River DOUVE (Inclusive).
RIGHT.- Line running - B.4.d.2.8. - C.1.central. - U.26.b.8.2. - U.21.d.7.0. - U.22.a.5.9. - U.23.b.4.9.

2.- There are three lines of defence.-

1st.- FORWARD.- Front System of Trenches.
2nd.- 2nd Zone of Defence (Corps Line).
3rd.- Army Zone of Defence.

3.- The existing 2nd ZONE Line is held by a system of Nucleus Garrisons, and consists of three Groups in which are included Posts. (See APPENDIX "A".)

4.- Disposition of Battalion.-

"H'Qrs".	-	CATACOMBS.
No. 1 Coy.-	--	DEAD COW FARM.
No. 2 Coy.	-	GREY FARM RESERVE, and under command of C.O., "A" Battalion.
No. 3 Coy.	-	AVENUE FARM.
No. 4 Coy.	-	U.8.d.5.3. - ONLY WAY.

5.- Coys. are responsible for - as follows:-

No. 1 Coy.	-	No. 1 Group.
No. 3 Coy.	-	No. 2 Group.
No. 4 Coy.	-	No. 3 Group.

6.- The action in case of attack or on orders from Battalion H'Qrs. will be.-

(a) No. 1 Coy. will send a Platoon to No. 22 Post in GREY FARM RESERVE.
The remainder, except the Nucleus Garrisons of Nos. 16, 20 and 21 Posts, will "STAND TO" and await orders from Battalion H'Qrs, to move forward - be prepared

(b) No. 3 Coy. will send a Platoon to each of the four Strong Posts 14, 17, 18 and 19.

(c) No. 4 Coy. will send a Platoon to each of the four Strong Posts in No. 3 Group.

7.- For Maching Gun Field of Fire, Position of Groups - See APPENDIX "B" (Ref. Map. PLOEGSTEERT. 1/10,000.)

8.- For strength of Nucleus Garrison - See APPENDIX "A".

9.- In view of the above, ALL Officers and N.C.O's. will immediately make a reconnaissance of the tracks to their respective positions, and to the positions on either Flank.

10.- Attention is directed to the necessity of improving the defensive situation in every way.
All Trenches to be kept clear and in good order.
Ammunition per Post to be maintained to the following table.-

10,000 Rounds S.A.A.
72 Bombs.

11.- A C K N O W L E D G E.

DISTRIBUTION - Next Page.

Lieut.
Adjutant, 22nd Battalion.

SECRET.- NOT TO BE TAKEN INTO FRONT LINE. APPENDIX 9 Copy No 12

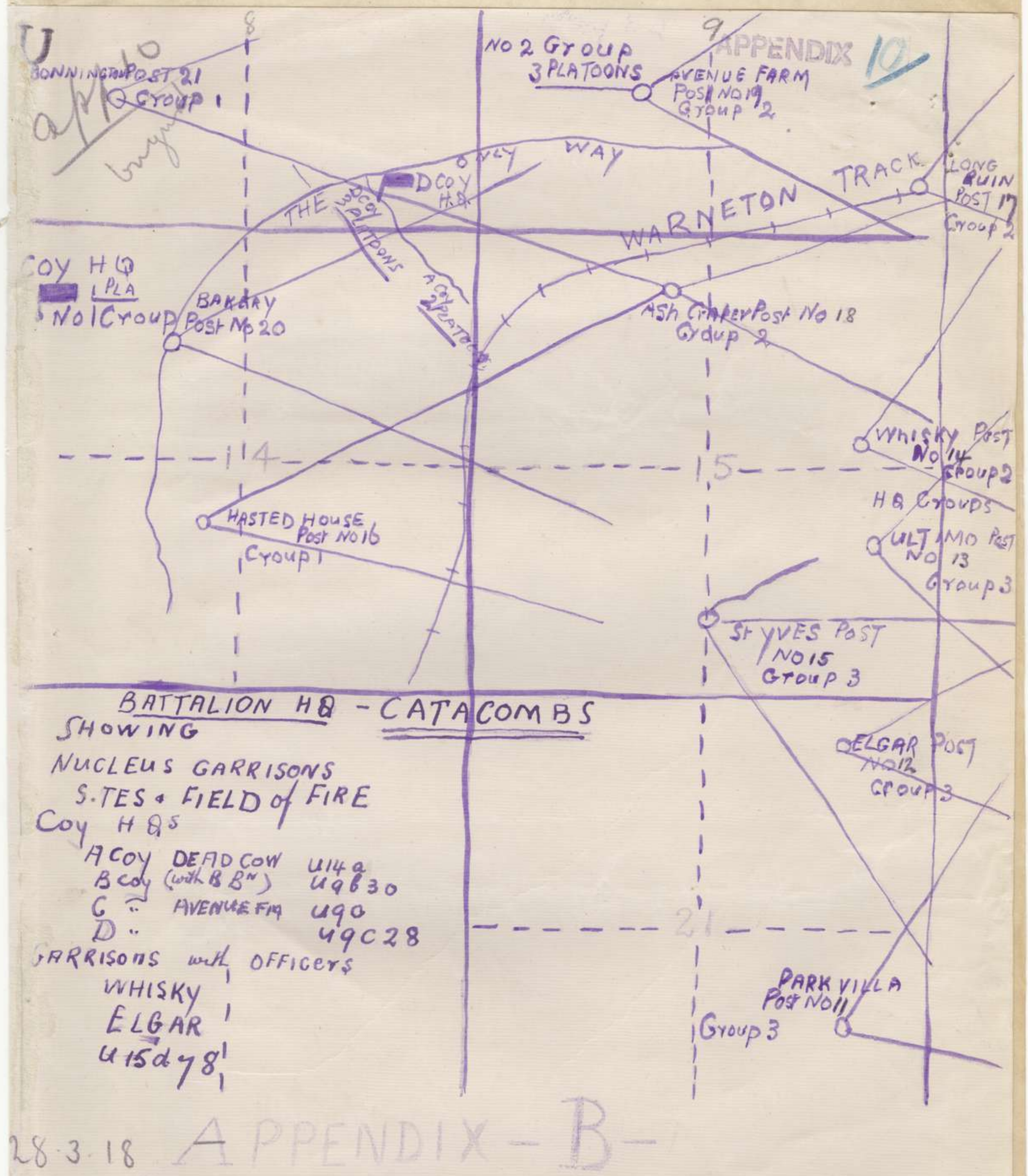
DISTRIBUTION.-

Copies to.-

No.1.-	File.
No.2/4.-	War Diary.
" 5.-	C.O.
" 6.-	Adjutant.
" 7.-	6th Brigade.
" 8.-	Right Battalion.
" 9.-	Left Battalion.
" 10/14.-	O.C's. Coys.
" 15/16.	Spare.

APPENDIX "A".

Post No.	Group.	Name.	Map Ref.	Strength.
16.	1.	HASTED HOUSE POST.	U.14.c.80.70.	(1 N.C.O., 3 O.R's. (2 L.Gnrs., & 1 L.G.
20.	1.	BAKERY POST.	U.14.a.70.60.	(1 N.C.O., 5 O.R's. (2 L.Gnrs., & L.G.
21.	1.	DONNINGTON HALL POST.	U.8.c.50.60.	(1 N.C.O., 3 O.R's. (2 L.Gnrs., & 1 L.G.
14.	2.	WHISKY POST.	U.15.b.65.15.	do. do. do.
17.	2.	LONG RUIN POST.	U.9.d.85.25.	do. do. do.
18.	2.	ASH CRATER POST.	U.15.a.70.80.	do. do. do.
19.	2.	AVENUE FARM. POST.	U.9.c.70.65.	do. do. do.
22.	2.	GREY FARM RESERVE.	U.9.d.9.4. (Approximate).	do. do. do.
11.	3.	PALK VILLA POST.	U.21.d.55.60.	do. do. do.
12.	3.	ELGER POST.	U.21.b.60.80.	(1 N.C.O., 3 O.R's. (2 L.Gnrs., & L.G. (and 2 S.Bearers.
13.	3.	ULTIMO POST.	U.15.d.75.70.	(1 N.C.O., 3 O.R's., (2 L.Gnrs., & L.G.
15.	3.	ST. IVES POST.	U.15.d.00.30.	do. do. do.



28.3.18 APPENDIX - B -
23rd Bn.

APPENDIX 11

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

23rd Battalion - 6th Infantry Brigade.

GENERAL REPORT FOR MONTH OF MARCH, 1918.

1.- OPERATIONS.- Battalion moved via Train to CANTEEN CORNER, thence to CATACOMBS. Previous knowledge of the Front made the task of Reconnaissance before taking over, particularly easy.
The usual fatigues were sent forward from this point, and the line was relieved at the expiration of 8 days.
Front was livilier than in JANUARY and there was a general alertness in view of a possible enemy offensive which, however, did not materialise.
Policy was, as before, one of Active Defence and casualties, considering the nature of the Front and the amount of shell fire, were light.
Co-operation with Artillery was again excellent, thanks chiefly to the principle of attaching Liaison Officers from Batteries to Battn. H'Qrs.

2.- HEALTH.- Weather being good, cases of sickness incurred in the line were again at a minimum. A marked decrease in cases of Dysentery being particularly gratifying and doubtless reflecting the sound sanitary arrangements.

3.- RATIONS.- Rations were delivered frequently and regularly, as before, to the Front Line System by the Reserve Coy.

4.- COMFORTS FUND.-and CANTEEN.- These were, as on previous occasion, organised by Chaplain Cleverdon with marked success, both while Unit was at CATACOMBS and later when line was taken over.

5.- REGIMENTAL PAPER.- This was published as usual on the 15th March, and the 31st March, 1918.

6.- 6th BRIGADE COMFORTS FUND. This section made usual welcome gifts of Socks, etc.

7.- STRENGTH.- The return of School and Leave Personnel, to their Unit on account of the German Offensive on the SOMME, as well as the recalling of men attached to Brigade, etc., increased the strength of the Battalion at the end of the Month to.-

43 Officers. 924 O.Ranks.

8.- DISCIPLINE.- The Discipline of the men remains GOOD.

Orderly Room cases.	-	8.
F.G.C.M. Cases.	-	7.

---------ooo----------

B.B. Brazenor Lt.-Col.
Commanding, 23rd Battalion.

1st April, 1918.

93

APPENDIX 12

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

23rd Battalion - 6th Infantry Brigade.

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE FOR 8 DAYS ENDING 8.30 P.m. 24.3.18.

1.- OUR ARTILLERY. Our Artillery displayed normal activity daily on WARNETON Targets - centres of enemy movement, U.11.b, U.12.c and U.12.d. Also each day on requests retaliated on active Minenwerfers U.12.c. From the 20th March, 1918, it was suggested that retaliative fire might be replaced by anticipative fire to keep enemy underground - the only result that could reasonably be expected from Divisional Artillery Bombardment. The suggestion was acted on; Sniping Guns firing at irregular intervals through the night were reported to have greatly minimised Minenwerfer activity.
On the 22nd March, 1918, at 3 a.m., heavy fire on our Front System necessitated a call for retaliation, when a barrage was put down on "S.O.S." lines - 1/3 "S.O.S." rate for approximately 1 hour.
Counter Battery work by the "Heavies" was less than usual until the 22nd inst, but then became more active.

2.- MACHINE GUNS.- Vickers displayed usual activity. Principal Targets being U.12.d.50.75, U.12.c.75.30 and V.13.a.10.30. - when an average of 4,000 rounds were expended on our front daily.

3.- TRENCH MORTARS. Light Trench Mortars, being "S.O.S." only, little firing was indulged in by them on our sector.
NEWTON 6" adopted an offensive policy, and daily engaged active Minenwerfers with apparently first class results.
9.45" Heavy Trench Mortars also were available and were freely used for Counter M.W. work.

4.- PATROLS.- An active policy of Patrolling was maintained to deny No Man's Land and the Enemy.
Patrols consisted of Coy. Officers and Coy. men, each with a small party of Battalion Scouts attached.
On two occasions enemy patrols were seen, but on each occasion, action was impossible owing to enemy's extreme caution in not leaving his own wire and visibility being high.
On misty mornings anti-raid precautions consisted of sending 1 Officer and 20 O.Ranks with Lewis Guns into No.Man's Land and between the barrage lines to await and attack enemy while forming up - No. Raiding Party was encountered.
Officers on Patrol were.-

16/17.	Lieut.	Clayden.	20/21.	Lt.	Kirkwood.
17/18.	"	Lowe.	21/22.	"	Hepburn.
18/19.	"	Morrison.	22/23.	"	O'Connell.
19/20.	"	Summers.	23/25.	("	Hepburn.
				("	Bragg.

5.- AIRCRAFT.- Our Aircraft were constantly alert, patrolling, photographing, and reconnoitring.
Visibility generally was high and enemy Anti-Aircraft Defences rather weak.
No collisions took place between our aeroplanes and those of the enemy.

---------oOo--------

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE FOR 8 DAYS ENDING 8.30 p.m. 24.3.18: (Contd).

- ENEMY -

1.- ARTILLERY.- Enemy Artillery showed a decided increase from our last period in this Sector.
Shelling in Depth was also more pronounced.
77 cm. and 105 cm. were the predominating calibres, with a few 15 cms. becoming more noticeable towards end of period.
Shelling was regular in character and was most intense on mornings of 21st March and 22nd March.
Gas Shells predominated in the first - when 3000 rounds were estimated to have fallen in three hours (3 a.m. to 6 a.m.)
The 22nd activity duplicated a practice barrage noted two days previously.
Shelling was generally very distributed and rather inaccurate though a number of direct hits on EGMONT AVENUE, and USEFUL LANE were obtained.

2.- MINENWERFERS.- Minenwerfers were very aggressive throughout. Only close supervision and prompt retaliation by our Artillery and Trench Mortars prevented absolute dominance.

3.- AIRCRAFT.- Throughout period Enemy Aeroplanes were practically never seen, Balloons were unusually numerous on our Front.

4.- MOVEMENT.- Usual movement around Ruins U.12.c and U.12.d. and trench system was observed. - though it showed a big decrease compared with the former trip in the Line.
No abnormal movement was observed, though slight increase following Rain on 20th March.

5.- MISCELLANEOUS.- FLARES were normal except on night of 19/20th. March, when they werequieter than usual.
Enemy attitude appeared to be strictly defensive, on our Sector.
Sniping was slight.
On the morning of 22nd March communications were broken after 20 minutes. Visual Signalling was impossible owing to mist. Recourse was made to Runners.

----------ooo----------

6.- WORK.- Our Work was continuous, and progressive.
Trenches in RIVER LANE and EGMONT AVENUE evened up.
Support Line revetted and duckboarded.
Many shelters were erected.
A new R.A.P. was also erected.
A Soup Kitchen renovated.
A Bomb proof Signal Office was constructed.
All work was carried out by a working party consisting of details in excess of Coy. fighting requirements.

----------ooo----------

Lieut.
Intelligence Officer.

29th March, 1918.

APPENDIX 13

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

23rd Battalion - 6th Infantry Brigade.

QUARTERMASTER'S SUMMARY - MARCH, 1918.

1.- GENERAL. At the beginning of the Month, the Battalion was in rest Billets at QUESQUES and VERVAL. The Transport and Stores moved from that Area on the 4th March, 1918, and travelled by road, taking four days to do the journey.
On the 6th March, 1918, the Battalion moved from Billets at 6.30 a.m. and entrained at LOTTINGHEM, detraining at STEENWERCK at 2.30 p.m., and from thence marched to CANTEEN CORNER.
On the 7th March, 1918, the Battalion moved to CATACOMBS and the Transport and Stores were situated at CODFORD LINES.
While at the CATACOMBS, Rations were delivered to the Battalion by Limber, and when the Battalion moved to the Line on the 16th March, the Light Railway was used as far as RACINE DUMP. and from there by Push Truck along the WARNETON TRACK.
During the night of the 20th March, 1918, the enemy shelled heavily with Gas Shells, and this delayed the Rations which did not reach their destination until 8 a.m. on the next morning.
The second Blanket and Winter Clothing were called in on the 26th March, 1918.
This was earlier in the Year than usual, but it was done in anticipation of an early move, and to make Units more mobile.

2.- RATIONS.- Rations have been consistently GOOD throughout the Month.

ORDNANCE.- Demands have been well supplied and the Battalion is at present well equipped.

----------oOo----------

Capt.
Quartermaster, 23rd Battalion.

29th March, 1918.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

APPENDIX 14

23rd Battalion - 6th Infantry Brigade.

- TRANSPORT -

On the 4th March, 1918, the Transport moved by Road from "Le VERVAL" to CODFORD LINES, ROMARIN, a distance of approximately 50 miles, and the trip taking four days: The first stage ELNES, the second stage RENESCURE, the third stage STRAZELLE, thence to CODFORD LINES, ROMARIN, arriving there at 10.45 p.m. on the 7th March.

The Horses stood the trip well, though exposed to the weather throughout the journey. We were fortunate to obtain stables again at ROMARIN.

During the month improvements were effected. Lime-washing of Stables, Walling Stables in with hessian, and making a brick limber park (150 loads of Bricks). Being near a Workshop opportunity was taken to overhaul the Transport and and repairs ~~were~~ were effected to all the vehicles. One Cooker and one Water Cart having been condemned, they were re-placed by new. Painting of Vehicles was also proceeded with.

On account of the reduction in horse rations, every opportunity was taken to graze the horses, which were clear of the lines by 9 a.m., returning not before 3.30 p.m. The result was a marked improvement in the condition of the horses, the grass having a good effect in improving their coats.

Lieut.

28th March, 1918. Transport Officer, 23rd Battalion.

Griffiths

APPENDIX 1/4

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

83rd Battalion - 5th Infantry Brigade.

- TRANSPORT -

On the 4th March, 1918, the transport moved by road from "Le VERVAIN" to COMPONT LINES, ROUMAIN, a distance of approximately 50 miles, and the trip taking four days: The first stage BELMES, the second stage RUMBOURN, the third stage SIMAMIN, thence to COMPONT LINES, ROMAIN, arriving there at 10.45 p.m. on the 7th March.

The Horses stood the trip well, though exposed to the weather throughout the journey. We were fortunate to obtain stables again at ROMAIN.

During the month improvements were effected. Lime-washing of stables, making stables in with hessian, and making a brick timber park (150 loads of bricks). Being near a morning opportunity was taken to overhaul the transport and repairs were effected to all the vehicles. One cooker and one water cart having been condemned, they were replaced by new. Painting of vehicles was also proceeded with.

On account of the reduction in horse rations, every opportunity was taken to graze the horses, which were clear of the lines by 9 a.m., returning not before 3.30 p.m. The result was a marked improvement in the condition of the horses, the grass having a good effect in improving their coats.

Capt. Fitzgerald
Lieut.
Transport Officer, 83rd Battalion.

83rd March, 1918.

11. MARCH 15, 1918. Price, Ten Centimes.

AU REVOIR.

To the most peaceful village it has ever been our lot to billet in—Farewell. To the simple and kindly folk of one of the hundreds of hamlets of similar kind we said our Au Revoir last week, and as we prepared for our journey to take up greater and graver duties their feelings were made manifest by the many little acts just prior to our departure in the dim light of breaking dawn. Small were these tokens of regard and affection—such as a cup of coffee to ease the chill ere the movement began, a scrap of some French dainty to supplement the scanty ration, or a bottle of home-made cider—but they were appreciated far and above their value by the boys, and they will be remembered long after, and thought of often when the turmoil ceases and the guns have given up their roar. True, our acquaintance was all too short, but the friendship was as sincere as it was spontaneous, and we have reason to believe that the 23rd Battalion made an impression that will develop into a lasting good opinion of those soldiers who hail from the Southern Cross, that is provided those who follow us uphold the good reputation, and "carry on" as men and soldiers should do.

FORWARD.

There's a deal of slick commotion
When the troops are set in motion,
To pack their kits and toddle to the line.
They leave their "rests" with sorrow
Their thoughts are of the morrow,
When they go to face the whizz-bangs and the slime.

Coquetting with winsome wenches
They prefer to grimy trenches,
But their chattles bang together with a click;
The day that they are shifting
To shell crash and duckboard lifting,
And dodging into dug-outs pretty quick.

They leave behind the roguish glance
From maidens fair of "sunny" France,
While settled in the hamlet for a rest.
For Billjim's greatest pleasure
When out on well-earned leisure,
Is to "parlez vous" with them in honest jest.

So through this life they go
In sunshine, rain or snow;
The "in" and "out" of war a constant grind;
But where e'er the boys may be
There's a sweet, long memory
Of Aussy and a girl he's left behind.

BIRTH.

TICH.--In the Transport lines, on Sunday, March 10th, "Little Tich," the Mascot dog, of a triplet family. All doing well. Australian papers please copy.

GENERALITIES.

Sorry, Capt. Moss, but Lieut. Morrell's fine platoon got pipped on the post at the Brigade competitions.

It must be pleasing to Transport Officer, Lieut. Hume, to see the boys pull off so many prizes in the recent parade.

The Brigade Major, who has been recently married, was the recipient of the good wishes of all the officers and men.

Orders say that the boys are to be issued with caps in lieu of "le grand chapeau" when they go on Blighty leave. Are we to lose our identity?

Much ado about Nothing.—One of the most exciting incidents during our stay in billets was the birth of a calf. After waiting for quite a lengthy period for the great event, "baby bully beef" arrived on the scene. After that, great rejoicing and wine all round, in which the boys of A Coy. duly drank the health of the new-born

A bashful young W.O.
At Paris was doing the sights,
The mornings were "snoosy,"
The afternoons—"Susie,"
But what of the beautiful nights?

The Y.M.C.A. picture show, opposite the Transport lines, is a great boon to troops of all branches of the service, in helping to pass the long evenings. The fact of no charge being made for admission emphasises the good work being performed by that organisation.

The clocks were put forward one hour at eleven o'clock on Sunday last—Summer time.

"Jockey Jack," Lieut. Wiltshire, was the envied recipient of the Brigade Blue Ribbon at the horse parade.

"Where We Are" is where we were in the first article on that subject, but the snow and mud is absent, and things are much livelier in the line.

The idyllic sublimity of climatic conditions now prevailing brings into being a feeling of exhuberant exhilaration, causing the blood to pulsate through the veins in vibratious effervescence, as cool, sparkling water dashing over roughhewn rocks.

We will not be surprised at being overwhelmed with an avalanche of spring "poetry" next issue. But steady, lads, the Fighting Editor is very fit.

Many thanks to Lieut. Hume, of the Transport, and those under him, for the great care always taken with the Batalion Press gear when on the move.

L-Cpl. Larry Herz has, we understand, written entirely from memory the old, but ever-green comedy, "Fun on the Bristol," which will be produced in due course by the Red Diamond combination of actors, known as the Sixth Brigade Concert Party. It is presumed that L-Cpl. Herz will manage the production.

That Australians love their health-giving field sport was evidenced at the last billets by the fact that on one afternoon there was quite a variety to choose from by the onlooker. Over the hill the Australian game of football was being played. At the foot Soccer or Rugby was being contested by enthusiasts, and a short distance away equestrian competitions were taking place. Perhaps, also, the Colonel and Second in Command were touring the meadows with "goff" sticks and polite language. (?)

FINIS.

SERGEANT-MAJOR COX.

With the deepest of regrets, shared by all, we record the death of the above comrade, gallant soldier and good fellow.

To his people in Australia we here extend our sympathy, and tablet the fact that he was "one of the best," and a pal of us all, who will never be forgotten.

SHARPS AND FLATS.

A report of the band trip appears on pages 4, 5 and 6.

At entertaining, the Australian nursing Sisters "beat the band."

Anzacs arm in arm with W.A.A.C.s promenade the seafront. "Tommy" looks on. Cheeky wretches, Anzacs!

"Amex" well represented in the seaport town. Some swank, too.

"Il Trovatore," so capably rendered by the band at the two hospitals, was the composer's (Verdi) greatest achievement.

One, at least, of our officers is popular with those most charming of our Australian women—the nursing sisters—judging by the vivacious bevy he was surrounded by at No. 2 Australian General.

When "an outsider" got too close to N——, the result of a stealthy potion of the "the cup that cheers" reached her nostrils, but she was polite—very polite. An excited ejaculation, "You've been-you've been—"Gassed!" was her way of putting it.

"RAMMYISMS."

The A.I.F. is indeed a wondrous thing. In it are many men and manners. It taketh the rich with the poor, and peradventure thy Batman of the day may be the Brigadier of to-morrow.

Speak kindly to the Quartermaster, and peradventure, thy reward will surely come.

Take heed to dodge the "minnie" and the "whizz-bang," that thy days may be long in the land.

Blessed is the "Aussy" who spends two years in Blighty, for then shall he be classed as an Anzac, and be entitled to spurs and feathers.

Beware of the Red, which means Staff, and the Blue, which means Anzac. Dodge them as thou would an Engineers' fatigue.

Speak kindly to the Sapper, and give him cigarettes of the brand that are Players, so that thy fatigue party may get home early.

Verily, the duckboards are a blessing, but when Fritz shells the track we assuredly get the "wind up."

The House of Horseferry Road is in deed a large house, and in it are many maidens, likewise many "soldiers," who liketh not the smell of the trenches.

In rest thou shalt have many drills, and kit inspections, and for any shortages thou shalt pay.

Look not on the "vin" when it is "blanc," for then shall the road rise up and smite thee, and thy legs become an abomination.

If on one tot of rum thou wouldst take three lines of trenches, God help the Kaiser if thou had'st the whole jar.

Verily, a sandbag is a comfortable thing. It buildeth up the parapet, and improveth thy dugout, but if a 5.9 strike it, then who can save it?

A MUSICAL FEAST.

TO HOSPITAL PATIENTS.

Whirr! Buzz!! Not a whizz-bang. It is the 23rd Battalion Band off on a twenty-five kilo motor trip, to the seaside, on an entertaining "stunt," to help to break the monotony of comrades convalescing or on the sick bed. The performers aboard were:—Bandmaster, W. Wilson; soloist, J. Baird; solo cornets, J. Robertson, J. Doake; first cornets, S. Savage, H. George; second cornets, C. Davis, F. Hamilton; third cornet, R. Dawson; solo horn, A. Bennier; first horn, E. Browne; second horn, S. Harris; third horn, G. Coleman; first baritone, R. Ferguson; second baritone, R. L. Hudson; solo uphonium, R. Berndt; euphonium, A. Green; Eb bass, W. Ketterer, W. Pomeroy; Bb bass, W. Scott, H. Carrol; first trombone, S. Vickers; second trombone, J. Hosking; bass trombone, W. Hansen; side drums, J. Reid, G. McKenzie; bass drum, A. Hudson, and Drum Major E. Langley. Major Beith and Capt. Galbraith also participated in the first day's trip, and kept the driver company in the more than cool atmosphere.

No. 25 General Hospital.

We glide steadily along to the beat and song of the driving band, between leafless but neatly trimmed hedges, up hill and down dale, with snow-capped hills all round. The day promises fair at the start, but eventually glowering clouds bank up over the hill tops, and a raw, bleak wind penetrates muffler and greatcoat, but does not cool the ardor of the boys on their journey to give pleasure to those less fortunate than themselves. The Brigade Concert Party is picked up by the wayside, bent on a similar errand, and off again we rattle past picturesque farmhouses, through quaint villages, and the narrow, winding streets of small towns. The roads are fair until nearing the sand dunes of the coast, then they become as if a severe barrage had been thrown on them, and our conveyance bumps and rolls like a tank chasing Huns, as we approach our destination—a typical French seaside resort. The hospital is the second largest in France, facing the channel, and evidently an ideal position when the sky is blue and summery zeyphyrs breathe, but on this occasion an arctic wind blows, and blizzards of snow sweep the esplanade and seafront. A fine hall, however, awaits the lads, and after the necessary operation of revictualling, under the direction of two kindly "Aussy" sisters the band renders its programme to a gathering of between 700 and 800 patients, who appreciated the items muchly, especially the solo parts and selections from the operas. The following was the treat served under the baton of Sgt. Wilson during the afternoon:—March, "The Cossack" (W. Rimmer); grand selection, "Il Trovatore" (Verdi); selection, "Bound to Win," (Henry E. Pether); cornet and euphonium duet, "A Night in Venice" (G. Lucantoni), J. Baird and A. Green; descriptive fantasia, "A Soldier's Life" (W. J. D. Sherriff); grand selection, "Faust" (Gounod); march, "The North Star" (W. Rimmer).

The Concert Party.

In the evening the large hall was again packed to its utmost by those able to get about, including many sisters relieved of their strenuous duties for the time being. The personnel of the concert party consisted of Cpl. Romaine (23rd Battn.), Cpl. J. Lee (22nd Battn.), comedians; Pte. N. Shepherd (22nd), female impersonator; Ptes. C. Senior and A.

Jones (21st) balladists; Pte. A. Dawson (23rd), juggler; M. Penny (6th M.G.C.), yiddish comedian; Johnson (23rd), pianist; J. Trevor, M. Hayes (23rd), the lights, and L-Cpl. L. Hertz (22nd), manager, and successfully entertained the audience, raising outbursts of hearty laughter and applause. Jim Romaine, as usual, bore the brunt of the recalls, and Jack Lee was second favorite. The other performers received due appreciation, and everyone was pleased. The band were again in demand, and acted as orchestra, rendering "Maritana" (Wallace) as the overture, and including "Merry Widow" (Franz Lehar) in the selections. R. Berndt efficiently acted as pianoforte accompanist.

Personal thanks to Sgt. Wilson and L-Cpl. Hertz; a game of billiards or a cup of coffee; a confab over the fire, and the journey back to billets at 1 a.m. left a feeling of tiredness and satisfaction, and everyone looked forward to the second stunt, commencing a few hours later.

No. 2 Australian General.

On the Sunday a journey to the above hospital was undertaken, per shanks' pony and train, on which there were no speed records broken. Eventually the train journey came to an end, and 1.25 p.m. saw the band, led by the drum major, marching through a mercantile and fishing town of large dimensions, also a port of embarkation and disembarkation of troops. In a short walk to the electric tram—compre electric tram Digger?—there was seen faces of almost every nation on earth, from the Kaffir to the wily Chinee, even the "squarehead" was in evidence. A cosmopolitan town indeed in war time! A trip round the edge of the sea to the accompaniment of waves dashing against a seawall in places, with a fine view of the channel, soon brought us to the No. 2 General Hospital, nicely laid out on the crest of a hill, and mostly under canvas. Tho' cool, the day was calm, and a slight mist hung in the distance over the broad expanse of water, lending an eerie solitude to the scene. It is safe to say that many gazed yearningly Blightywards—so near and yet so far. The band was received by a bevy of Australian sisters, each of whom wore the trim and neat nurses' uniform and a perpetual smile—one of those which won't wash off—and they immediately opened up a barrage of delicacies from which the lads had to eventually retreat for the business of the afternoon, under a heavy fire of beaming faces, nuts and sweets. The charming sisters hailed from the harbour city and the city of gardens and wide streets, and as Australians we had to "pinch" something, so we "pinched" their names for publication, which are as follows:—Acting Matron, Sister E. A. Cuthbert; Sisters E. Gallin, M. Fisher, C. Potter, M. R. Thomas, A. Dorrington, E. Gallin, G. J. Whiting, A. S. Sweet, B. Creswick, Norah Lehman, Victoria. Sisters K. Rees, A. J. McKenzie, E. P. Wright, M. Fillans, N.S.W.

A programme was rendered by the band on one of the lawns, which was received by the inlying patients in the wards with applause, and was much appreciated by them. The items were as follows:—March, "B.B., C.F." (J. Ord Hume); selection, "Barber of Saville" (Rossini); waltz, "Destiny" (Sydney Baynes); selection, "Bing Boys" (Nat D. Ayer); selection, "The Turkish Patrol" (Th. Michaelis); serenade, "Birthday Greetings" (Paul Linki); march, "Through Bolts and Bars" (Ernest Urback.)

Impromptu selections were again rendered in the evening at the Y.M.C.A. hall from six till seven, after which the boys were let loose on well-earned

parole. The sleeping arrangements were in keeping with the reception. We were tucked safely in "dinkum" beds by acting sisters Geo. Mackenzie and "Fat" Davis, who thoughtfully enquired after their patients' throats. They all proved dry, and the "dinkum oil" was prescribed in suitable doses. There were some very bad cases which required a double dose, and even that was not sufficient for the official scribe. He was consoled with the fact that "there was a wee drap in th' bottle for th' mornin'." It was not long, however, when everyone was in dreamland in the cosy snugness of a blanket or two over the issue, to the accompaniment of the flapping canvas of a huge marquee.

Some of the boys said that no sooner had they gone to sleep when reveille sounded. However, they had a good night's rest and turned out spick and span, and in good nick to again cheer stricken comrades with a morning performance of the programme which relieved the dullness at No. 25 on the Saturday. To say their efforts were appreciated is putting it mildly. The in-patients thoroughly enjoyed it, as a visit to the wards proved. The Camp Commandant heartily thanked the lads for the treat, and the sisters' enthusiasm was displayed in bountiful relays of tea and toast, and the ever present smile, combined with jovial banter, not forgetting the "glad eye" and flirting—yes, flirting!

A hearty lunch, exchange of greetings and souvenirs, a couple of hours sightseeing, and once more the train is boarded, and only a memory remains—a memory of sweet faces by the seaside, and gratitude of striken comrades.

A big, hefty sergeant, named Harry,
For a trip went to lovely Paree,
When the girls knew his name
They said "fie for shame,"
Not "Petite" but "Grande," ma cherie.

SPORTING.

FOOTBALL.

Further matches have been played since last issue, but on account of the forward move the competition remains uncompleted. At present the teams stand as following list:—

Team.	W.	L.	D.	Pts.
Headquarters - -	2	0	1	5
A Company - -	2	1	0	4
Transport - - -	1	1	0	2
B Company - -	1	1	0	2
D Company - -	1	2	0	2
C Company - -	0	2	1	1

23rd Band played the Transport on Saturday last. The musicians were blown out, Transport winning easily.

23rd combined Band and Transport met 22nd ditto last week. We won by a point. Scores—6gls 12bds to 7gls 5bds. "Robbie" (3), Pollock (2), Petrie (1), potted the main points.

HIGH JUMP.

At the Brigade sports, in the above competition, no finality was arrived at on account of the greasy condition of the ground. L.-Cpl. Holman, Pte. Appleyard (23rd) and Pte. McCaffery (22nd) were left to fight out the right to first honors, and last week they contested with the following result:—

Pte. McCaffery (5ft.) - - 1
L.-Cpl. Holman (4ft. 11in.) - 2

BRIGADE HORSE PARADE.

At the above Parade, held recently, the battalion secured first honors in the following events:—

Officers' Hack (Lieut. Wiltshire); Shoeing (Dvr. H. Ross); Limber Driving (Dvr. Paine); Rapid Assembly Harness Dvr. Norton.

AMONGST THE BOYS.

"Under Two Flags."—The Russians.

* * *

"To the Trenches!"—The order of the day—and many days.

* * *

Winter is evidently on the eve of departure, for the days are now mellow.

* * *

Four more wins added to the number already to the credit of the battalion at the Brigade Horse Parade.

* * *

Sgt. Ramsdale goes to the Brigade Concert Party. "Rammy," perhaps, will shed some of the light of the Perham Stars on the Co.

* * *

We are told that a well-known cook, once of A Coy., but now in Australia, put up a record, inasmuch as the first night he landed in the southern city he fell foul, not of the M.P.s but the C.P.s, and got put away for a few hours to cool off.

* * *

The difference between the battalion tailor and a Belgian farmer is that "Bob" sews what he gathers, and the farmer gathers what he sows.

* * *

Pte. Tom Delahunty writes from the Signalling School, stating he is doing A1. He doesn't anticipate a trip to France yet awhile.

* * *

"The Coon" says that American soldiers in France refer to us as "those guys from down under." His description of their words of command are amusingly "Johnsonian."

* * *

A couple of bandsmen were indiscreet enough to go A.W.L. on the entertaining trip. Can't understand some soldiers.

"Wallie" Williams has done a bunk to the Antipodes.

* * *

"Tock" Tehan, so the wireless says, is now on the Imprest Account Staff, attached to Colonel Knox's Command in Blighty.

* * *

The moment that men recognise the rights of others, and because they recognise them—respect them—the wrongs disappear.

* * *

When "Dan" drops his pots and pans for a day he develops "some" swank. We wonder how many hearts he broke the other day.

* * *

It is an old joke, but apparently some of our boys haven't got wise to it, for we hear that a certain N.C.O. was recently sent to A—— for some striped paint. It was a stiffish walk, too.

* * *

Sgt. Miller, better known as "Littly," has returned to the battalion from duty in England.

* * *

There was a ha-rum, sca-rum rush the other night at eight o'clock There were no casualities or sore heads next morning, not to say that Jack Entiknapp and his gang of bully beef purveyors did not deserve severe chastisement for spreading the furphy that there was to be a rum issue. It was a diabolical hoax.

* * *

"Bill" Williamson celebrated his birthday recently. It was a very dry affair—very dry. Geo. Grant endeavored to wax eloquent, but words grated in his throat like a cross-cut saw.

* * *

We regret to record the death of Mr. Geo. Ely, brother of popular "Dad," of the transport, who was killed in a railway accident at Yarra Junction, thro' a train colliding with a sulky which Mr Ely was driving. "Dad" had another brother killed in the Ypres salient.

A DREAM.

FRITZ SNIPERS TURNED INTO FLY WHEELS.

In Chicago they turn everything about the pig into money except the squeal. But it has been reserved for a well known Australian officer to outdo even that remarkable fact.

Early one morning last week the sacred precincts of our office were invaded by a gaunt figure whose eyes shone with the fiery gleams of some tremendous achievement. To add more to the "tout ensemble" of his entrance, a terrific noise of shellfire filled the air, and it was in vain we tried to hear what he had to say.

After frantic gesticulations, he indicated a desire for us to accompany him, and we did so, dodging shell splinters, duckboards, mud, etc. on the way. At the end of one of the trenches he suddenly stopped and pointed proudly to a strange looking object built on the lines of a waterwheel. On the end of each blade was a cut out head and shoulders of a private. By pressing a lever the whole wheel rose up a couple of feet and almost immediately comme revolve rapidly, while we had to ta ter from a rain of flattened bullets seemed to spatter from the top wheel.

The explanation was simple. head just peeped over the bank and target for Fritz. As each blade ca bringing another head into view, simply peppered away, and the impa the iron heads provided sufficient to turn to useful account.

"There you are," he said. "A rov these and you can drive almost anywhi

The colossal possibilities of the in tion struck us dumb with astonishm What a glorious idea to drive our n multi-quadruple machine--when it arri

The shell fire having moderated so what, we could listen to his discourse the stupendous value of the invent and visions of millions and possibly m floated before our dazed imaginations.

Then——Well, when we woke up, discovered that our office was a thing the past, and pending a new and sa dugout, most of our time is engaged in search for sufficient type to see this through.

This space is for you to write Home in. DO IT.

Printed and Published by Pte. H. H. Ford, on the Belgian Battl enc