

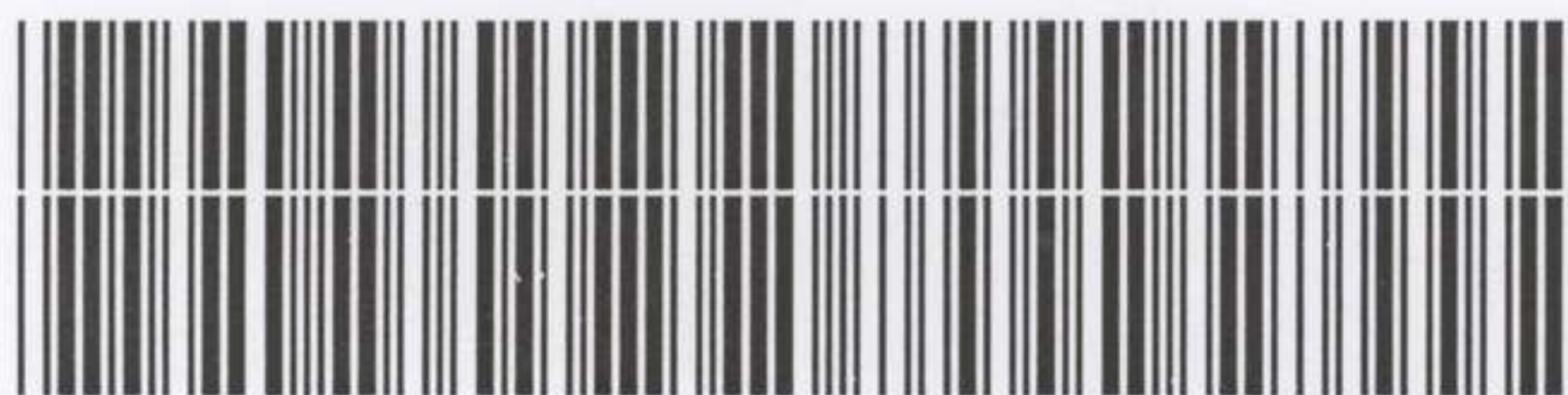
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Artillery

Item number: 13/107/8

Title: 3rd Australian Medium Trench Mortar
Battery

October 1918



AWM4-13/107/8

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

3RD A.M. T.M. Battery

FOR

October **1918**

Signature of Officer compiling

Frederick P. G. Barnes

Signature of Officer Commanding

Frederick P. G. Barnes

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Raisil Map Ref Sheet 620 K16B2-3	Oct 1		In hills at Raisil. Gun crews standing by. 6 th and 7 th Aust. Infantry Brigades passed through village towards the line. Gnr. Condrat returned from English leave. Weather cold and unsettled - very cloudy. Strength 2 officers 39 OR.	
"	2	5 pm 6 pm	Mags & Battery at Raisil. Orders from D.Y.M.O. for salvaging party to proceed up line. 3 N.C.O's and 9 men under Lieut. Pontey proceeded to Bellecourt. Orders from D.Y.M.O. for gun crews to be in readiness to move at any time. Slight shelling of village by high velocity gun. Forwarded recommendation for promotion of Sgt Bdr W Fadden to substantive rank to D.Y.M.O. Weather cool and cloudy.	
"	3	5.30	Mags & Battery at Raisil. Salvaging party up line - gun crews standing by. Under cover of heavy artillery barrage our infantry advanced several blocks. Many prisoners passing along road to P.O.W. Cage. Railway station & yards at Raisil shelled by high velocity gun. Bdr Jones returned from furlough.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Roisil	Oct 3		Orders from D.L.M.O. for dump party to move to a forward dump at G16 D5.5	
K16 B2.3			Weather dull and unsettled.	
Sheet 62c				
"	4		Sdgs at Roisil. Salvaging party returned to Bellecourt and proceeded to forward dump. W. Barnes + 18 O.R. also moved to forward dump.	
			Cpl. Barker proceeded on furlough. Weather cool and cloudy.	
	5		Sdgs at Roisil. Lieut Barnes and 29 O.R. engaged all day working on ammunition dump. Ammunition coming in & going out day and night.	
G16 D5.5.			Hundreds of motor buses and char-a-bancs full of American troops passed thro village to front line.	
			Orders from D.L.M.O. for every available man to proceed to dump	
			6 O.R. detailed to proceed there tomorrow morning. Weather cold windy & cloudy.	
K16 B2.3	6		Sdgs at Roisil. 6 O.R. proceeded to ammunition dump for duty.	
			Lieut Barnes and 34 O.R. engaged all day on dump work.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Dec 6		Thousands of American troops marching thro' village towards line. Gen. Canavan returned from furlough. Gen. Melville evacuated to hospital. Weather cold windy and cloudy.	
K16 B 2.3	7		Sigs at Roisel. Lieut Bours & 34 O.R. working on ammunition dump. American soldiers marching thro' village all day towards line. Cleaned and oiled ladders, guns and gun beds etc. Weather cold & showery.	
"	8		Sigs at Roisel. Battery working on ammunition dump. Big attack on this sector by American troops - very successful - many guns and prisoners taken. Salvaging Party comprised of men from 3 RD and 4 TH Batteries under Lieut Pontey (4 TH Bty) followed up the infantry and salvaged 10 dial sights and 4 clinometers from captured guns, rangefinder, signalling lamp etc totalling about £700 worth. Weather fine but cloudy. Strength 2 officers 39 O.R.	

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K16B2.3	Oct 9		Hqrs at Rousel.	
G16D5.5		9am	Orders from D.L.M.O. that dump at G16D5.5 was moving forward to B27B7.5 and that party at dump were to move with it. Dump established at B27B7.5. About 200 or 300 civilians passed through rest camp today having been released by advancing troops from captured villages. Many prisoners coming down.	
Ponchaux B17B9.8	10	9am	Orders from D.L.M.O. for Battery Hqrs to move forward at 9am tomorrow to Ponchaux at B16B9.8. Guard to remain at Rousel to guard stores etc.	
G16D5.5		1pm	Battery Hqrs moved off to Ponchaux passing thro Bellicourt & Estrees - Ponchaux lays just outside of Beaurivoir - a large village captured by Australians a few days previously & held against strong enemy counter attacks. Dead and all kinds of war equipment including machine guns lying scattered all over the ground. Arrived Ponchaux - Bty Hqrs located in village also D.F.M.O. Battery working on dump. Gve. Thomas evacuated to hospital. Sgt. Brealy & 2 O.R. remained at Rousel as guard. Weather cold & showery.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Ponchaux	Oct 11		Hdqs located at Ponchaux	
B17B9.8			Dump at G16 D5.5 moving forward today - 3 rd Battery to remain to load remaining ammunition. Many tanks passing along roads. Weather cold & showery.	
"	12		Battery Hdqs at Ponchaux. Battery work ^{ing} on ammunition dump. Weather cold and showery.	
"	13		Battery Hdqs at Ponchaux. Battery working on ammunition dump - loaded 78 motor lorries with shells to be transferred to forward dump. 3pm Orders from D.L.M.O. to be ready to move forward at 9 am. tomorrow. D.L.M.O. proceeded to Maretz to pick billets. Weather dull and showery.	
VIC1.5 Sheet 62 ^D	14	9am	Battery Hdqs moved to Maretz about 8 Kilos forward. Maretz is a fair sized town with many civilians still living there. The town has suffered very little damage with the exception of the Church which had been mined and blown up. Hdqs established in town & billets for battery obtained.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
VICI. 5	Oct 14		Orders from D'UMO for two gun crews to report to Hdqrs from dump tonight. Sgt Slight (4 th Bty) proceeded to dump with dispatch and then on to Reisel with four gunners to load guns, beds & stores on to motor transport tomorrow morning. 10am Two gun crews reported to Hdqrs from dump. Sgt. Poole proceeded on furlough. Weather cold and showery. Strength 2 officers 38 O.K.	
"	15	9am 5pm	Hdqrs located at Mantz. Lieut Barnes arrived from Reisel with motor transport with 2 guns complete. Unloaded guns &c from motor & transferred them to limbers. Lieut. Arthur with 21 O.K. proceeded up line with limbers two guns complete and 80 rounds ammunition. Guns were placed in position at St Sulpit - map reference sheet 57 th S.E. Q33A8.6 and Q33A8.7. Gun crews engaged during evening preparing positions &c. Seven men returned from Regs line to Hdqrs to take up ammunition & rations tomorrow. Remaining men at dump near Estres to move forward tomorrow to Hdqrs. Weather cold misty & showery. Heavy transport on roads - big guns moving forward.	
"	16		Hdqrs at Mantz. Men remaining at dump reported to Hdqrs. At fired 40 rounds per gun on to enemy positions on railway embankment.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Oct 16		Orders from D'Amo for gun crews to return to Hdqrs tonight leaving guns in village as big attack to take place tomorrow. Spade beds were used in shoot and proved very successful. Csm. Griffith returned from furlough. Weather cold cloudy & showery.	
VICI-5	17	11 am	Hdqrs at Marestz. Cpl McCurie & 3 gunners proceeded to St Souplet to guard guns. Six high shrapnel bursts over town. Attack from place this morning - heavy fighting. BSM Ballingall returned from furlough.	
do	18		Hdqrs at Marestz. Heavy bombardment about 5:30 am. WSM W. Fadden promoted to substantive rank. I/Bdr. Letsons Jones recommended for promoted to substantive rank. Bdr. Browne returned from furlough. Weather unsettled - fine moonlight night.	
do	19	9.30	Headquarters at Marestz. Parade 9.30 drill order. Cleaned all lumber &c. Cpl McCurie & guard at St Souplet. Orders from DA for BSM Ballingall and Cpl. Rennie to report to 2 nd D.A.C. Hdqrs. Csm. Commons and Deumen returned from English leave. Moving orders to be ready to move to staging area - time & place to be notified later. Weather wet and unsettled.	

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VICI-5	Oct 20		Headquarters and Battery at Marenz.	
			Orders from D. S. M. to be ready to move off tomorrow at 8 am.	
			Four drivers with mules reported to Hdqrs from 2 nd D.A.C. to pull guns out etc.	
		8 am	Two limbers proceeded to St Sauplet to move guns etc. Cpl. McCurrie & guard at gun pits reported back to Hdqrs with limbers. Cpl. Kenwick reported to 2 nd D.A.C for duty.	
			Cm. Beaumont evacuated to hospital with influenza. Weather cold dull & showery.	
	21	9 am	Four motor transports reported to Hdqrs to move battery & guns etc to resting area.	
		10 am	Loaded limbers and transports & proceeded to Roisel.	
		12 am	Motor transports arrived at Roisel where remaining guns, beds, stores etc were loaded.	
123 (7-4)		1.30 pm	Arrived at billets allotted to Battery. Unloaded all guns, stores etc & stores same in sheds. Billets allotted form part of an old German camp about 2 Kilos from Peronne and possess good cubular huts for accommodation.	
			The limbers are to stay night at Roisel and come on to Hdqrs tomorrow.	
			Cmrs. Austen & Triffitt acting as guard. Cpl. Barber returned from furlough.	
			Afternoon occupied in straightening up camp.	
			Weather cold and unsettled. Strength 2 officers 112 OR.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
123 C 7.4 Sheet 62°	Och 22		Hqrs & Battery located at 123 C 7.4.	
		9am	Parade fatigue dress - detailed various camp fatigues &c.	
		2pm	Parade full marching order - preparing list of shortages of equipment and clothing & indenting for same. 6 Drivers reported back to 2nd D.A.C. Weather cold, cloudy and wet.	
do	23		Hqrs & Battery located here.	
		9am	Parade drill order, inspection of gas helmets by gas N.C.O.	
		2am	Parade fatigue dress - cleaning up camp &c. In. bacumons evacuated to hospital. Weather cold and unsettled.	
do	24		Hqrs & Battery located here.	
		9am	Drill order - drill and rifle exercises. Building new huts &c.	
		2pm	Parade - fatigue dress. Large issue of comforts from Comforts Fund consisting of tobacco, eggs, fruit, milk &c. Weather fine but cloudy & windy.	
do	25		Hqrs & Battery located here	
		9am	Parade drill order - engaged on various fatigues and cleaning equipment.	
		2pm	Parade fatigue dress. Bdr Burford & 3 men reported to Courcelles to load clothing for divisional baths. Weather cold & wet.	

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123 C 7.4	Och 26		Headquarters and Battery located here.	
		9am	Parade - fatigue dress. Half Holiday. Played football match.	
			Snr. Austen proceeded on furlough. Weather cold and unsettled. Strength 2 off. 42 HR.	
do	27		Headquarters and Battery located here.	
		9am	Parade - fatigue dress. Half holiday. Strength 2 officers 42 OR	
			Weather cold and showery.	
do	28		Headquarters and Battery located here. Beginning of training syllabus.	
		7-7.45am	Parade - camp fatigues	
		9-9.45	Physical Training.	
		9.45-10.45	Rifle exercises	
		11-12 noon	Route March	
		2-3pm	Gas Drill.	
		3-4pm	Map Reading (N.C.O's only) Semaphore Signalling for mess.	
			Snr. York returned from furlough. Weather fine and warm.	
			Missing orders from D. G. M. reporting that motor transports will arrive about 10 am.	
			Known and move Battery stores to Allonville.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 29	7 am	Parade - Men to have kits packed & ready by 9 am	
		10 am	Two motor transports reported to Headquarters. All guns, beds, stores etc loaded on one transport - the other transport to carry personnel.	
		10.15 am	Proceeded to Allonville a small village lying about 8 kilos from Amiens and distant 40 kilos from Peronne.	
		1.30 pm	Arrived Allonville passing through Peronne & Albert awaiting orders from D.A	
		4 pm	Orders to move to billets in Cardonette, a village about a kilo away.	
		5 pm	Arrived Cardonette, unloaded transport & stored all guns, beds stores etc. Battery billeted in various barns. Weather showery early but otherwise fine.	
Cardonette	30		Headquarters and Battery located here.	
		10 am	Parade in am fatigue dress - occupied during morning on various fatigues & fixing up & cleaning billets.	
		2 pm	Parade - fatigues etc. Weather fine & warm.	
do	31		Headquarters & Battery located here.	
		9 am	Parade drill order - inspections etc. - Training syllabus to be continued tomorrow.	
		2 pm	Parade - erecting cook house etc. Cpl Lamborn & Cpl Robinson proceeded on furlough.	
			Weather fine & warm	

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			<p>Review by O.C.</p>	
			<p>The end of the month finds the Battery at Cardonette a small village close to Amiens and with the prospect of remaining here for a few weeks spell. The attractions of the village are limited, but leave to Amiens will be very much appreciated by the men as the City is rapidly recovering from the effects of the German advance when it lay for some months under range of the German guns. The inhabitants are flocking back to their homes and the shops and cafes are resuming business as before. The Battery carried out a shoot at St. Souplet (Sheet 57 B.S.E. Map ref. Q 33 A 8.5) when 80 rounds were fired on enemy positions at St. Souplet Railway Station and entrenchment. The shooting was witnessed by the D.S.M.O. who afterwards commented on the accurate shooting and good results obtained. This shoot was the first in which we used the new mobile spade bed and the results obtained came up to all expectations as regards accuracy and mobility. After the first shoot</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<i>Review by O. C. (cont'd)</i>	
			<i>the bed settled down firmly but with a tendency during prolonged firing to settle slightly at rear. This could be remedied however, by the addition of a 6" steel overlapping plate at rear, similar to the one now attached at front of bed.</i>	
			<i>With the exception of this sheet the work of the Battery was confined to ammunition dumps which several times moved forward in consequence of the advances of our troops.</i>	
			<i>The health of the men has been fair. We had one case of influenza but no signs of an epidemic as in July last.</i>	
			<i>While on rest near Peronne the clothing and equipment was inspected and all shortages and unserviceable articles are being replaced.</i>	
			<i>O.C. 3rd A.M. T.M. Battery.</i>	