

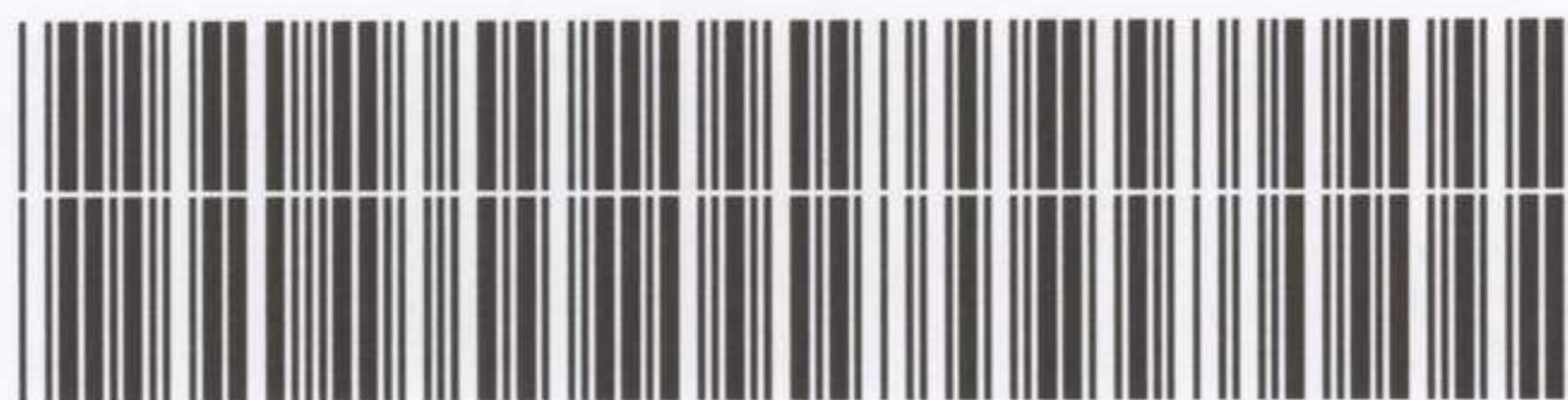
AWM4
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/18/22

Title: 13th Australian Machine Gun
Company

April 1918



AWM4-24/18/22

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.
~~DUPLICATE.~~
TRIPLICATE.

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

13th Aust. Machine Gun Coy.

FOR

April 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling

Umbery Capt

Signature of Officer Commanding

Umbery Capt

April 1918

13th MACHINE GUN COMPANY, A.I.F.

WAR DIARY

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY - 13th AUST. MACHINE GUN COY.

(Erase heading not required.)

ORIGINAL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Sheet 62.d.	1.		Our Artillery very active at intervals, shelling Dernancourt especially. In retaliation enemy shelled vicinity of Railway Line. Our Aircraft active most of the day. Enemy aircraft more active than usual flying well over our front line. M.G.s. Enemy were seen digging in to bank of sunken road at K.1. central. About 50 men appeared to be at work. Fire was opened on them causing casualties. Good progress made on tunnel under Railway Line, timber being salvaged and carried to position. E.19.d.2.2. Gun positions and Accommodation for men carried on with at D.23.c.85.25. D.17.c.63. and D.17.c.4.1. Trench extended and Ammun. Shelter constructed at E.19.b.4.5. Considerable enemy movement observed on road through K.7.a. and C. Casualties Nil. Ammun expended 250 rounds. 4.O.R. Rejoined from M.G. Base. H.Q.s. D.18.c.2.0. Transport and Reserves moved at 10am. from CONTAY to BAYELINCOURT.	
	2.		Very little Artillery activity. Hostile planes very active flying low over our front line. Machine Guns active sniping parties of the enemy working in sunken road at K.1. central. Enemy A.A. M.G. observed at K.1.d.18.40. Weather fine Observation Good. Casualties Nil. Ammunition expended 450 rounds.	
	3.		Our artillery active shelling along the river ANCRE, DERNANCOURT and VILLE-SUR-ANCRE. Enemy artillery shelling BUIRE and C.E.S with Shrapnel. Aeroplanes very active on both sides, and several combats reported. Relief of front line Section was carried out during night and they returned to D.17.c, each section moving forward to complete relief. No casualties. Ammun expended 150 rounds. Heavy rain during night and early morning.	
	4.		Our Artillery quiet until 6pm when a barrage was put down lasting for 1/2 hour. Hostile artillery shelling forward and back areas. Little aerial activity on acc of very poor observation. Rain at frequent intervals during day and night. Progress made with work on tunnels in Railway. Casualties Nil.	
	5.		Operations. See Appendix "A". 12. O.R. Wounded. 2. O.R. Killed. 8. O.R. Missing. (see Appendix "B")	Appendix "A" and "B"

2449 Wt. W14957/M90 750,000 1/16 J.B.C. & A. Forms/C.2118/12.

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O.C.
13th Machine Gun Coy.
A. I. F.

April 1918.

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13th MACHINE GUN COMPANY, A.I.F.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

13th MACH. GUN COY.

(Erase heading not required.)

No. Date

ORIGINAL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Sheet 62.d.	6.		<p>Artillery much quieter. At 7 p.m. out S.O.S. was reported to have gone up near ALBERT. Our Artillery put down a splendid barrage for 1/2 hour. Enemy replied by shelling forward and rear Areas heavily - a few gas shells falling in forward Areas too. Our aeroplanes active all day patrolling our lines and kept enemy planes from crossing our front. Gun positions are as follows:- 2 guns each E.19.c.4.9. D.23.c.7.4. D.23.d.1.9. D.17.d.7.7. D.17.c.7.3. E.19.c.9.1. E.19.d.2.2. 1 gun at E.19.d.4.4. One gun out of action was returned to Transport. Casualties. Nil. 1 O.R. Evac Sick. O.C. 7th Coy preparing for relief of guns on front.</p>	
	7.		<p>Situation has quieted down considerably, shelling at intervals by both artilleries. Weather showery during the day, but fine and clear at night. Relief of guns by 7th A.M.G. Coy. was carried out successfully without casualty. The relief being completed by 10.30 p.m. Company marched by Sections to Lahoussoye.</p>	
	8.		<p>Company arrived Lahoussoye 1.30 a.m. where Coy. Cooker awaited them with a hot meal and tea. At 4.30 a.m. marched to BONNAY. 3 Sections (1, 2 & 4) relieved 12 guns of "A" Coy. 35th M.G. Bn. Relief completed by 12 midnight. 4 remaining guns (3 Section) remaining in Reserve at H'Co. H'Cos at BONNAY. Disposition of Guns: 2 guns at J.25.d.2.9. J.26.c.4.7. J.26.d.6.1. 1 gun each at J.32.d.4.7. J.34.d.1.7. J.32.d.2.5. J.28.c.2.3. P.2.d.1.8. P.2.b.2.1. Heavy rain during the day. Transport moved from BAVELINCOURT to PONT NOYELLES.</p>	
	9.		<p>Forward Areas VAUX and Road to CORBIE heavily shelled. Arrangements made for relief by 24th Coy. on night of 10th. Very misty and cloudy during the day. Ammn. expended Nil. Casualties. 1 Officer Wounded (Lieut. T. DOUGLAS). 1 O.R. Died of Wounds.</p>	
	10.		<p>Hostile Shelling intermittent in Forward Area. No enemy movement observed. Enemy aeroplanes active. Two observed flying low over forward area and one, flying high, dropped bombs on BONNAY in the afternoon. Relief by 24th A.M.G. Coy. completed by 10.30 p.m. without casualty. Company marched to Billets in PONT NOYELLES arriving at midnight. Weather fine all day.</p>	

2449 Wt. W14957/M90 750,000 1/16 J.B.C. & A. Forms/C.2118/12.

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O.C.
13th Machine Gun Coy.
A.I.F.

April 1918

13th MACHINE GUN COMPANY, A.I.F.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

13th Aust. Machine Gun Coy.

(Erase heading not required.)

ORIGINAL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Sheet 62a PONT	11.		Parade 10 am. Fighting Order for Muster Parade and Roll-Call. Company resting for remainder of the day. Lieut. DOUGLAS & 1 O.R. rejoined unit.	
NOYELLES	12.		Parade 9.30 am. Fighting Order. Inspection of Box Respirators. Afternoon. Cleaning and re-packing limbers. 1 O.R. 2o field Ambce. Sick. 1 O.R. Evac'd C.C.S. Stuck off. Weather fine.	
	13.		Parade 9 am Full Marching Order. Company warned to be ready to move at a moment's notice. Shortages taken of Gun Gear, Equipment and clothing. Afternoon. resting	
	14.		Company ceases to be attached to 13th A.I. Bde. and comes under command of 4th A.M.G. Bde. 1 Officer & 5 O.R. Detached for duty with Bn. H. Gns. Morning. Examination of Belt Boxes and Ammunition. Afternoon. Issue of Clean Clothing and Bathing Parade.	
	15.		Morning. Cleaning guns and gear. Filling Ammunition Belts. Afternoon. PAY Parade 2 p.m.	
	16.		Morning. Cleaning equipment and examination of Box Respirators. Afternoon. Resting. Rain all afternoon. O.C. inspected line of Defence by Composite Force from H. S. central to N. S. central and selected positions.	
	17.		Muster Parade 9.30 am. for return of 2nd. blanket. Gun drill and Elementary work. Afternoon. Cleaning guns and checking Spare Parts. Mechanism & Stoppages. 39 O.R. Reinforcements taken on Strength. Weather fine and clear. Officers & N. C.Os. reconnoitring roads & approaches to positions for defence.	

Unborrowed
13th Machine Gun Coy.
A.I.F.

WAR DIARY

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY 13th Aust. Machine Gun Coy.

(Erase heading not required.)

13th MACHINE GUN COMPANY, A.I.F.
Date: _____
ORIGINAL

April 1918.

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.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Sheet 62.d. PONT NOYELLES.	18.		<p>Morning Technical Exercises "A". Afternoon. Cleaning Guns Mechanism. Stoppages & I.A. Composite Force 2nd Scheme. Defence of PONT NOYELLES Bridghead in case of Attack. 4 gun positions selected :: H.12.a.5.2. I.7.c.3.9. H.18.c.4.5. H.17.d.7.2. 12 guns in reserve and in event of attack to move wherever required. 1 OR. To Field Ambee Sick 1 OR. Evac'd C.C.S. Sick Struck off.</p>	
	19.		<p>Morning. Technical employment of Machine Guns. Afternoon. Examination Box Respirators. Testing reinforcements on knowledge of gun drill, etc. Heavy rain at intervals throughout the day.</p>	
	20.		<p>Inspection of Arms & IRON rations, etc. Section Drill (b). Afternoon. Gun cleaning by 1s and 2s. Remainder Rifle Drill. A little snow fell during the day. Weather sharp.</p>	
	21.		<p>Nos 1s. and 2s. testing guns on range. Bathing Parade for part of the Coy. at 5.30 p.m. & 7 p.m. Weather fine and clear. 9 OR. Reinforcements Taken on strength.</p>	
	22.		<p>Morning. 1 Section on Range Stoppages. Revolver Practice. Mechanism. Rough Ground Drill. Use of Ground and Cover. Afternoon. Cleaning guns. Bathing Parade for rest of Company.</p>	
	23.		<p>Morning. Kit Inspection and Medical Inspection. Gun mounting on tough ground and use of ground for cover. Immediate Action & Mechanism. One Section on Range (Stoppages). Afternoon. Football and Swimming.</p>	

Umbery Capt
O.C.
13th Machine Gun Coy.

WAR DIARY

April 1918.

13th MACHINE GUN COMPANY, A.I.F.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY - 13th AUST. MACHINE GUN Coy.

(Erase heading not required.)

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No.
D. O.

ORIGINAL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Sheet 62d.	24. to 28.		See Summary of Operations attached.	Appendix "C".
BLANGY TRONVILLE.	29 th		Parade 3 p.m. to take deficiencies in Equipment. Company resting remainder of day. 2 OR Erad Accidentally Injured. Rain at intervals during the day.	
	30.		Parade 10am. for Orders. Nucleus personnel (21 OR). reported to Capt. H.W. CROUCH. M.C. 24 th A.M.G. Coy at LA MOTTE at 10.30am. Relief of Nos. 1 and 2 Sections in AUBIGNY LINE by Nos 3 and 4 Sections carried out during the night without casualty.	

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O.C.
13th Machine Gun Coy
A.I.F.

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APPENDIX

WAR DIARY

OF

13th AUST. MACHINE GUN COY.

FOR

April. 1918.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.

Subject.

A.

Summary of Action on Morning
of 5th April 1918.

B.

Report re 8 O.R. Missing in Action
5/4/1918.

C.

Summary of Operations from
24th to 28th April 1918.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ON MORNING of 5th April 1918.

Appendix "A"

On the morning of the 5th April, Stand-to was at 4.15 a.m., everything as usual, dark and very misty. At about 7.15 a.m. hostile artillery barrage opened. This was mostly on high ground behind front line and over towards artillery positions. Visibility very poor.

Shortly afterwards small parties were seen coming down the ridge between DERNANCOURT and MORLANCOURT, and attack at DERNANCOURT developed. S.O.S. Signals were sent up from Front Line and repeated from 52nd. Bn. H.Qrs. (Sheet 62.D. D.18.C). Our Artillery reply was poor. This was repulsed by Trench Mortars, Lewis Guns, and Vickers Guns fire. The latter got some splendid targets at about 800 yards range in this attack, causing very heavy casualties. Visibility was too bad for guns in rear to observe fire effect. After this, the enemy continued to come in parties of twos and threes in short rushes, and our front line guns were successful in getting a great number of these. Towards 9 a.m. mist slowly lifted, enemy again attacked from DERNANCOURT and guns on left flank were again hard at it. Right front line guns located enemy machine gun firing from a large white stone house on river bank about 300 yards South of DERNANCOURT. They immediately got on to it and evidently put it out of action. A party of about three hundred tried to rush the railway embankment near DERNANCOURT, and the Lewis and two left flank Vickers guns (E.20.a.7.1) wiped this party out at point blank range. Enemy next appeared North of embankment getting a Machine Gun into position on Railway. Infantry were forced to retire from railway embankment for about 300 yards. Left flank guns were now on extreme flank and still firing on enemy in front of embankment. Suddenly enemy appeared making towards C.C.S: guns to left front of C.C.S. (E.19.B) were firing heavily. Front line guns now swung. One had to move to opposite side of railway line. These guns got enfilade fire on the enemy and one gun fired 1250 rounds without stopping, causing very heavy casualties. Enemy snipers were very active, and one gunner became a casualty whilst carrying gun across Line. Enemy now appeared to retire, making North. On account of the sniping, the two left flank guns had to retire, taking up a position further back on the line. Guns in front of C.C.S

(ceased)

ceased firing, presumed targets had disappeared from view. Indirect fire was directed on valley where enemy appeared to retire to. Things were obscure for a time. Hostile trench mortars enfiladed the embankment and infantry retired. Guns moved to the flank taking up a position at D.24.d. Guns in front of C.C.S. were heard firing up till about 1.30 pm, and it was impossible to get into communication with these teams. Lieut. Tuckett and two teams observed that the enemy had advanced north of them, and were practically cut off; at 2.30 pm. tried to return with guns, 3 men were killed 5 wounded, and one man and Lieut. Tuckett. Got back to Trench 300 yards in rear with one gun; Sniping and counter sniping was carried on for some time. Lieut. Tuckett had got into touch with the two front line left flank guns getting gunners and ammunition. At 5.15 pm our counter attack was launched, and guns again got good targets on retiring enemy. The situation was only partially restored. Three guns Lieut. Weston in charge, returned to positions on railway line and two with Lieut. Tuckett in charge remained in Trench (D.24.d.) covering C.C.S. where there was a gap in the Infantry line. It was reported by Lieut. Julian of 52nd. Bn. that it was owing to the splendid work done by Sgt. Waters, who was in charge of the two front line flank guns, that B. Coy. 52nd. Bn. were not wiped out when retiring. No reports were received from two guns, at E.19.B. it being impossible to get into communication with these guns after the enemy had advanced on to the ridge. These two teams must have either all become casualties, or were overpowered by the enemy. From the amount of firing heard from these positions, they must have caused heavy casualties before they were.

(Signed) W.M. CORY, Captain O.C.

13th AUST. M.G. Coy.

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(COPY).

13th AUST. MACHINE GUN COY.

6-4-1918.

APPENDIX

B⁹

Headquarters,
13th AUST. INF. Bde.

Reference 8 O.R. Missing in Action.
(believed Prisoners of War and Wounded).

These men had two (2) Vickers Guns in position at Sheet 62. E.19.B.20.80. on the 5/4/1918. These guns were heard firing heavily up till 12 noon at enemy approaching from DERNANCOURT. The enemy broke through NORTH of this position and got in behind them. It was reported by the Infantry that they were seen to blow up their guns when the enemy rushed them.

Appendix "B"

(signed) W.M. CORY. Captain.

O.C.

13th AUST. M. G. Coy.

Headquarters

4th A.M.G. Btn.13th AUST. INF. BDE.Appendix "C"

At 11.40 am on the 24/4/18 this Coy. moved out of PONT NOVELLES with the 13th A.I. Bde. in fighting order, with one blanket and oilsheet, also unexpended portion of days rations, 24 hours rations, and emergency ration.

Travelling along old railway track south to N. 5. thence across through N. 16. and BLANGY TRONVILLE to N. 34. B. arriving at 4 pm. A start was made to dig in for the night, and some guns took up defence positions. Reconnoitring country in the vicinity was started. Orders came for O.C. to report to B.H.Q. at once, and attack on VILLERS BRETONNEUX was discussed. 13th A.M.G. Coy. to send two guns forward with 51st Btn. and two ~~to~~ with 52nd Btn. four guns to cover approaches from village when infantry had advanced, until the village was mopped up. These guns were then to be distributed in depth.

The remaining 8 guns were to go into reserve at CACHY Switch trench. All troops were to be on jumping off tape before 10 pm. At 7.15 pm immediately on return, all officers of company were called to gether, and a brief explanation of operations given. No. 4 Section detailed to go forward with attacking troops and arrangements made with COs 51st and 52nd Btns. to supply carrying parties for these teams. One officer was detailed to report at once to 50th Bn. and make arrangements to obtain carrying party from them, for four guns of No. 3 Section, that were to cover the approaches of village.

The cooker had been brought forward and a hot meal and tea was ready by 7.45 pm. As soon as this was finished, carrying party from 51st and 52nd Btns. were brought to gun gear and attached to gun teams. These two sub-sections moved off in rear of respective Battalions. Carrying party for No. 3 Section had not yet arrived. At 8.30 pm. every available man was collected and put on as carrying party, moving forward with as much ammunition as possible, and getting into touch with 50th Bn. in U. 1. D. In the meantime Nos. 1 and 2 Sections moved forward towards CACHY Switch.

The attack had started by this time, the enemy replying with very heavy Machine Gun fire from VILLERS BRETONNEUX and the wood west of it, causing many casualties. Lieut. Cowley, No. 3 Section, located an enemy gun in O. 34. c. brought two of his guns into action, and silenced it. These two guns remained in position covering exits from wood. The other two guns of No. 3 Section took up positions in U. 4. d. covering south west end of village. Two guns which went forward with 51st Btn. took up positions O. 35. d. 4. 2 and 1 at U. 5. B. 3. 4. Both teams had casualties but arrived in position with 8 belts per gun, and these were soon made up to 12, by salvaging from the enemy. Guns on the right with 52nd Btn. advanced to U. 5. a. 7. 0 where 2nd Lt. was killed one N. 6. 0. and two gunners became

casualties. Cpl. Davie assisted by runners, took the two teams forward about 200 yards, and took up a position approximately U.5.d.1.9. and reported to Major Brase (52nd Bn). Two German light guns were mounted and brought into action, and this saved our ammunition, a good deal of which had been lost in the advance. 4 teams of No 2 Section and 3 teams of No 1 Section took up positions in CACHY Switch in U.3.b. and c. 1 gun took up position in U.3.b.o.o. covering road from VILLERS BRETONNEUX.

Machine Gun fire continued to come from BOIS d'ARQUENNE, until cleared up by tanks about 9 am 25/4/18. Enemy was shelling both the wood and village long before they had been mopped up. Enemy snipers and machine guns were very active during the day firing from the MONUMENT, WOOD, and from high ground in O.11.a. and b. About 10 am. lot of movement was noticed on this ridge, which was supposed to be held by English troops. Owing to a mist it was very hard to make sure who was there. Continual sniping appeared to come from this direction. About 11 am. when a machine gun started firing on CACHY Switch, this was located about O.11 central and our guns opened fire at 1900^x, and at once silenced it. The snipers continued to be very active, but all movement was fired on. A mist set in later, and a couple of machine guns started sweeping along the trench at intervals. These could not be located. Enemy shelling fairly heavy all day, especially in CACHY and BRETONNEUX, also wood east of latter, using a big percentage of gas. The wood and low ground was heavily gassed. Gun at U.5.b.30.40. got some good targets during the mist, getting well on to large bodies of the enemy, dispersing them and causing casualties.

When movement was first observed on high ground in U.11.a. and b. Bde H.Qrs. was at once notified and again at 11 am. when sniping appeared to come from that direction. Shortly after this our aeroplanes flew very low over the line we stated was held by the enemy, and on their return, three tanks went out to stop the snipers. However they were met with a hail of M.G. and rifle fire, and after a short cruise round, firing at everything they saw, they returned. In some places, the enemy retired at first sight of them, offering good targets. Shortly after the tanks returned, another intense artillery bombardment came on. Our artillery replied with a splendid barrage, except for one or two guns that were firing short. The French started to come in about 8 pm. and patrols went out to locate the enemy as soon as light permitted. The order came through that the 50th Bn. with 2 Coys. and 49th Bn. on the left, would push the line forward on the left, in conjunction with 15th A.I. Bde. The French to attack MONUMENT WOOD, and high ground South of it. The 52nd Bn. withdrew, and the French took over from them. Two guns in U.5.b. withdrew with the Bn, the French placing guns in these positions. These guns withdrew under orders from Infantry in the line, before M.G. Orders reached them, and touch was lost until next day. Lieut. Bowley took two guns forward, and took up positions as follows: O.36.c. 35.45. and O.36.c. 30.40. one gun covering down railway line, the other across towards the MONUMENT. The French advanced on the Right, but were held up by very heavy M.G. fire on our Right from (the).

The MONUMENT and WOOD. The artillery fire was very heavy during the whole 24 hours. At 7.15 pm a very heavy barrage was put down on the whole area. The French sent up an S.O.S. and again our artillery replied with a heavy counter-barrage.

Lieut. Cousins moved two of his guns forward to O.35.d.8.2. and O.35.d.9.3. covering right flank of 50th Bn. Two guns at U.4.B. were shelled out and moved to U.4.d. Company H's moved to O.26.b.0.8. arriving at new position at 2.30 am. Our artillery was very active during the day shelling Monument Wood and enemy lines. Enemy artillery was also very active. The usual Barrages were carried out. The 12th A.9. Bde. relieved 13th A.9. Bde. during the night 27/28th.

On the 28th very little enemy movement was observed. Both artilleries were very active during the whole 24 hours. The 12th A. M.G. Coy. relieved 13th A.M.G. Coy. during the night 28/29th. 8 guns of 13th A.M.G. Coy. relieved 8 guns of 8th M.G. Battalion. at the following positions: U.1.c.50.15. U.1.c.50.20. U.1.b.40.20. U.1.b.40.25. 3 guns at the centre rides at O.32.a. and 1 gun at O.27.0.4.

Remainder of company moved to BLANGY TRONVILLE.

During tours in the line, Company Cooker was kept in N. 36.c. where hot tea and one hot meal per day, were prepared and sent up the line.

Total casualties:

- 1 Officer Killed in Action (Lieut. F.S. BURT).
- 1 Officer Wounded in Action (Lieut. T.E. COWLEY).
- 6 O.R. Killed in Action.
- 22 O.R. Wounded in Action.

(Signed) W.M. CORY Captain.
13th AUST. MACHINE GUN Coy