

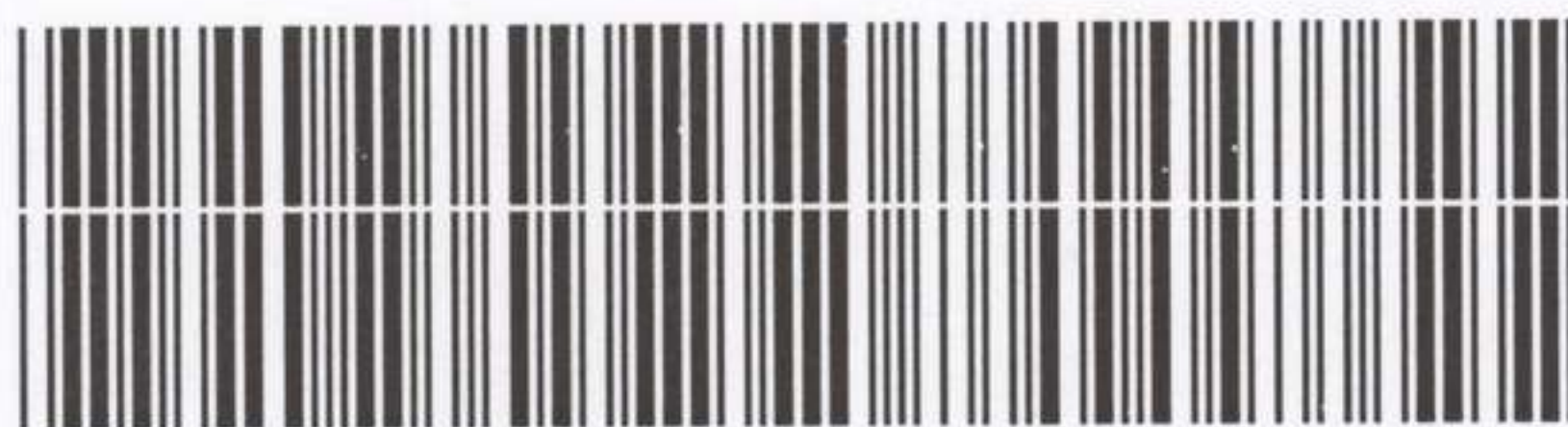
**AWM4**  
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
**1914-18 War**

Artillery

**Item number:** 13/92/7

**Title:** 4th Australian Divisional Trench  
Mortar Officer

February 1917



AWM4-13/92/7



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

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4<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Trench Mortars

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the Field	1/2/17		<p>Lt Col M<sup>c</sup> PHERSON forwards the following report of operations carried out by the A Battery on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 1917.</p> <p>In accordance with instructions received I placed 2 Medium Trench Mortars in position to destroy enemy wire between N 21 B 2<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> - 0 - N 21 d 8<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> - 5. Guns were in position at N 21 D 1.8 and N 21 c 8.8<math>\frac{1}{2}</math>. Telephone communication was established between pits and C.P. at N 21 B 3.5<math>\frac{1}{2}</math>. Having only 2 telephones, communication between pits was obtained by runner. Fire was opened at 11 pm on 30.1.17 and continued until 4.30 pm. The right gun engaged N 21 D 5.7 to 6<math>\frac{1}{2}</math>. 7. onfilade. 28 pounds were fired and about 15 yards of wire chopped out. There had little depth and unless a bomb fell directly on it, no result was obtained. Owing to the frozen ground, bombs appeared to bounce before detonating. A number of effective trench shots were obtained.</p> <p>The left gun fired for wire at N 21 D 4.2. First round was plus and next round was fired with 2° more right deflection, which I judged would bring it out on to the Hun trench or wire as his line was oblique to the gun. The next two rounds were well minus and I increased the range and had effective shots to carry on with. The No 1 on the gun was given the order to "carry on". The firing of the gun after this was very erratic, many shots going well over the Noche line and three fell short in No Man's Land. A message came through to the effect that 2 rounds had fallen on the parapet at the gun pit. The gun was ordered to cease fire. I returned to the pits and it was explained that when the rounds left the gun the cordage blazed fiercely. The cordage used was HW 9 Co 7 KN. This gun fired 15 pounds. Forty three pounds were fired for the day with poor results.</p> <p>Operation of 31.1.17. Firing commenced at 11.30 pm. The right gun engaged a point at about N 21 D 5<math>\frac{1}{2}</math>. 7. where a good deal of wire remained after the bombardment by Heavy Artillery. The left gun's objective was still intact and engaged effectively. 28 pounds were fired with 1 shot. All KN ammunition was used.</p> <p>The right gun, I regret was unfortunate in having a short round on its parapet, which detonated and killed 1 man and wounded 2 others. This gun had done excellent work and had fired 16 pounds. They were then to cease fire and stand by while wire was further reconnoitred. I returned and gave the order to "carry on". One round had been fired I noticed an explosion towards the pit. Telephone communication was cut and I immediately made for the position. I found the pit wrecked. No 19 of the small J. C. was dead and No 11 of the gun team 9 + No 11 of the gun fell into the wounded. From the appearance of the pit a short round had occurred on the parapet. The pit had been constructed in a shell hole, sand bagged up and an opening to the front line. The gun was fired by coming</p>	



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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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4 Australian Divisional Trench Mortars

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the field	12-17		<p>Operation of 31 117 continued  out of the pit into the front line. On questioning the men, Gun Collins (wounded) stated it was the ammunition. Gun Fitzgerald, telephonist, could not tell what happened. He was sitting in the trenches between the wounded men. In the trench, ammunition of H W 7 Co was scattered round. — It would appear to me that cordite of H W 7 Co is affected by the frost of the past few weeks, causing faulty combustion when ignited. Ammunition was taken over from 1st Aust. Div. Trench Mortars and had a dry store.</p>	bas bas
	24/17		Nothing to report.	
	3/2/17		<p>1st mortar (X 4 AB 14) reports as follows:— At 3.10 pm. 1 mortar was brought into action against the wire at N 21 a 2 1/2, 3 1/2, 9 25 paces were fired, 5 of which were short, one being within 30 yards of the gun. The remainder of the shots were good and fine results were obtained. Wire was cut in several places and what did not go into the wire was in the Roche trench as only 3 minus shots were observed. The trench I should say was badly damaged, as a flare store ignited and a huge column of smoke came out of the trench. Another bomb caused an explosion in the trench about half as big in effect as the medium bomb. This occurred about 3 seconds after the bomb explosion. Another bomb struck sheets of iron in all directions. In my opinion the operation was a success, wire being cut and trenches battered, and I understand, infantry encountered no difficulty at this point when they went over.</p>	bas
	5-2-17		Nothing to report	
	9-2-17		Nothing to report	
	10-2-17		Y 4 A Battery relieved X 4 A Battery in the line.	
	14-2-17		Z 4 A Battery returned from 1st Anzac TM school	
	15-2-17		Trench Mortars moved from ALBERT to Artillery Wagon Line Camp at X 29 B	
	16-2-17			
	17-2-17			
	18-2-17			
	19-2-17		Nothing to report	14