

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

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/17/19

Title: 12th Australian Machine Gun
Company

September 1917



AWM4-24/17/19

*Confidential -
Original.*

WAR DIARY

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.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WEST OF HAZEBROUCK (Sheet 27, U. 18. d. 6. 6)	1-9-17		Training proceeded with.	
	2-9-17		Limbers packed for move. Cricket match, Company V. Transport. A win for Company.	
	3-9-17		Company moved by motor busses to BEAUMETZ-LEZ-AIRE, arriving about 5.30 pm. Billets very fair.	
BEAUMETZ-LEZ-AIRE	4-9-17		Training proceeded with. Barrage drill for all ranks.	
	5-9-17		Training. Barrage work. All ranks greatly interested in this work. Lectures in afternoon.	
	6-9-17		Training proceeded with.	
	11-9-17		4378 C.S.M. Lawrence Phillip MASCHMEDT appointed 2nd Lieut as from 1-9-1917.	
	11-9-17		Training.	
	12-9-17		Company paid. Night operations carried out.	
	13-9-17		Training. Barrage work carried out. Lectures to all ranks in afternoon.	
	14-9-17		Lt. TONKIN returned from U.K. leave. "A" and "D" Sections warned to stand by to move up to help 1st Aust. Division operations near YPRES. Limbers packed and crews got ready.	
	15-9-17		O.B. (Capt. D.S. MARTIN) met G.S.O. I (Lt. Col. BERNARD) in afternoon re above. Holiday for 12th Brigade Sports. Vickers gun contest very good; great interest taken in it by all; "B" Section (Corp. J.B. CLARKE and team) winners. 12th M.G. Company won "Best Turned-out Limber" and "Driving Competition". Our "Best Turned-out Limber" was easily first, and an excellent display. Hack Race won by Capt. CROUCH'S horse. Lieut. HOLROYDE'S horse came 3rd in race open to Divisional horses. Officers gave dinner at night in honour of Lieut. TONKIN, Capt. REYNOLDS, and Lieut. NASH of A.A.S.C., and Lieut. MARTIN of 48th Btn. were present.	
	16-9-17		Church parade with 46th Btn. Lieut. TONKIN departed from Company to U.K. preparatory to returning to AUSTRALIA to complete medical course. All ranks were very sorry to lose him. Capt. CROUCH left on U.K. leave.	

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.

OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BEAUMETZ-LEZ-AIRE	17-9-17		<p>Training proceeded with under Section Officers. Lieut. UPTON went billeting to LENIEPPE Area. During the week 2 cricket matches played against 26th Coy A.A.S.C; victory for 12th M.G. Coy. both times. Matches also played between Company and Transport, and Company and Headquarters, and won by Transport and Headquarters respectively.</p>	
	18-9-17		<p>Training proceeded with "A" and "D" Sections. "B" and "C" Sections marched out at 10.0 am: under O.C. (Capt. D.S. MARTIN) to take part in 12th Bde. Field Day, but returned to billets at mid-day, as the operations were cancelled owing to heavy rain. Limbers packed in afternoon ready for move.</p>	
	19-9-17		<p>Reveille 6.0 am. Company fell in at 9.15 am. and embarked at BEAUMETZ-LEZ-AIRE. Only four busses for Company. Men very tightly packed in and remainder distributed in 46th Bttn busses. Company disembussed at LE NIEPPE at 3.45 pm. after very slow trip. Company marched to billets at Sheet 27, T.S.A. 87.75. Most of Company camped in tents in a good field.</p>	
LE NIEPPE	20-9-17		<p>Final overhaul of guns and equipment preparatory to going into line.</p>	
STEENVOORDE	21-9-17		<p>Company marched via CASSEL to neighbourhood of STEENVOORDE. Billets unfit for use, so tents procured, and Company well provided with shelter. All men's feet inspected after the long march, and found to be generally in good order.</p>	
YPRES (Sheet 28 H. 23. d. 5. 9)	22-9-17		<p>Company embarked near STEENVOORDE with 4th Aust. Inf. Bde and 4th Divisional M.G. Company. Passed through POPERINGHE and disembussed on POPERINGHE - YPRES ROAD. Marched to 1st ANZAC M.G. Camps at BELGIAN CHATEAU (H. 23. d. 5. 9) near YPRES. Company in tents and shelters. 2 N.C.O.s. and 32 men from 45th, 46th, 47th & 48th Bttns attached as carriers.</p>	
	23-9-17		<p>In early morning Capt. D.S. MARTIN with Officers and N.C.O.s. made of a reconnaissance of front in the neighbourhood of WESTHOEK. Officers and N.C.O.s. from 4th and 13th Aust. M.G. Coys. accompanied the party.</p>	

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.

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
YPRES	23-9-17		All gun gear finally inspected	
(Sheet 28 H.23.d.59)	24-9-17		At night each battery (2 batteries from 12th A.M.G. Coy and one each from 4th and 13th A.M.G. Coys) sent up working parties under officers to commence digging gun positions, etc. Work was completed in early morning. Two Other Ranks became casualties, but remainder of working party returned safely. Men rested during the day. 4 Other Ranks reinforcements from Base arrived. At night ammunition and water were conveyed by lumber and carrying party to a dump near gun battery positions. Bearings taken and aiming marks laid out. Capt D.S. MARTIN put in charge of S.O.S. Group (4 Batteries of 8 Guns each).	Appendix I
	25-9-17		1769 Sgt. J. KNIGHT left for England to join Officers' Cadet Battalion. In the evening battery and headquarters personnel moved up into position in accordance with Appendices I and II. Lieut. A.F. TAYLOR and Lieut. P. GRIEVESON with 37 Other Ranks remained at transport lines as a Company Reserve. While directing and overseeing preliminary work at Battery position at 7.30 pm Lieut. T.H. TRIMBLE was severely wounded by shell-fire and was safely got away to dressing station. Group H.Q. was established at J.2.d. 13.27, near WEST HOEK, in an old German concrete shelter.	Appendix I Administrative Orders No. 1. Appendix II Operation Order No. 9.
WEST HOEK (near YPRES)	26-9-17		Heavy enemy shelling of battery positions all night with some casualties. Our artillery and "E" Battery of S.O.S. M.G. Group commenced a barrage at 5.50 am. Remainder of Group opened fire at 7.36 am. 4th Australian Division attacked, took and held all their objectives. Machine gun barrage is pronounced a great success. 2/Lieut. MASCHMEDT was very severely wounded while directing fire of his battery. Lieut. PONTIN was slightly wounded. Both officers were safely got away. To noon casualties amongst Other Ranks numbered - Killed 3 Wounded 5	
			During the day three counter-attacks were smashed by our artillery and M.G. barrage. Rations were brought up at night by pack horses.	

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.

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WESTHOEK (near YPRES)	27-9-17		Fairly quiet in night and morning, though enemy planes very daring. Casualties 24 hours ending noon: - 1 Other Rank wounded. Strong enemy counter-attack in evening broken by splendid M.G. and artillery barrage. Machine gun work again highly commended by troops in line. Rations, hot tea, water and mail brought up by pack animals.	
	28-9-17		Fairly quiet during morning. Casualties 24 hours ending noon: - 1 Other Rank killed; 2 Other Ranks wounded severely (1 severe shell-shock). 1 Other Rank, remaining at duty, slightly wounded. 3134 C. J. Mc DONALD M.T. left for CAMIERS to join M.G. School. Company relieved at night. 1 Other Rank slightly wounded, but remained at duty. Remainder of Batteries "F" and "G" and Headquarters safely reached Transport Lines at H. 23. d. 5. 9. Lieut FOX (Transport Officer) who came up to supervise transport of gun-gear, etc, was wounded severely, there one driver slightly wounded, three transport horses killed and two of limbers blown up, owing to enemy artillery shelling roads.	
YPRES (Sheet 28 H. 23. d. 5. 9)	29-9-17		Reorganization of company, and cleaning and refitting of guns, gear and equipment, proceeded with. Capt CROUCH, M.C. returned from U.K. leave. Enemy planes dropped bombs in near vicinity during night. No damage done in our camp.	
	30-9-17		Company resting. Lieut GRIEVESON and 6 gun teams selected from Reserve of last operations to act as a battery in support of 1st Division operations scheduled for the next few days. Lieut GRIEVESON reconnoitred front during the night. Enemy planes heavily bombed neighbourhood of camp at night. Some bombs unpleasantly close, but no damage done.	Appendix III Report on Operations Appendix IV Lessons learnt Appendix V Fighting Capt. M.G.
			Strength of company 8 Officers (includes 182 Other Ranks.	J. J. Martin

- I The 12th AUST. M. G. Coy will form part of an S. O. S. baggage group and will move into the line according to plan laid down in operation orders.
- II Lieut TRIMBLE & HOLROYDE will be in charge of G & F batteries & they will see that all men are duly warned.
- III (a) Lieut TAYLOR & GRIEYSON will remain with the "B" teams, at the transport lines & await further orders.
(b) Lieut TAYLOR will see that all returns are duly signed and sent away.
Lieut FOX will be in charge of the Transport & will make arrangements as regards the following:
 - (a) Supply of rations to company in front line.
 - (b) Locate the A.C.F. & try & obtain comforts.
 - (c) Try & complete mobile reserve of ammunition to 72,000 rounds to K or K.N. This ammunition should be packed, and when completed the boxes sent to coltage.
- IV Officers should see that all men are provided with box respirators that are not damaged.
- V (a) Packs will be piled at Q.M. Store at least 4 hours before leaving camp.
(b) Blankets will be rolled round packs & will not be taken to front line.
(c) Waterproof sheets will be taken.
- VI Lieut FOX will see that all men going to line are provided with 24 hours rations & 24 hours iron rations.
- VII Lieut FOX will accompany the O.C. when he moves into the line, or as to locate Group Headquarters.
- VIII Carrying parties will be utilised for moving gun gear in. On completion of move they will be sent to Transport lines & await further orders.
F. Battery will have 45th & 47th men.
G " " " 46th & 48th "
- IX Battery Commanders will see that all gun gear etc is packed all ready to move off at 12.30 O.C. to-day.
- X (a) Lieut TAYLOR will see that all details other than Transport men, are fallen in daily & the rolls checked.
(b) He will notify company H.Q. of any casualties or sick evacuations.
- XI Lieut FOX will make arrangements with regard to shelters.
The company will probably only be in the line for 48 hours.
- XII Acknowledged.
- XIII Issued at:
- XIV

- Copy No
- 1-2-3 - Was Dicky
 - 4 - Lieut FOX
 - 5 - " TAYLOR
 - 6 - " TRIMBLE
 - 7 - " HOLROYDE

Lt. Martin Capt.
O.C.

12TH AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.	
No.	
Date. 25-9-1917	

12th AUST. M. G. COMPANY
OPERATION ORDER N^o 9

REFERENCE MAP WESTHOEK }
OOSTHOEK } 1/10,000.

1. The 14th AUST. DIVISION will attack and capture the enemy positions for a depth of about 1200 yards.
The 11th BRIGADE will be on the right, the 13th BRIGADE on the left, & the 12th BRIGADE held in reserve.
The enemy positions are reported to be lightly held.
2. The 12th AUST M. G. Coy with two sections from 13th AUST M. G. Coy & two sections from 4th A. M. G. Coy will consist of an S. O. S. barrage group, & will be under the orders of O. C. 12th M. G. Coy. (Appendix A with Fighting Hoop & Fire Organisation orders to Battery Commanders only.)
3. Batteries will be connected to Group H Qrs by telephone and Group H Qrs to D. M. G. O.
Communications will also be maintained by runner and visual (Appendix A)
4. Special Dumps of S.A.A.-R.E. Material are situated at:-
MAIN DUMP BIRR CROSS ROADS (1.7 to 2.8)
FORWARD DUMP J 7 to be used
5. Packs animals load to used forward of J 7 central (Appendix A)
Watches will be synchronized at 12 + 2 hours before ZERO at Group Headquarters.
6. ZERO will be notified later.
7. S. O. S. will be notified.
8. GROUP H. Qrs will be at Tac 45.30.
D. M. G. O. will be at Tid 6.1.
9. Battery Commanders will make arrangements thro' their own companies with regard to Transport & rationing arrangements.

Acknowledge.

Issued at:-

- Copy No
- | | |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 1-23 | War Diary |
| 4 | D. M. G. O. |
| 5 | E Battery |
| 6 | F " |
| 7 | G " |
| 8 | H " |
| 9 | 12 th A. I. Bde. |

W. Martin Cpl

O. C.

12TH AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.	
No.
Date	25-9-17

APPENDIX A

ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH OPERATION ORDER No 9

213

1. (A) The S.O.S. Barrage Group will be divided as follows:-

BATTERY No	COMMANDED BY.	COMPOSITION.	No of GUNS.	MAP POSITION
E	LIEUT KENNARE.	2 Sections 4 th A.M.G. Coy.	8.	J 2 d 94. 75.
F	LIEUT HOLROYDE.	C + D SECTIONS. 12 th A.M.G. Coy	8.	J 2 h 86. 14.
G	LIEUT TRIMBLE.	A + B SECTIONS 12 th A.M.G. Coy.	8.	J 2 h 78. 35.
H	LIEUT TUCKETT.	2 SECTIONS 13 th A.M.G. Coy	8.	J 2 h 75. 60.

(B) Batteries will be in position & ready to fire four hours before ZERO. Routes to be used as previously reconnoitred by Battery Commanders. Gun teams will be conveyed from present camp to BIRR. CROSS ROADS by Motor lorries.

They will rendezvous at BELGIAN BATTERY CORNER at an hour to be notified later.

Gun gear consisting of guns, tripods, 14 belts boxes per gun, condenser tubes etc. spare parts, aiming posts, flame extinguishers spare barrels, belt fillers will be taken up under arrangements of Battery Commanders.

The D.M.G.O will obtain pack animals which will be used to convey as much gun gear and ammunition as possible to battery positions.

These pack animals will be made the most of.

Battery Commanders will make arrangements to have their zero lines laid out before dusk.

The greatest possible care must be taken, when taking these bearings.

Battery Commanders will obtain as many clinometers as possible.

2. (A) Communications will be by runner, telephone & visual. SGT TEMPLETON (12th A.M.G. Coy) and LIEUT HOPKINS (4th A.M.G. Coy)

will see that each battery is connected to Group by telephone (metallic circuit), and GROUP to D.M.G.O

Communications will also be ^{maintained} made by runner, and visual. At night lucas lamps will be used.

(B) Following reports will be forwarded to GROUP H.Q. as follows.

Intelligence Summary	6-0 A.M.
Situation Report	2-0 A.M.
"	2-0 P.M.
Casualties	9-0 A.M.

12TH AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.

2. (c)

S.O.S will be notified.

3. (a)

Special Dumps of S.A.A. R.E Material are situated at
MAIN DUMP. BIRR CROSS ROAD (I 17 to 2.8)
FORWARD " J 7 to Central

Pack animals will be used forward of J 7 to Central.

(b) Following scale of S.A.A etc will be at each Battery position 12 hours before ZERO.

ARTICLE.	PER BATTERY
S.A.A	140,000 rounds
Water (Gun)	8 petrol tins
Spare Barrels	8
Oil	$\frac{1}{2}$ Gallon
Bambo	8 Boxes
Iron Rations & Drinking Water	24 Hours

4. Battery Commanders will see that these articles are in position. Casualties will be sent to Dressing Station which is situated at approximately J 2 d 15.15.

5. Battery Commanders will make arrangements with M.O in charge. Watches will be synchronized at GROUP. H. Q. 12 + 2 hours before ZERO.

6. Battery Commanders will send their watches to GROUP. H. Q. ZERO will be notified.

7. (a) GROUP. H. Q. will be at J 2 C 45.30.

(b) D.M.G.O. will be at J 1 d 6.1.

8. Dress:- Fighting Order. 24 hours rations and 24 hours iron rations to be carried on the men.

COPY NO

1-2-3 War Diary
4 D.M.G.O.
5 E Battery
6 F "
7 G "
8 H "
9 12th A.I. Bde

J. Martin

O. L.

12TH AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.	
No.	
Date	25-9-1917

The company moved into bivouac camp in the forward area (H 23 d 5.9 sheet 29) on 22nd September. Minor preparations were immediately started on.

Instructions N^o 1 were then received from D.M.G.O. regarding the disposal of guns.

16 guns from 12th Coy, 8 from 13th Coy & 8 from 14th Coy were formed into an S O S Barrage group of four batteries under the command of O.C. 12th M.G. Coy.

The batteries were numbered from right to left as follows.

E. Battery	8 Guns	14 th Coy	commanded by	LT KENNARE	14 th Coy
F. "	8 "	12 th	"	LT HOLROYDE	12 th -
G. "	8 "	12 th	"	LT TRIMBLE	12 th -
H. "	8 "	12 th	"	PLT TUCKETT.	13 th -

2. On the early morning of 23rd the O.C. 3 officers & 2 Sgt from F battery, 3 officers & 2 Sgt from G Battery, 2 officers & 1 Sgt from E battery, & 2 officers & 2 Sgt from H battery went up to reconnoitre.

Battery positions were selected, bearings taken and exact position of directing guns resected on map.

Directing guns were as follows:-

E. Battery	T 2 d 94. 75
F. "	T 2 b 86. 14
G. "	T 2 b 73. 35
H. "	T 2 b 75. 60

WESTHOEK Sheet 1/10,000.

Group H Q^{rs} was selected at T 2 d 13. 27.

During the day all gun gear was finally overhauled preparatory to being taken into the line.

During operations transport lines remained at H 23-d 5-9

3. During the night 23/24th, parties under officers were sent from each battery to commence digging gun positions, bell filling places & shelter for gun teams.

The positions were finished that night, T bases put in for each position & finally every place properly camouflaged.

4. During the day of 24th all ranks rested and slept. On the night 24/25 100,000 rounds bulk S.A.A was sent to each battery position. This was done by means of limbers & pack animals.

Unbroken parties met pack animals at battery positions, and the ammunition was properly distributed to each gun. It was then camouflaged.

One or two positions which had been damaged by shell fire were repaired.

12TH AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.

No. 5

Fire organization orders, operation orders, battle fighting maps were all worked out & prepared by the O. C. thus saving the battery commanders a considerable amount of work.

The method adopted for conveying working parties up was excellent, as it saved all ranks unnecessary fatigues.

Men were taken by motor lorries to BIRB CROSS ROADS thus only having to walk about 2 miles.

At 7.30 P.M. on the 25th inst. all batteries moved into their positions. Gun gear was taken by ladders to WESTHORN RIDGE & the men were conveyed by motor lorries.

Carrying parties attached from battalions were used to convey ammunition & gun gear to the Battery positions across their cuts back to the transport lines.

This saved a lot of fatigue for men who were going into the line.

Group H O's opened at 8.30 P.M. all batteries reported ready to fire at 11.30 P.M.

LT TRIMBLE, ^{12th Coy} was wounded whilst taking bearings

The ZERO hour for the general attack was 5.50 am on the morning of 26th inst.

H. Battery opened at 2+74 kept up a creeping barrage beyond first objectives till 2+32. This battery then kept up searching fire on this area till 2+152. It then ceased fire & all guns laid on their S.O.S lines.

E.F+G. Batteries opened fire at 2+106 kept on a creeping barrage beyond first objective till 2+168.

The batteries then searched on these areas till 2+288 & then ceased fire, all guns laying on their S.O.S lines.

During the barrage all batteries were subjected to a heavy enemy artillery fire of all calibres, however owing to the localizing effect of the ground the casualties sustained were not as great as might have been expected.

The following officers were wounded during the barrage. 2nd Lt MASCHMEDT & 2nd Lt PONTIN. 12th Coy & 2nd Lt TUCKETT. 18th Coy.

2nd Lt CULLIMORE was then taken from F battery & placed in charge of G battery.

Between 4 P.M. & 7 P.M. on the 26th inst the enemy launched three counter attacks. Fire was opened by all batteries, immediately the S.O.S signal was seen.

This fire was kept up as long as the SOS was called for. On the evening of the 27th inst at 6.40 P.M. the enemy launched a very strong counter attack along the whole front.

All batteries again opened immediately & according to personal interviews with prisoners, heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy before the attacking got on to them.

The effect of the SOS machine gun fire was wonderful & conclusively showed what wonderful work the Machine Gun can do.

9. During the period harassing fire, targets were marked out by the O.C. sent to E & F Batteries. E Battery carried out harassing fire during the nights 26/27th & F Battery during the nights 27/28th.

Reports state that this fire was very effective.

10. On the afternoon of 27th inst E Battery was taken from the SOS group sent to relieve mobile guns in the front line.

O Battery 8 guns 24th Coy commanded by LT JACK was then attached to the group & took up a position at T 2090.13. This battery was in position and ready to fire before E. battery vacated its position thus ensuring that the divisional front was covered during the whole period.

11. Bulk S.A.A was replenished on the nights 26/27th & 27/28th.

This ammunition was brought up by pack animals guides being sent to conduct them to battery positions.

Rations, water & tea were sent up every evening so that all men were well rationed.

Tommy cookers were also supplied to each battery.

12. Reports on communications & disposal of spare parts as sent to C.M.O are attached herewith.

13. During the morning of the 26th the following guns & tripods were destroyed by shell fire.

F Battery	1 Gun + 1 Tripod
G "	3 guns + 2 tripods
H "	1 gun + 1 tripod

These were replaced on the night of 26th inst by gun & tripods sent up by 6th Aust M.G. Coy. Also during the same evening re. reinforcements from 13th & 12th Companies were sent up to replace casualties.

In the evening of 28th inst orders were received that
SOS group was to be released.

Guns from 13th & 24th companies then came under the
orders of their respective O's & reported to them for duty.
Guns from 12th company were sent to Transport lines and
men proceeded to bivouacs there.

Whilst getting the guns out Lt FOX (T.O. 12th Coy)
was wounded, three horses were killed & one limber
damaged. No gun gear was destroyed. Both batteries
were clear of WESTHOEK RIDGE at 12 midnight.

Lt WEARNE 13th Coy battery commander was
wounded, when proceeding to consult his company
commander with reference to orders.

15. Amount of ammunition expended during operations.

breeping barrages 149,500 rounds S.A.A.

SOS Barrages called for 160,500 " S.A.A.

Total 310,000 rounds

16. Casualties for operations were as follows.
This includes personnel that were attached from 13th
14th & 24th AUST. M. G. COMPANIES

	Killed		Wounded		Gassed		Wounded Remaining at Duty	
	OFF	OR	OFF	OR	OFF	OR	OFF	OR
13 th Coy	-	6	2	16	-	-	-	-
12 th "	-	4	4	10	-	2	-	3
14 th "	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
24 th "	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Total	-	11	6	30	-	2	-	3

Officers wounded & dates of wounds are as follows:-

13th Coy 2/Lt TUCKETT 26-9-17

2/Lt J. WEARNE 28-9-17

12th Coy Lt T.H. TRIMBLE 25-9-17

2/Lt L.P. MASCHMEDT 26-9-17

2/Lt J.A. PONTIN 26-9-17

Lt A.E. FOX 28-9-17

Lt. Markin Cuff
O.C.

12TH AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.	
No.	Date 29-9-17

12TH AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.

REPORT ON DISPOSAL OF SPARE PARTS.

213

The method adopted by this unit in recent operations was found to be very satisfactory and the loss in spare parts was practically nil.

Each gun team took their first aid case (with wallet) with them, leaving the Spare Parts Box at the Transport lines.

This method was found to be entirely satisfactory as the small quantity of spare parts which were held at Group H. Co were not called on.

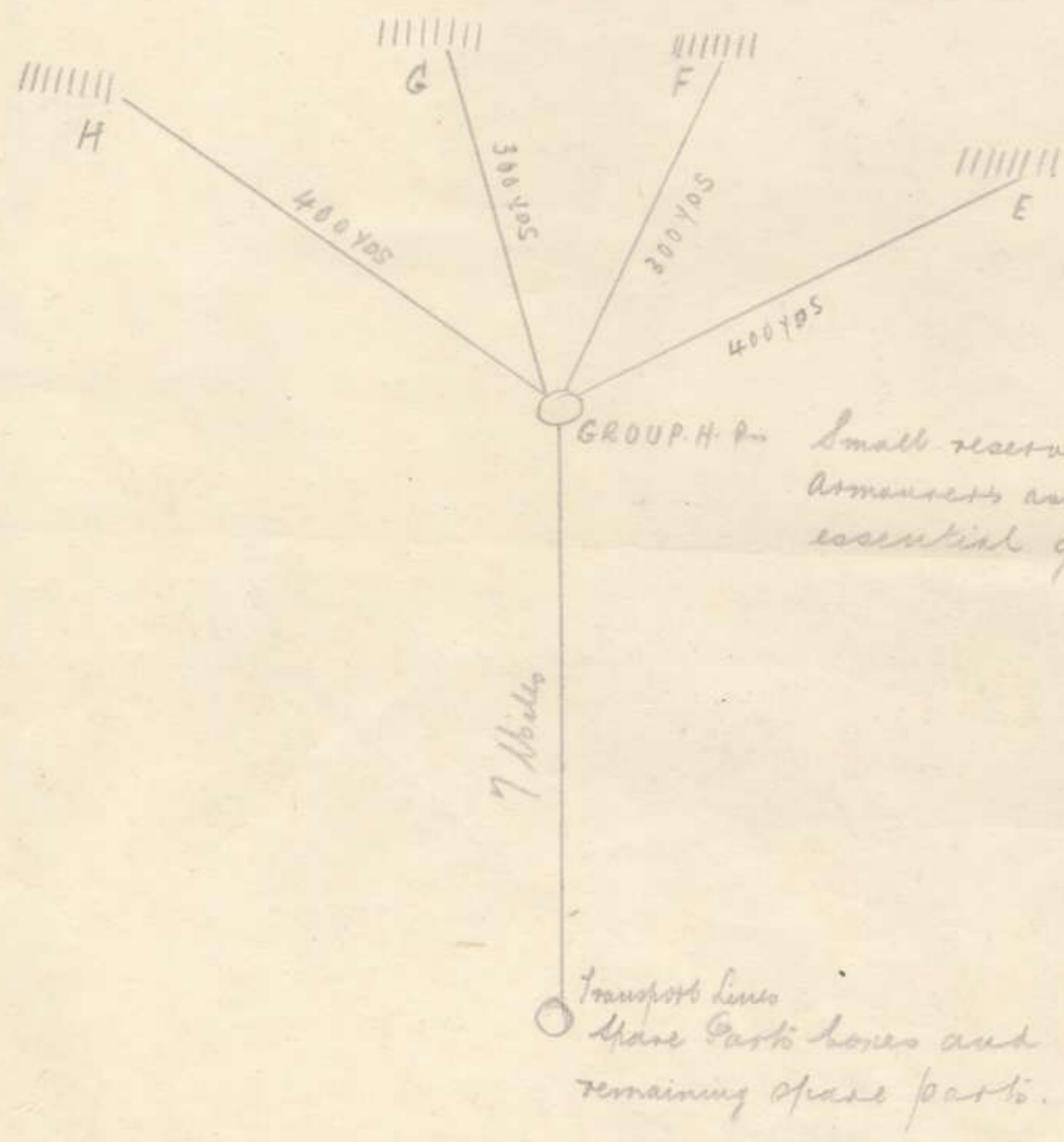
Group H. Co was only about 300 yds from the Batteries, and any guns temporarily out of action were sent there.

These these guns were quickly put right again by an armaments assistant.

Spare baskets were of course taken for each gun.

Each gun fired about 12,500 rounds, and there was practically no nickelling in the barrels.

Sketch herewith shows disposal of spare parts.



Each gun had one first aid case and one basket.

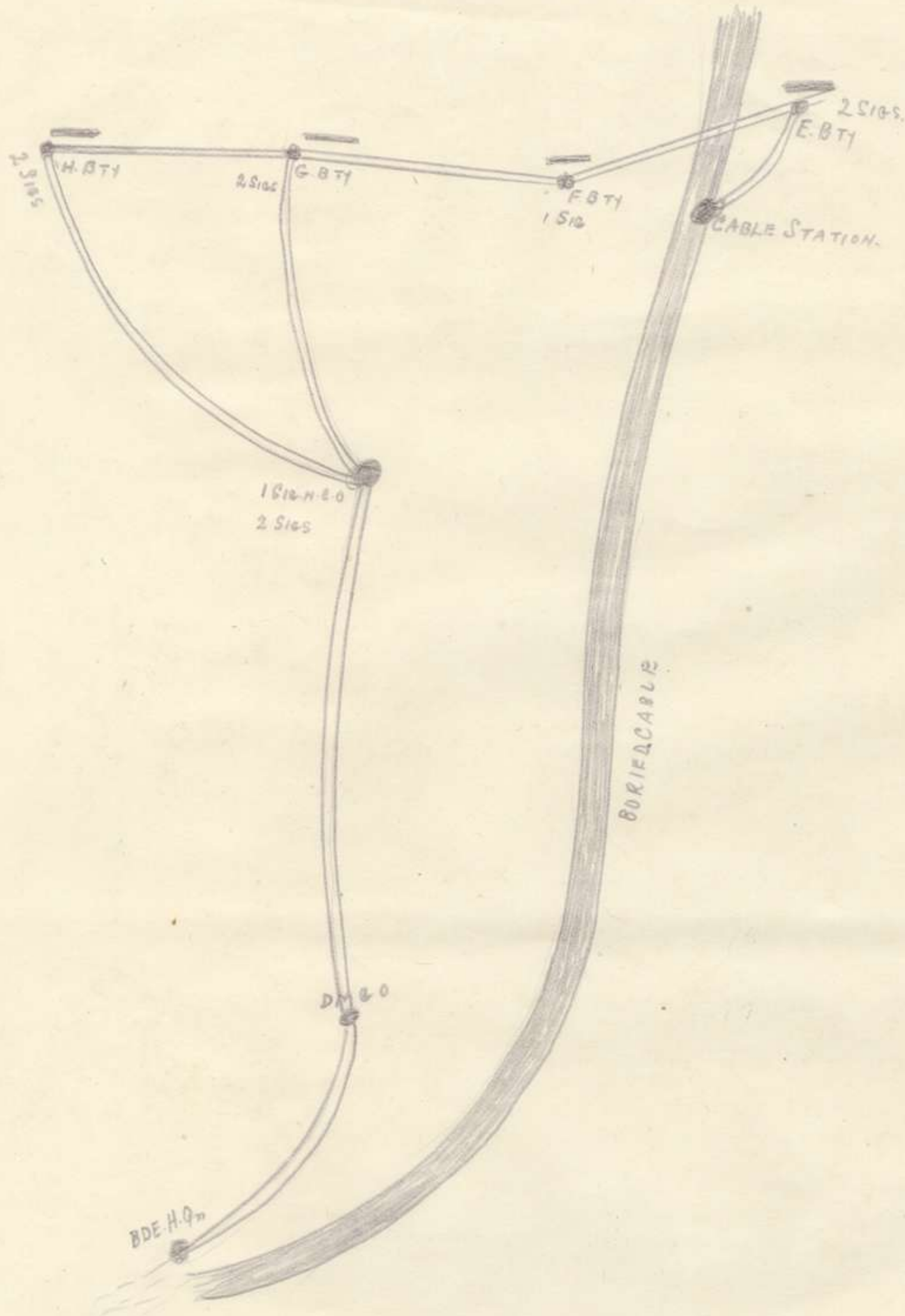
Alphabetic Code

12TH AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.	
No.
Date 29-9-1917

O.C.

213

Sketch herewith shows method by which telephonic communications were maintained during recent operations.



As shown in sketch double lines were used in each case, so that 2 lines would have to be broken before communications were severed. The electric circuit of course was dead. Lines were laid along the ground, as a three foot busy is not considered advisable because if the wire breaks, the break is hard to locate.

Of course the main thing is quick repairs & I was lucky in having excellent signallers, who were always quick at work. During the whole operation there was only one time when telephonic communications were held up.

A system of runner communications was also arranged for, and secret messages were sent in this manner.

My signaller & runner were all picked men & were exceedingly conscientious in their work.

This last point in my opinion is most essential.

I think that if the above system was adopted in future operations for machine gun battery groups, that it would meet all contingencies.

W. Martin
J.C.

LESSONS LEARNT FROM RECENT OPERATIONS

Recent Operations have shown: -

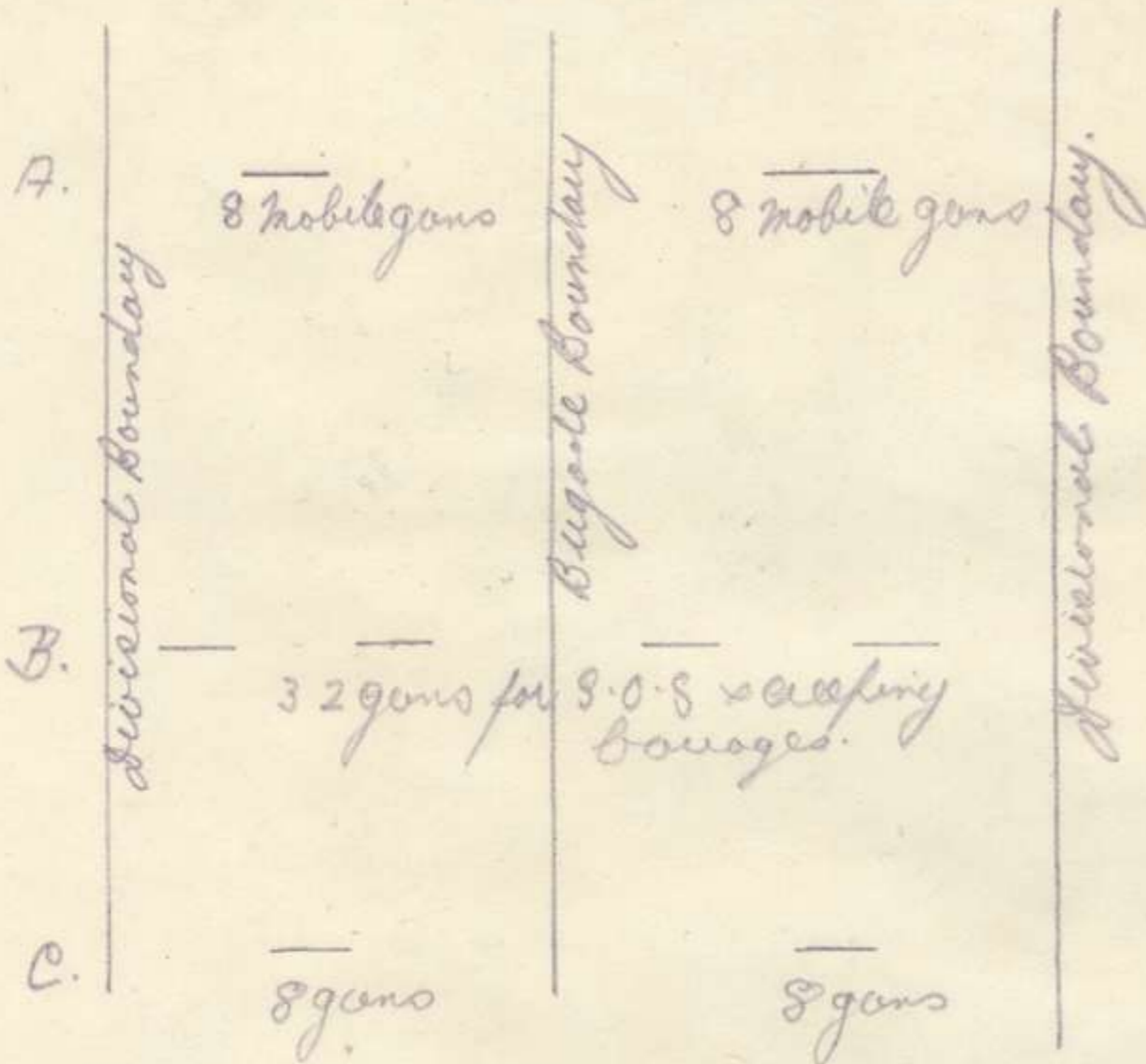
- (1) The issue of one clinometer per gun is essential, as there is not sufficient time between lifts to allow a gun commander to put the elevation on more than one gun.
Correct elevation is most essential & therefore should be checked most carefully.
- (2) The issue of workable traversing stops should be considered. The present issue are clumsy, & the men prefer to work without them.
The elevating stops issued, were found to work fairly well.
- (3) All Section officers, N.C.O's & No 1's prefer the old box slide on the tangent sight, to the one that is being issued at present.
It is stated that the present slide is continually dropping down.
- (4) More time should be given companies for preparatory work, before the operations.
If only two or three days are allowed for reconnaissance, digging & preparing positions etc it will always be found that all tanks are thoroughly fixed out before the operations.
- (5) It is thought that the S.O.S guns could carry out the work of the creeping barrage guns. If this were done, the number of guns used would be lessened, and thus it would stop the present system of one division sending guns to assist another division. This system has proved most unsatisfactory.
It is considered also that some of the creeping barrage could be abolished.
Allowing light guns for each brigade in the attack, if the system as shown on attached sketch was carried out. It is thought it would prove more than satisfactory.
- (6) It is hoped that in future pack animals belonging to Machine Gun Companies, will not be sent to the divisional pack train.
Companies really want all their pack animals for carrying ammunition, water, rations & gun gear, so that if these animals are taken from them, it means ~~an~~ a re-demand on the pack train.

12TH AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.	
No.	1-10-14
Date	

J. Martin Capt
of c

No.
Date:

Sketch showing proposed disposal of guns.

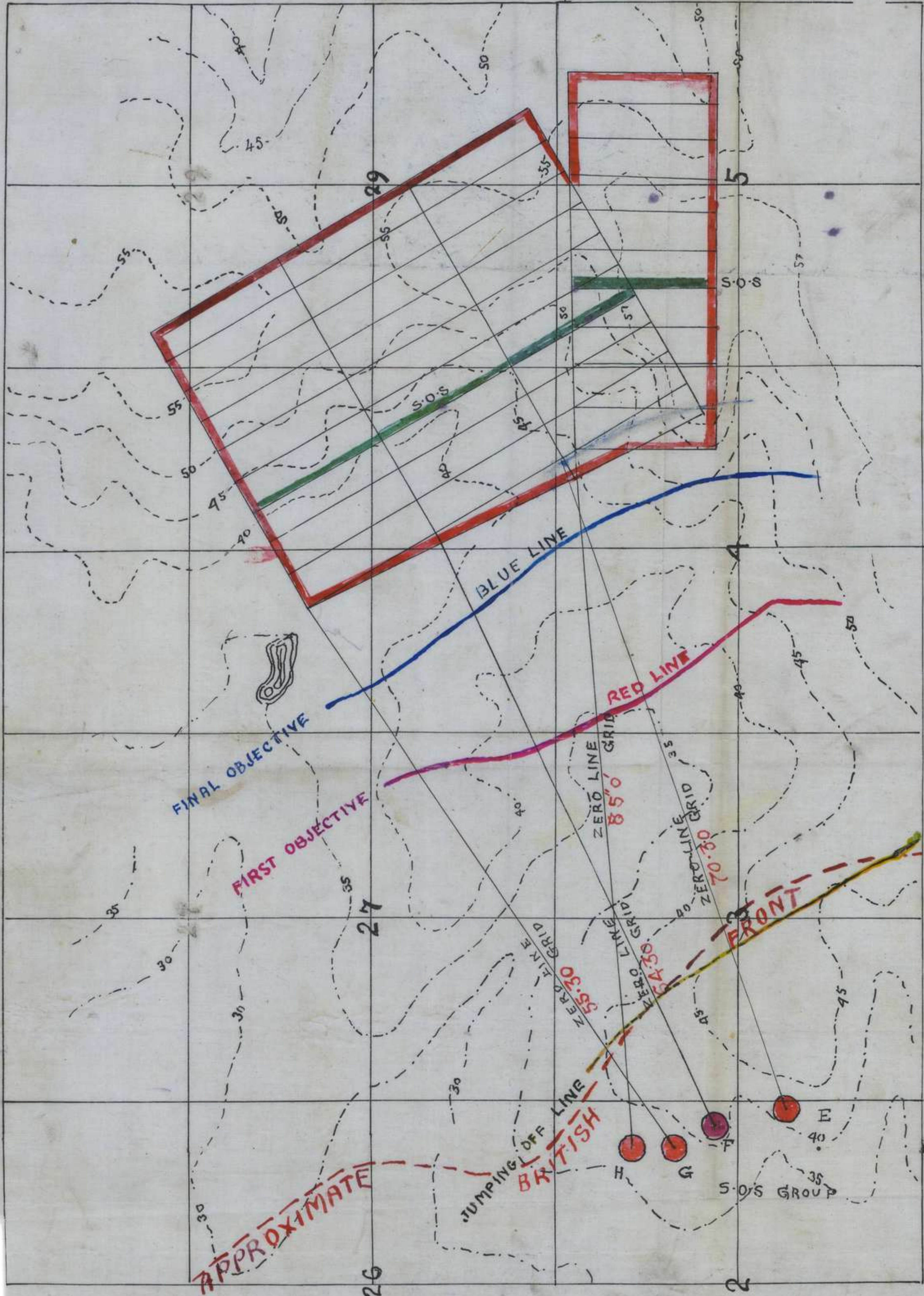


- C. These sixteen guns would be used for neutralizing fire on strong points during the attack. These guns will fire on these strong points as long as safety will allow. They will be withdrawn about 2712 hours or perhaps before, and will be placed in safety in reserve. They will then be used for relieving mobile guns in front line.
- B. In regard to S.O.S. guns they could be kept in as long as required. 32 S.O.S. guns should be sufficient to cover the divisional front. Each gun can cover 50 yds. Thus 32 guns will cover 1600 yds frontage.

D. J. Martin Capt
o/c.

12TH AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.

No.
Date: 1-10-14



S.O.S. GROUP FIGHTING MAP

SCALE 1-10,000

Part of Sheet 28.

213

Intelligence Report
for period ending 6.0 am. 26-9-17

Artillery - Our artillery generally active throughout the night. A heavy barrage opened at 4.0 am and lasted an hour. A creeping barrage opened at 5.50 am.

Enemy artillery was fairly active all night, erratically shelling battery areas and WESTHOEK RIDGE. Only high explosive was used.

Aircraft - Our aircraft were observed patrolling our front and dropping flares.

Work - Gun positions were improved during the night and shell-hole shelters made. One gun position was blown out at G battery and the tripod damaged. This position was immediately re-made.

General - H Battery opened fire

at Z+7 and the guns
are firing well. Other batteries
will open fire at Z+106.

Casualty Report will be
rendered at 14.00.

A. Martin Capt.
O.C.
S.O.S. Group.

Intelligence Report
for Period ending 5.30 am 27.9.1917.

Artillery - Artillery Barrage opened at 5.50 am
and H Battery opened fire at 2.7,
and carried out their orders regarding
harrassing and barrage fire. E

E, F and G Batteries opened
fire at 2.10.6 and programme
was carried out to the letter.

These batteries ceased fire at
10.40 am. Guns were then laid
on S.O.S lines, and fire was
opened on three occasions when
S.O.S signal was observed, rapid
fire being kept up until guns were
ordered to stand down.

During the night of 26th/27th
E Battery carried out harrassing
fire as per instructions received.

During the first barrage
put down by the batteries fire
was controlled by the use of
flappers. Each gun commander
was in possession of a watch and
these watches were synchron-
ized at various times before
the commencement of the oper-
ations.

During the barrage the

batteries were subjected to exceedingly heavy hostile artillery fire. This fire was kept up throughout the day, finally abating at about 8.30 pm. Hence then it has been quiet.

Aircraft - Our aircraft has been active during the whole period, continually flying very low. Enemy aircraft was also fairly active during the day, several planes flying low. Two of these planes were shot down out of action, falling in our lines.

Work - On many occasions gun positions, belt-filling positions, etc, were blown in. These places were immediately rebuilt and also the men have been hard at work building positions for themselves. Every battery is O.K. now, all positions being successfully camouflaged. More sand-bags are required to make the shelters water-proof.

Casualties - These were moderate, "A" Battery losing a number of men, also "C" Battery, who lost three officers. "E" and "F" Batteries only suffered very few casualties. These casualties have been replaced by men who were sent up about 6.0 pm on 26th.

5 guns were blown out but have all been replaced with guns from 6th Company. Several guns were temporarily put out of action, but were quickly got going again.

Communications - Communications have been maintained throughout the operations, both by telephone and runner. At about 7.30 am on 26th all lines were blown up. The system of runners to all batteries was maintained whilst the lines were renewed by the signallers, who have done excellent work.

Ammunition - At the commencement of operations each battery had

14 belt. boxes per gun and
 and "H" and "G" batteries 100,000
 rounds of bulk and "E" and
 "F" batteries, 50,000 rounds bulk.
 100,000 rounds was sent up
 during the night of 26 to 27th,
 50,000 rounds going to "E" battery
 and 50,000 rounds to "F" battery.

General - The spirits of the men and
 their conduct have been excellent
 throughout the operations, this
 being due to the wonderful example
 set by officers and NCOs. Despite
 the heavy shelling the barrage
 was carried out as though on
 the parade ground. Each
 battery is well settled now
 and should not suffer any more
 casualties.

W. M. M. P. G.
 of the 50th
 Group

Detailed Report on Batteries.

All Batteries carried out their barrage orders to the letter. Each Battery was subjected to intense hostile shelling and the conduct of all ranks was magnificent.

"H." Battery.

One gun temporarily out of action.
2/Lt WEARNE acting as Battery Commander.
All guns now laid on S.O.S.

"G." Battery.

5 guns still in action, 3 having been blown apt.
All guns now laid on S.O.S. lines.
2/Lt CHILLIMORE acting as Battery Commander.

"F" Battery

Everything OK.
 One gun out of action.
 All guns now laid on 505
 lines.
 Lt. HOLROYDE still Battery
 Commander.

"E" Battery.

All guns in action and now
 laid on 505 lines.
 5 guns working with 8 men.
 Lt. KENNARE still Battery
 Commander.

It appears from the above
 notes that reinforcements are
 required. Also bulk ammuni-
 tion which should be up to-
 night. Otherwise everything OK.

I am more than pleased with the
 manner everyone has carried out
 their job, and will have a number
 of recommendations.

A. Mackin Capt

H.O.

12th A.I. Bde.

REFERENCE WESTHOEK 410000.

Disposition Report.S.O.S. MG Groups

Ref. 61 of 28-9-1917.

4 Oct 28.

Group H.Q. and 12th MG H.Q. (Capt.
D.S. MARTIN) at J. 2 d. 13. 27."H" Battery (8 guns, 13th MG Coy)
at J. 2 b. 75 60."G" Battery (8 guns, 12th MG Coy)
at J. 2 b. 73 35."F" Battery (8 guns, 12th MG Coy)
at J. 2 b. 86 14."O.I" Battery (8 guns, 2nd MG Coy)
at J. 2. c 90. 13.

C.To. NIL.

Trench at J. 2 d. 94. 75.

J. 2 d. 94. 75

O.C.

S.O.S. Group.

Intelligence Report
 Period ending 7.0 am. 29-9-17.

Artillery - Enemy artillery was active during the day, battery positions being subjected to promiscuous shelling. At 6.40 pm their artillery fire became intense and our SOS signal was seen to go up. All batteries immediately opened fire which was kept up for about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour. At about 7.30 pm it became quiet, the enemy counter-attack having been blown out.

Aircraft - Enemy aircraft was not so active as usual though at times some planes flew very low over our lines.

Our aircraft were very active during day and night, one being brought down in flames.

M.G. Fire - Enemy M.G. fire was more active than usual but no bullets fell in the vicinity of batteries.

Works - All battery positions were improved during the day as far as possible, gun positions and cover for personnel being improved.

General - "E" Battery was disbanded on night of 27th and a new battery "O2" (24th MG Coy) was placed at my disposal for barrage work. During the day fresh SOS targets and harassing fire targets were worked out for each battery.

All batteries reported laid on new targets at 4.0 pm.

All men who have been killed have been buried and map location noted of the positions.

During the day personnel were given as much rest as possible.

A false SOS was seen at 10.45 pm. All guns immediately opened, but were stopped.

All guns are in good condition and working well.

More ammunition (20,000 rounds per battery) and sand-bags are required.

J. H. Martin *Capt*

Officers		O. Ranks		
K	W	K	W	Grand SK
	=	=	2	2
	3	3	5	
		=	1	
	1	1	2	1
				2
	4	4	10	2, 3.

General - "E" Battle
 on night of 2
 battery "O2"
 was placed
 for barrage
 day fresh
 harassing
 out for E

K

W

3

on new

1

have been

4

noted

were g

possible

10.45

open

det

not

be

Officers

C. Ranks

K

W

K

W

Jan SK

3

3

2

2

1

1

1

2

1

2

4

4

10

2

3