

**AWM52**  
**2nd Australian Imperial Force and**  
**Commonwealth Military Forces unit war**  
**diaries, 1939-45 War**

**Item number: 8/2/18**

**18 Infantry Brigade**

**November 1942**

# WAR DIARY

or

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required).

Army Form C. 2

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
MILNE BAY	1 Nov		H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde closed HAGITA HOUSE 0820 hrs opened No. 1 HOUSE 1100 hrs.	
	2 Nov		D Coy 2/9 Aust Inf Bn took over defence GURNEY FIELD from 25 Aust Inf Bn . 2/9 Aust Inf Bn patrol NOWLA relieved by 2/5 Aust Inf Bn.	
	3 Nov		Training and exercise of H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel.	
	4 Nov		2/9 Aust Inf Bn Patrol GOMIMI R. relieved by 2/5 Aust Inf Bn. Mr H. McCOLM L.O.3 att. temporarily to H.Q. MILNE FORCE as L.O.	
	5 Nov		Anti- Gas tng and P.T. 18 Aust Inf Bde H.Q. personnel	
	6 Nov		Mr H.W. PIPER I.O. att temporarily to H.Q. MILNE FORCE as asst G.S.O. 3 (I)	
	7 Nov		Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. returned from Port MORESBY	
	8 Nov		Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. att. temporarily to G.S. MILNE FORCE. Chaplain R.A. HELMORE reported from DRAKE FORCE for tpt to First Aust Army.	
	9 Nov		Capt F. QUILTY departed under orders Sigs MILNE FORCE to establish spotting station on MISIMA ISLAND.	
	10 Nov		Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. returned from MILNE FORCE to 18 Aust Inf Bde.	
	11 Nov		Zeroing of rifles and range practice H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel.	
	12 Nov		Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. conducted Col LAUX, U.S. Army Official Observer from WASHINGTON over MILNE BAY Area and conferred with N.O.I.C. Lt. Comdr. ANDREWARTHA on siting of naval sig stn in fwd area.	
	13-14 Nov		Tng and exercise H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel (Close order drill and zeroing of rifles)	

18 Bde Location statement No. 25 attd.

WAR DIARY

or

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required).

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.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	marks references to Appendices
MILNE BAY	15 Nov		Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. went aboard H.M.A.S. STUART which sailed to KANAKOPE PT. where he discussed location of P.W.S.S. with Comdr SPURGEON (H.M.A.S. STUART) and N.O.I.C. Lt Comdr ANDREWARTHA. Capt F.E. QUILTY Sig Offr returned from MISIMA IS.	
	16 Nov		Bde. Comdr. Brig G.F. WOOTTEN D.S.O. returned from PORT MORESBY and resumed command 18 Aust Inf Bde, incl. 2/9 Aust Inf Bn. Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. reported to G.S.O. I MILNE FORCE Col F.O. CHILTON D.S.O. results of discussion on P.W.S.S. Range practice H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel.	
	17 Nov		45 amm W.R.A. CO 45 returned for examination to Brig. O'BRIEN M.G.O.s Branch. Stock green clothing and dye sent to 2/12 Aust Inf Bn.	Letter G/38/48 att sent to MILNE FORCE
	18 Nov		Bde Comdr Brig G.F. WOOTTEN D.S.O. assumed comd MILNE FORCE at 1600 hrs during absence on leave of Maj Gen C.A. CLOWES D.S.O. M.C. 2/9 Aust Inf Bn placed under direct op comd MILNE FORCE.	
	19 Nov		A. Tp 4 Bty, 101 Aust A/Tk Regt, Bde Carrier Res, 2/10 Aust Inf Bn tpt, placed under adm comd 2/9 Aust Inf Bn. In the event of 2/9 Aust Inf Bn moving, these sub-units NOT to move without orders from H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde.	See 0359 att
	20-21 Nov		Tng and exercise H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel	
	22 Nov		Party of 30 all ranks 2/9 Aust Inf Bn visited SAMARAI in H.M.A.S. STUART.	
	23 Nov		13 Carriers Universal 2/12 Aust Inf Bn handed over to 17 Aust Inf Bde in accordance with MILNE FORCE A.Q. 2275	
	24 Nov		Comforts Fund issue to H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel	
	25 Nov		Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M., Mr R.J. SEDDON S.C.(1), Mr N.J. SHERWIN L.O.2, Mr H McCOLM L.O.3 acted as umpires in two day exercise with 2/9 Aust Inf Bn EANEANENE - KALOHI Ck area	
	26 Nov		Maj J.E. BROCKSOPP took up appt of B.M. (1)	

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~~

(Erase heading not required).

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
MILNE BAY	<del>XXXX</del> 27-29 Nov 30 Nov		<p>Tng and exercise H.Q. 18 Aust Inf Bde personnel (small arms tng and route march)</p> <p>-----                      ))))                      -----                      Maj J.A.Y. DENNISTON B.M. lectured offrns and N.C.O's ,2/9 Aust Inf Bn on Op. orders.                      -----</p>	<p>Intelligence Log for period 1-30 Nov att.</p>

# MESSAGE FORM

**CALL  
 AN  
 INSTRUCTIONS.**

IN

OUT

No. of Groups  
**GR.**

Serial No.

OFFICE DATE STAMP

(ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

TO

MILNE FORCE.

FROM

18 AUST INF BDE

Originator's Number

1707

Date

24

In Reply to Number

ACK	COPY	No	9	Admin	Instr
AQ2275					

THIS MESSAGE MAY BE SENT **AS WRITTEN**  
 BY ANY MEANS:

*ex with WIT*  
*[Signature]*

SIGNED

IF LIABLE TO BE INTERCEPTED OR FALL  
 INTO ENEMY HANDS, THIS MESSAGE MUST  
 BE SENT **IN CYPHER**

SIGNED

(BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

ORIGINATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS  
 DEGREE OF PRIORITY

TIME OF ORIGIN

0830

SYSTEM IN	TIME IN	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER

**T.H.I.**

**T.O.R.**

18 AUST. INF. BDE.

TOR 245/24 11 AG / 1570.

	INIT.	DATE
COMD		
BM		
BM (L)		
SC		
SC (L)		
IO		One
LO1		
LO2		
LO3		
TO		
LAD		
SUP O		

HQ MILNE FORCE  
23 Nov 42

COPY NO .....9.....

ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTION NO AQ 2275

1. One Pl Carriers will embark on SS KOORAKI 23 Nov 42 for PORLOCK HARBOUR. Time of embarkation will be notified later. On arrival at PORLOCK HARBOUR, carrier Pl will come under command 32 US Div.  
Pl will be made up as follows :-
  - (a) 13 carriers - supplied by 18 Aust Inf Bde.
  - (b) Personnel on basis of W/E for one carrier Pl less MC section - supplied by 17 Aust Inf Bde.
  - (c) All carriers will be serviced and must be in first class condition before shipment.
2. Personnel and carriers will concentrate in 2/9 Bn area not later than 1200L 23 Nov 42; at which time Carrier Pl comes under command HQ, Milne Force. Prior to embarkation, further orders will be issued.
3. Each carrier will be equipped with 2 LMGs supplied as follows :-
  - (a) 17 Aust Inf Bde will provide 13 LMGs, complete with spare parts and an additional 8000 rounds SAA per carrier
  - (b) 17 Aust Inf Bde will supply 1 A/Tk rifle per section, complete with amm.
  - (c) HQ Milne Force will supply 13 LMGs, complete with spare parts - 15 magazines per gun only - balance to bring holdings up to W/E to be supplied by 17 Aust Inf Bde.
  - (d) P.O.L. sufficient for 200 miles per carrier will be drawn by 17 Aust Inf Bde. In addition, a reserve of P.O.L. sufficient for a further 200 miles will be taken.
  - (e) Rations and quinine for 7 and 14 days respectively, together with medical kit, will be carried.
4. Messing while at sea will be a unit responsibility.
5. O.C. Carrier Pl will act as O.C. Tps and will be responsible for AA protection during the voyage.
6. C.O.S.C. will be responsible for loading of all stores and equipment.
7. THE NECESSITY FOR MAINTAINING THE STRICTEST SECRECY IN CONNECTION WITH THIS MOVEMENT MUST BE IMPRESSED ON ALL CONCERNED.
8. Ack.

*Pringfield*  
Col  
AA & QMG, MILNE FORCE

DISTRIBUTION

NGF	(2))	War Diary	(2)
C.O.S.C.	(2))	File	(2)
DAQMG	(2))	Copy to	G
17 Aust Inf Bde	(2))		AQ
18 Aust Inf Bde	(1))	2 copies to	32 US Div for infm.

W.D.  
AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE  
ROUTINE ORDERS  
BY  
BRIGADIER G.F. WOOTTEN DSO  
COMMANDING 18 AUST INF BDE

25 Nov 42

Part 1

No 159

1. SICKNESS OF OR INJURY TO MEMBERS OF THE AMF ON LEAVE

General Routine Order No A550 of 13 Nov 42 is repeated:-

"1. It is to be impressed on all members of the AMF that it is necessary to inform the Military Authorities at once should they become sick or sustain injury whilst on leave. This responsibility rests with the individual in order to avoid the risk of being regarded as "absent without leave" in the event of such sickness or injury preventing his return to his unit by the date due.

2. Any member who becomes sick or sustains injury whilst on leave will -

- (a) Report at once to the nearest military hospital or, where this is impracticable, to the nearest area medical officer; or
- (b) Report at once to the nearest public hospital if a military hospital or area medical officer is not available; or
- (c) If unable to attend or be taken to a military hospital (or public hospital where a military hospital is not available), then obtain private medical attention and immediately forward a certificate by the medical attendant to the nearest headquarters of a L of C Area, which will take action to notify the unit and the DDMS.

3. When the state of health of members who are injured or become sick whilst on leave permits they will at once communicate with their unit advising the nature of injury or sickness, location whilst sick and the probable duration of treatment.

4. Any military hospital, area medical officer, or administrative medical authority to which, or to whom a member so reports, will -

- (a) Arrange for appropriate medical or surgical treatment, and
- (b) Advise the member's unit that the member has reported and of the arrangements made for treatment, and the nature and probable duration of disability.

5. Members who become sick or sustain injury whilst on leave without pay granted for the purpose of engaging in seasonal or industrial activities in a civil capacity are not entitled to treatment in military hospitals or at government expense. However, in order to maintain records it is necessary that such members should report particulars of any sickness or injury, and of the progress of their treatment, to the nearest area medical officer or administrative medical officer, who will then ensure that the member's unit is advised. "

2. The following NG Force ROs of 16 Nov 42 are repeated:-

562. Malaria Control Measures

1. Attention is directed to the fact that NGF RO 496 is NOT being observed by all tps.

2. NGF RO 496 will be re-published in Unit Orders for the next two weeks.

3. COs of units will ensure that tps under their command are dressed in the manner required by that order and that the other prescribed precautions are taken.

4. Disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.



563 Personnel on Leave

Personnel proceeding on leave compassionate or otherwise are to report to the RTO of each capital city through which they pass.

571 Trading With Natives

1. There appears a list of the maximum prices hereunder, to be paid for produce and curios ordinarily sold by natives.

2. This order will be reproduced in all unit ROs.

Bananas	1/6 to 2/6 per bunch according to size
Eggs	2/- per doz
Fowls	2/6 each
Mandarins	9d per doz
Mangoes	1/6 per doz
Oranges	1/- per doz
Pawpaws	3 or 4 per 1/- according to size
Potatoes (sweet)	1/2d per lb
Pumpkins	6d each
Sipora (limes)	3d per doz
Baskets	3/- to 8/-
Beads (strings)	1/- to 2/-
Bows	3/- to 4/-
Arrows	2 for 1/-
Canoes (models)	2/- to 3/-
Combs (wooden)	2/- to 3/-
Ganas (arm bands - wide)	1/- to 1/6
Ramies (grass skirts coarse)	3/-
Ramies (grass skirts fine coloured)	5/-
Spoons	6d each
Sticks (Mailila walking)	5/- to 15/-
Pineapples	3 or 4 per 1/- according to size.

S. C. 18 Aust Int 1

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE  
ROUTINE ORDERS  
BY  
BRIGADIER G.F. WOOTTEN DSO  
COMMANDING 18 AUST INF BDE

24 Nov 42

Part 1

No 158

1. SUPPLY DUMPS

Milne Force RO No 380 is repeated:-

AASC dumps and depots are out of bounds to all personnel not on duty and disciplinary ~~action~~ ~~will be taken~~ against any person or persons found within the bounds of these dumps without authority.

(To be repeated in all Unit ROs)

2. MOBILE CINEMA UNIT

Milne Force RO No 398 is repeated:-

The showing of pictures on the evening of 20 Nov by the above unit was cancelled owing to the following incidents which arose during the previous evening's programme:-

- (a) Approx 3500 tps attended of whom nearly half came in trucks
- (b) Approx 70 trucks were parked in the area during the programme

These vehicles caused serious dislocation of ordinary traffic and did considerable damage to road shoulders and side drains in what was already a bad area apart from the matter of unauthorised use of MT.

It should not be necessary to draw attention to the grave danger arising from such concentration of personnel and vehicles in the event of an air raid.

To prevent recurrence it is directed that Comds of all units bring the following instructions to the notice of all members:-

- (a) Troops from neighboring units ONLY will attend
- (b) Motor Transport will NOT be used

Units are reminded that the Cinema Unit is MOBILE and will visit each locality in turn so that all troops will have the opportunity of seeing each programme.

The substance of this Order will be repeated in all unit ROs.

3. VEHICLE TAIL BOARDS

Milne Force RO No 385 is repeated:-

- (a) Vehs frequently travel with tail boards swinging free. This results in distortion of bodywork and damage to hinges and tail boards, and the practice will be discontinued.
- (b) Should a load be such as to prevent the closing up of the tail board, the latter must be secured in a horizontal position with the chains provided or with ropes.

(To be repeated in all unit ROs)

*G. S. Wootten*  
for Capt.  
S.C. 18 Aust Inf Bde.

18 AUST INF BDE LOCATION STATEMENT NO 26

AS AT 2359 HRS 15 NOV 42

Ref Map MILNE BAY 2" Prov 2nd Edition  
WAIGANI 3"

- 1. HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde No 1 House 025007
- 2. B Ech 18 Aust Inf Bde " 025007
- 3. "J" Sec Sigs 7 Aust Div " 025007
- 4. 2/47 Aust LAD Route 4 977994
- 5. 11 Pl Aust HQ Gd Bn No 1 House 025007
- 6. 5 Sec 2/7 Aust Div Pro Coy Route 4 976998
- 7. Det 2/7 Aust Div Postal Unit Route 4 975998
- 8. Bde Carrier Res (adm only) 2/9 Aust Inf Bn Route 4 976993
- 9. A Tp 4 Bty 101 Aust A/Tk Regt Route 4 983991

ADMINISTRATION ONLY

- 10. 2/9 Aust Inf Bn Opp HAGITA HOUSE 981992
- 11. HQ Coy Route 4 980991
- 12. A " Junc routes 1, 3 & 4 984992
- 13. B " DONA DONA Road 983994
- 14. C " (less one pl) Route 4 978995 978995
- 15. One Pl C Coy EANEANE 974002
- 16. D Coy No 1 Strip 994998

AS AT 2359 HRS 15 NOV 42

Ref Map MILNE BAY 2" Prov 2nd Edition  
WAIGANI 3"

- 1. HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde No 1 House 025007
- 2. B Ech 18 Aust Inf Bde " 025007
- 3. "J" Sec Sigs 7 Aust Div " 025007
- 4. 2/47 Aust LAD Route 4 977994
- 5. 11 Pl Aust HQ Gd Bn No 1 House 025007
- 6. 5 Sec 2/7 Aust Div Pro Coy Route 4 976998
- 7. Det 2/7 Aust Div Postal Unit Route 4 975998
- 8. Bde Carrier Res (adm only) 2/9 Aust Inf Bn Route 4 976993
- 9. A Tp 4 Bty 101 Aust A/Tk Regt Route 4 983991

ADMINISTRATION ONLY

- 10. 2/9 Aust Inf Bn Opp HAGITA HOUSE 981992
- 11. HQ Coy Route 4 980991
- 12. A " Junc routes 1, 3 & 4 984992
- 13. B " DONA DONA Road 983994
- 14. C " (less one pl) Route 4 978995 978995
- 15. One Pl C Coy EANEANE 974002
- 16. D Coy No 1 Strip 994998

AS AT 2359 HRS 15 NOV 42

Ref Map MILNE BAY 2" Prov 2nd Edition  
WAIGANI 3"

- 1. HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde No 1 House 025007
- 2. B Ech 18 Aust Inf Bde " 025007
- 3. "J" Sec Sigs 7 Aust Div " 025007
- 4. 2/47 Aust LAD Route 4 977994
- 5. 11 Pl Aust HQ Gd Bn No 1 House 025007
- 6. 5 Sec 2/7 Aust Div Pro Coy Route 4 976998
- 7. Det 2/7 Aust Div Postal Unit Route 4 975998
- 8. Bde Carrier Res (adm only) 2/9 Aust Inf Bn Route 4 976993
- 9. A Tp 4 Bty 101 Aust A/Tk Regt Route 4 983991

W D

SECRET

18 AUST INF BDE LOCATION STATEMENT NO 25

AS AT 0900 HRS 11 NOV 42

Ref Map MILNE BAY 2" Prov 2nd Edition  
WAIGANI 3"

1.	HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde	No 1 House	025007
2.	B Ech 18 Aust Inf Bde	"	025007
3.	"J" Sec Sigs 7 Aust Div	"	025007
4.	2/47 Aust LAD	Route 4	977994
5.	11 Pl Aust Hq Gd Bn	No 1 House	025007
6.	5 Sec 2/7 Aust Div Pro Coy	Route 4	976996
7.	Det 2/7 Aust Div Postal Unit	Route 4	975998
8.	Bde Carrier Res (adm only) 2/9 Aust Inf Bn	Route 4	976993
9.	A Tp 4 Bty 101 Aust A Tk Regt	Route 4	983992

ADMINISTRATION ONLY

10.	2/9 Aust Inf Bn	Opp HAGITA House	980992
11.	HQ Coy	Route 4	981991
12.	A "	Junc routes 1,3 & 4	985992
13.	B "	DONA DONA Road	982985
14.	C " (less one pl)	Route 4	989994
15.	One pl C Coy	EAMBAWENE	974002
16.	D Coy	No 1 Strip	994999

**MESSAGE FORM**

**CALL AND INSTRUCTIONS.**

IN

OUT

*54*  
*10*  
*19/11*  
*1/10 file*  
*7 19/11*

No. of Groups  
**GR.**

Serial No.

OFFICE DATE STAMP

(ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

TO

*2/9* *cond* *int* *hbr*

FROM

*18* *cond* *int* *hbr*

Originator's Number

*0359*

Date

*19*

In Reply to Number

<i>2/9</i>	<i>hbr</i>	<i>now</i>	<i>under</i>	<i>operational</i>	<i>cond</i>
<i>units</i>	<i>force</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>A</i> <i>up</i>	<i>4</i> <i>blg</i>	<i>107</i>
<i>7 TK</i>	<i>right</i>	<i>hbr</i>	<i>carrier</i>	<i>res</i>	<i>2/10</i>
<i>hbr</i>	<i>opt</i>	<i>det</i>	<i>under</i>	<i>cond</i>	<i>1/9</i>
<i>hbr</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>adm</i>	<i>disruption</i>	<i>cond</i>	<i>Eng</i>
<i>0</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>sub</i>	<i>2/9</i>	<i>hbr</i>	<i>moving</i>
<i>from</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>hbr</i>	<i>sub units</i>	<i>revert</i>

THIS MESSAGE MAY BE SENT AS WRITTEN BY ANY MEANS:

**EXCEPT**

**WIRELESS**

SIGNED

IF LIABLE TO BE INTERCEPTED OR FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS, THIS MESSAGE MUST BE SENT IN CYPHER.

SIGNED

ORIGINATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS  
DEGREE OF PRIORITY

TIME OF ORIGIN

(BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

SYSTEM IN	TIME IN	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER

**T.H.I.**

**T.O.R.**

# MESSAGE FORM

**CALL AND INSTRUCTIONS.**

IN

OUT

No. of Groups  
**GR.**

Serial No.  
 OFFICE DATE STAMP

(ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

TO

FROM

②

Originator's Number

Date

In Reply to Number

to	desert	could	this	Hq	and
will	NOT	repeat	NOT	more	work
ordered	by	this	Hq	②	7/9
be	with	advised	sub	marks	referred
to	)	contents	this	message	back

THIS MESSAGE MAY BE SENT AS WRITTEN BY ANY MEANS:

**WIRELESS**

IF LIABLE TO BE INTERCEPTED OR FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS, THIS MESSAGE MUST BE SENT **IN CYPHER.**

ORIGINATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS  
 DEGREE OF PRIORITY

TIME OF ORIGIN

0835

SIGNED

*[Signature]*

SIGNED

*[Signature]*

(BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

SYSTEM IN	TIME IN	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER

**T.H.I.**

**T.O.R.**

# MESSAGE FORM

**CALL AND INSTRUCTIONS.**

IN

OUT

2

X 0 1

10

19/11

No. of Groups

GR.

23

Serial No.

OFFICE DATE STAMP

21X81

(ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

TO 18 BDE RPT.D 17 BD 17 BDE 2/9 BN SIGS RAE

FROM MINNEFORCE

Originator's Number

01459

Date

18

In Reply to Number

cancel	out	01418	of	16	Nov

THIS MESSAGE MAY BE SENT AS WRITTEN BY ANY MEANS:

IF LIABLE TO BE INTERCEPTED OR FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS, THIS MESSAGE MUST BE SENT IN CYPHER

ORIGINATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS DEGREE OF PRIORITY

TIME OF ORIGIN

2200

SIGNED

SIGNED

(BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

T.H.I. 2226

T.O.R.

SYSTEM IN	TIME IN	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER
F/17	2359	White	Sigs								

**MESSAGE FORM**

Serial No. *118*

**CALL AND INSTRUCTIONS.**

IN

*2 X 01 P*

OUT

No. of Groups  
**GR.**

*25*

OFFICE DATE STAMP



(ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

**TO** *19 Bde, rptd 7 Bde, 17 Bde, 2/9 Bn, Sigs, RAE, 17 Q*

**FROM** *Milne Force.*

Originator's Number

*01418*

Date

*16*

In Reply to Number

*2/9 Bn reverts to command 18*

*Bde forthwith*

*After 7/11  
and 17/11*

THIS MESSAGE MAY BE SENT AS WRITTEN BY ANY MEANS.

IF LIABLE TO BE INTERCEPTED OR FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS, THIS MESSAGE MUST BE SENT IN CYPHER.

ORIGINATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS DEGREE OF PRIORITY

TIME OF ORIGIN

*2115 L/16*

SIGNED

SIGNED

(BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

**T.H.I.**

*2115*

**T.O.R.**

SYSTEM IN	TIME IN	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER
<i>F</i>	<i>2217</i>	<i>Reber Sy.</i>									



Copy

W.D

REF GS INSTN NO 15  
PREPARATION OF DEFENCES.

HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde  
17 Nov 42.  
G/38/48.

MILNE FORCE.

1. On examining the "Diagrammatic Layout of Rifle Section Post" annexed to Milne Force GS Instn No. 15 (copy of which was also received by this Bde with 7 Aust Inf Bde "Design and Layout of Section Posts" dated 10 Nov 42) it is noticed that it is practically identical with the design of a section post prepared by Lt-Col BRUER of 2/10 Aust Inf Bn while engaged in the defence of TOBRUK, and with the same initial omission, i.e. it contains no provision within the post design for latrines and disposal of refuse.
2. It is my opinion that, for hygienic reasons and also to avoid exposure and casualties when in contact with the enemy, that proper accommodation for latrines and for disposal of refuse must be provided, and this must be done in the initial layout of the section post on the ground. This is just as important and essential as any of the other features mentioned in the above-noted diagram.

Brig.  
Comd 18 Aust Inf Bde.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

*K162*

HQ Milne Force,

*7* Nov 42.

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY INTERROGATIONS OF JAP P.W.

MILNE FORCE NO 18.

NEW GUINEA FORCE.

1. Herewith reports on preliminary interrogations of above numbered P.W. captured GOODENOUGH IS 30 Oct 42.

G. A. CLOWES Maj-Gen.  
COMD MILNE FORCE.

Copies to:

7 Aust Inf Bde  
17 Aust Inf Bde  
18 Aust Inf Bde

PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION OF JAP P.W.

2 Nov 42

M.P. NO 18

Interrogator - Lt. A. SHERLOCK

NAME: HIMATSU

NO: 106

UNIT: FUKUOKA LANDING PARTY (2nd COMPANY?)

106  
106  
106

30.10.42 CAPTURED. P.W. captured GOODENOUGH IS 30 Oct 42.

On arrival at Goodenough Island 1800L I immediately saw PW, who has attempted to gouge his own eyes out and had bitten his tongue so much that he was unable to close his mouth.

Came back to HQ on same boat as PW and he has been admitted to No 1 O S.

The PW made signs also that he wanted to be shot several times. PWs papers and personal belongings were also brought to HQ by me.

*Alwyn Sherlock*  
Lieut.,  
INTERROGATOR

Age 36

Been in Navy 3 years

1st class stoker or engineer (KIKAN)

FUKUOKA (BUTAI) Commander Lt-Col (Ginso) FUKUOKA

•  
•  
•

(1)

(2)

(3) Companies (Ginso)  
Commander Capt TANGATA (TAI)

About 500 strong  
This was the only Coy that  
landed.

P/W got fever - don't know what happened.

It is very difficult to understand P/W - his tongue is very  
much swollen.

Interviewed the M.O. who told me that he had only had liquids and  
his tongue was still pretty sore.

*Alwyn Frederick*  
Lieut  
Interrogator

PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION OF JAP P.W.

M.F. NO 18

8 Nov 42.

Interrogator - Lieut A. SHERLOCK.

PLACE OF BIRTH. KYUSHU  
NAGASAKI  
NASA 106

14.12.16 DATE OF BIRTH. 14 Dec 1916

PARENTS DECEASED

P/W has two sisters.

SINGLE.

EDUCATION. NAGASAKI 6 years.

P/W very unreliable.

P/W would not answer any further questions regarding his unit.

The P/O says that the tongue has been bitten thru and it should be much better when the "dead" piece on the side falls off.

*Alexander Sherlock*

Lieut.  
INTERROGATOR.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

K196

HQ MILNE FORCE  
Nov 42

SUBJECT:      PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION OF JAP P.W.  
MILNE FORCE NO 19.

IMPORTANT (NAVAL)

N.G. FORCE

Herewith report on preliminary interrogation of above numbered P.W. captured at GOPAIA on 27 Nov 42.

Would suggest that all papers belonging to this P.W. be translated before interrogation.

Brig  
Admin Comd MILNE FORCE

Copy to: 7 Aust Inf Bde  
          17 Aust Inf Bde } For infm.  
          18 Aust Inf Bde }

*Wes*

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION JAP P.W. MILNE FORCE NO 19.

(Interrogator A.A.S.)

27 Nov 42 ( 1500hrs to 1700 hrs.  
( 1900 2230  
28 Nov 42 ( 0900 to 1150  
( 1430 to 1600.

NAME HANAKI YOSHISADA  
NO SHI SUI 7745  
RANK PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS  
UNIT YANO BUTAI (UNIT)

27.11.42 WHEN CAPTURED 27.11.42

WHERE " GOFAIA - about half a mile east side of AHIONA by natives while lying down hiding from an aeroplane which was overhead at the time.

ADDRESS AICHI KEN  
NAGOYA  
AMAGUN  
MIWA MURA 91.

AGE THIRTY-SIX YEARS

CIVIL OCCUPATION - DEPARTMENT STORE  
(MATSUSUKAIA)  
NAGOYA BRANCH

I.O. ASSESSMENT P/W is in good health, talked freely after I explained to him that he was quite safe in our hands.

MIL. HISTORY & MOVEMENTS  
PRE S.W.P.A.

8.9.07 P/W was born on 8.9.07 at the above address. This address is also the home of his father and mother who are still alive. He went to a primary school at MIWA for eight years then joined MATSUSUKAIA Department Store where he stayed six years in the foreign clothing department and then joined the NAVY on 1.6.27 as fourth class seaman. Was promoted to third class seaman on 1.12.27 1/12/27 to second class seaman on 1.12.29 1/12/29 to first class seaman on 1.12.31 1/12/31 promoted again to Petty Officer third class on 1.6.36 1/6/36, and placed on the reserve list. He stayed at home farming until he was recalled to the NAVY on 1/12/41.  
16.2.42 P/W was training until 16/2/42 and on this date joined the KURE BUTAI (UNIT).

S.W.P.A.

17.2.42 He left KURE (JAPAN) on 17/2/42 by the ASUMA SAN MARU  
23.2.42 (about 8000 tons) for TRUK arriving there on 23/2/42. P/W stayed  
26.2.42 in TRUK for three days then sailed for KAVIENG on 26/2/42 arriving  
30.2.42 at KAVIENG on 29 or 30/2/42.

Between TRUK and KAVIENG he made three trips carrying food; Rice - beef - and biscuits also ammunition.

The ASUMA SAN MARU was accompanied on each of the trips by the GOYO MARU. (about 8000 tons) this ship was torpedoed June 42 some time in June 42 and towed by the ASUMA SAN MARU back to TRUK. The ship at this stage was on its side.

Both these ships carried 2 guns. A/A one fore and one aft, the calibre being about 3 inches also 2 W/T operators making five personnel to each gun, the personnel being from the YANO BUTAI (P/W's UNIT).

1.9.42  
1.9.42

He left KAVIENG for RABAUl arriving on the morning of 1/9/42 sailed on the same day and arrived at RABI on the night of 1/9/42.

The ships from RABAUl to RABI had numbers only and were new. The numbers were 36, 38 and 39. These three ships each of 1000 tons were escorted by three destroyers and dropped anchor near RABI. These destroyers were each of approximately 2000 tons their names being MURAKUMO, SHIRAKUMO, and the YOSUKUMO.

On their arrival the HYASHI unit was in action, and P/W drew a rough sketch of the arrival: SEE APPX 'A'.

P/W also heard that Lt-Col HYASHI had been wounded as soon as they (YANO BUTAI) landed.

He heard a lot of shooting - got lost in the dark and wandered until his capture.

P/W lived on coconuts and vegetables from native gardens.

P/W pay is approximately £3-0-0 per month; £6-0-0 to wife - £2-0-0 for self.

About 120 landed from eachship with the numbers 36, 38, and 39. All YANO BUTAI/landed and a few from YOKOSUKA BUTAI were landed from destroyers.

His orders were to keep am up to the tps.

There was one MLC with the convoy carrying about 120 men.

P/W also stated that the aerodrome at KAVIENG had been made much larger and at times they all have to work on it.

Details of P/W's unit see Appx 'B'.

According to P/W MURIYAMA Coy and MAKINURA Coy was still in KAVIENG.

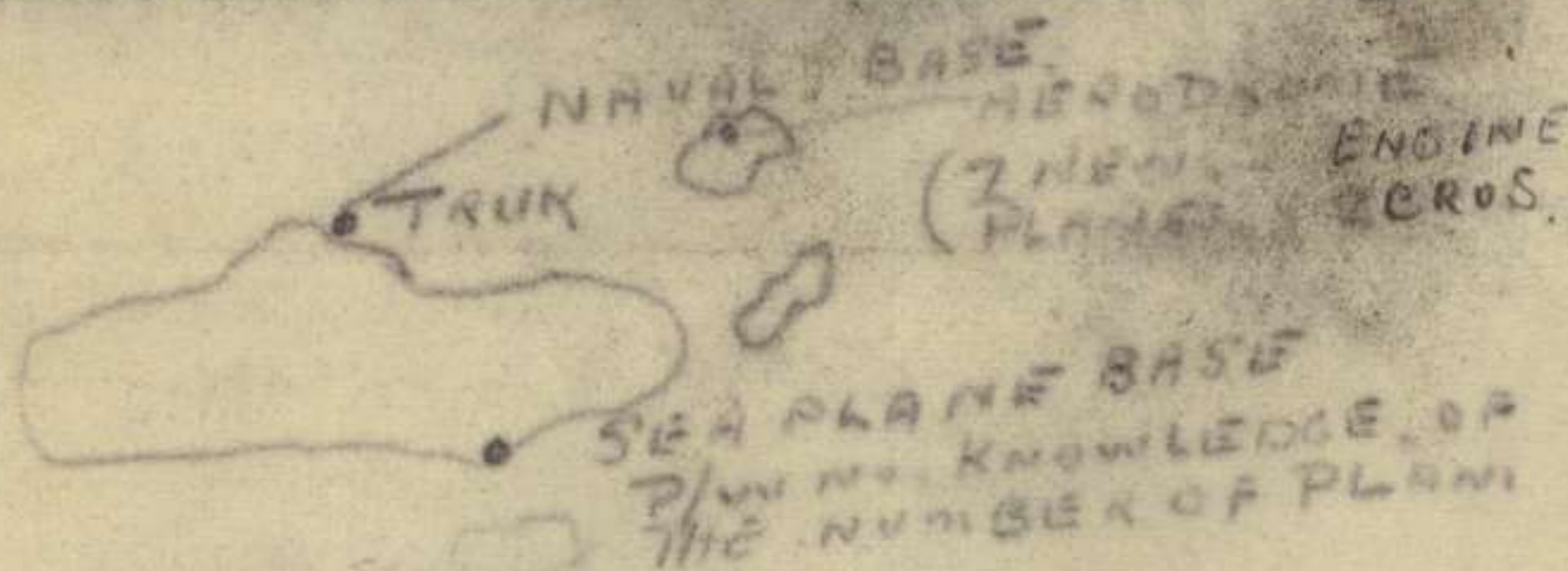
The only time that P/W saw tanks was during a trip to TOKYO with his wife - on this occasion there were 15-16 but only small ones.

AIR: P/W did not know a great deal about aeroplanes but at TRUK had seen two-engine planes - which were very new and he did not know the names of them - they were two engines and double rudders. There were 7 of these and 5 Zeros.

He had no knowledge of their speeds.

P/W also stated that there were about 2000 KOREANS at TRUK in labour units.

NAVAL & AIR:



1.9.42

NAVAL: On Sep 1, he thought there were 14 or 15 merchant ships and transports (all sizes) at RABAUl, also about seven destroyers, and two old cruisers about 4000 tons each. These were TATSUDA and TENRYU.

P/W did not know the names of the new ships, but could remember the following :



CRUISERS:

July 42

- MOGAMI : 7500 tons. Sunk by aeroplanes in Dutch Harbour some time in July.
- ATAGO : 10000 tons
- MAYA : "
- CHOKAI : "
- HACHI : "
- MIYOKO : "
- CHIKUMA : "

He further stated that YOKOHAMA was the biggest shipyard as the battleships were built there. The next largest was KURE - he thought the first class cruisers were built there.

When questioned regarding battleships he gave the following information:

BATTLESHIPS:

- NAGATO : 35000 tons
- MUSU : 35000 "
- YAMASHIRO : 30000 "
- FUSO : 30000 "
- ISE : 31000 "
- HYUGA : 31000 "
- KONGO : 27000 " new 30000 tons with new armament
- HARUNA : " " " "
- KIRISHIMA : " " " "
- HIKI : " " " "

P/W also heard of the NISHIN - this was a submarine mother ship.

Aug 42.

At TRUK P/W saw the KAKO 7000 tons (he informed me that this was sunk in Aug) also

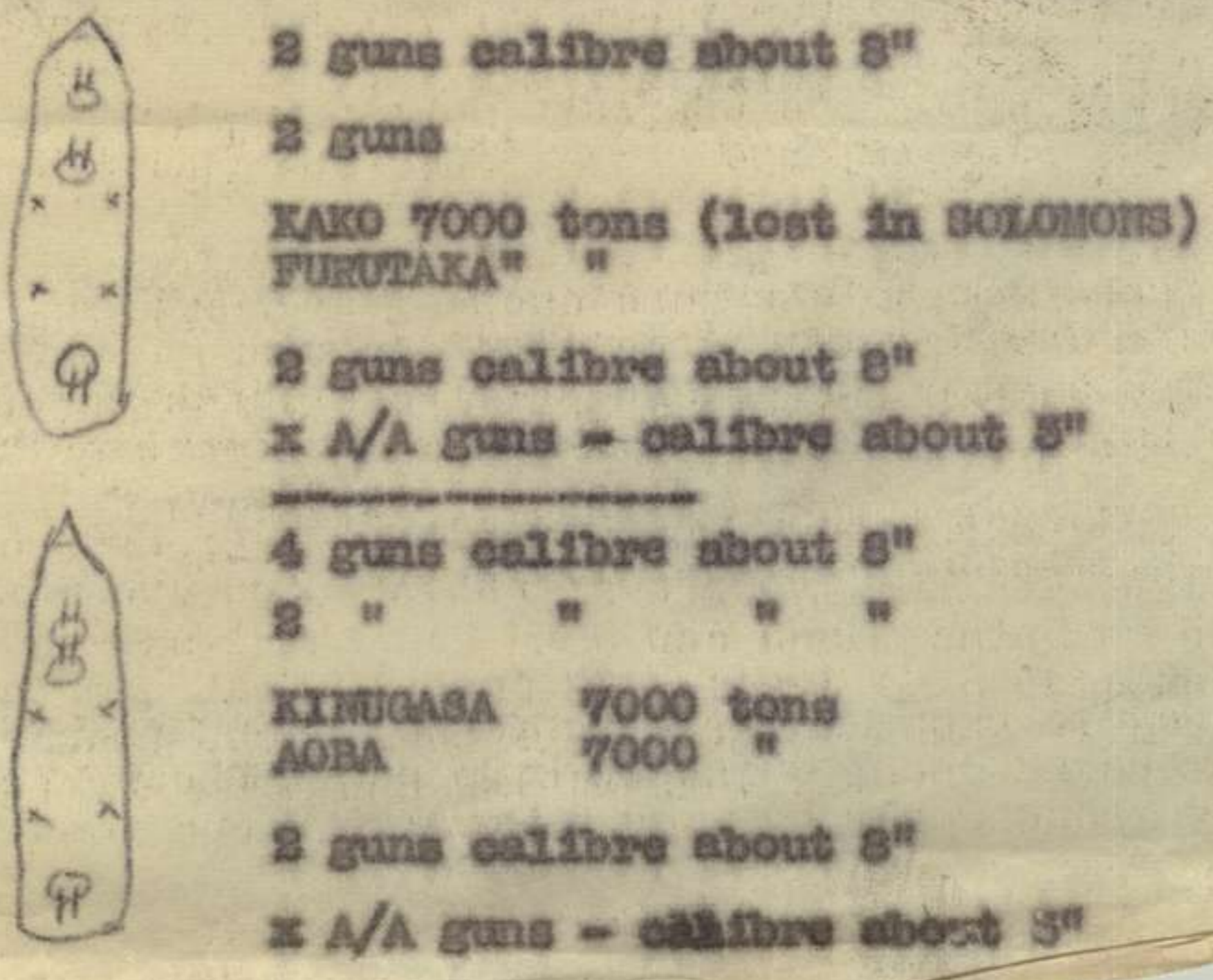
- FURUTAKA 7000 tons
- KINUKASA 8000 "
- OABA 8000 " these four ships had guns with a calibre of approximately 8". Merchant ships were in and out of TRUK every day.

P/W was of opinion that TRUK was the biggest NAVAL base outside JAPAN - this was also the biggest sea-plane base.

KAVIENG.



When asked to draw a picture of the gun positions on the first class cruisers P/W sketched the following:



P/W when questioned on ammunition plants thought most made near YOKOHAMA, but the big store of amm was in the mountains in NAGASAKI.

P/W does not know Morse Code.

May 43

At TRUK P/W saw one aircraft carrier. SHOHO about 7000 tons. This was a converted merchant ship and sunk during the Coral Sea battle May 1942.

I obtained a questionnaire from Lt-Comd WILKINSON but the only questions the P/W could answer were:

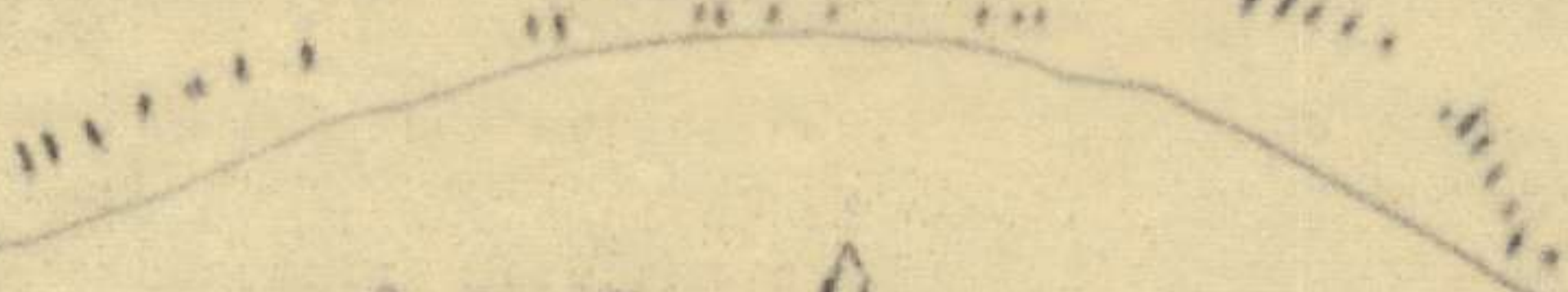
1. Midget subs were carried on deck of mother craft and slid out the back after loading.
2. The TSUGARU was a 5000 ton minelayer.
3. The SUMIDA and HASIDATE are 700 ton gun-boats at SHANGHAI.
4. RADIO DETECTING DEVICES: For A/C only the usual receiver. Anti-submarine devices were on all ships - also for surface craft, but P/W knew very little about them.
5. He had only heard of the AIKOKU MARU.
6. On cruisers and destroyers these boats carried about 100 tps per 1000 tons in addition to the regular crew.
7. P/W saw three midget subs at TRUK.
8. The crew of the 33000 tonners was 1300.

Although I did not ask P/W it is my personal opinion that he is pleased to know he is safe and with careful handling more information can be obtained.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lieut  
INTERROGATOR.

APP "A"

HYASHI UNIT.  
IN ACTION.



BOAT  
NO 36

MURAKUMO. DESTROYER.

P/w's  
BOAT

NO 38

SHIRAKUMO

NO 39.

YOSU. KUMO

36. 38. 39.  
1000 TONS  
EACH.

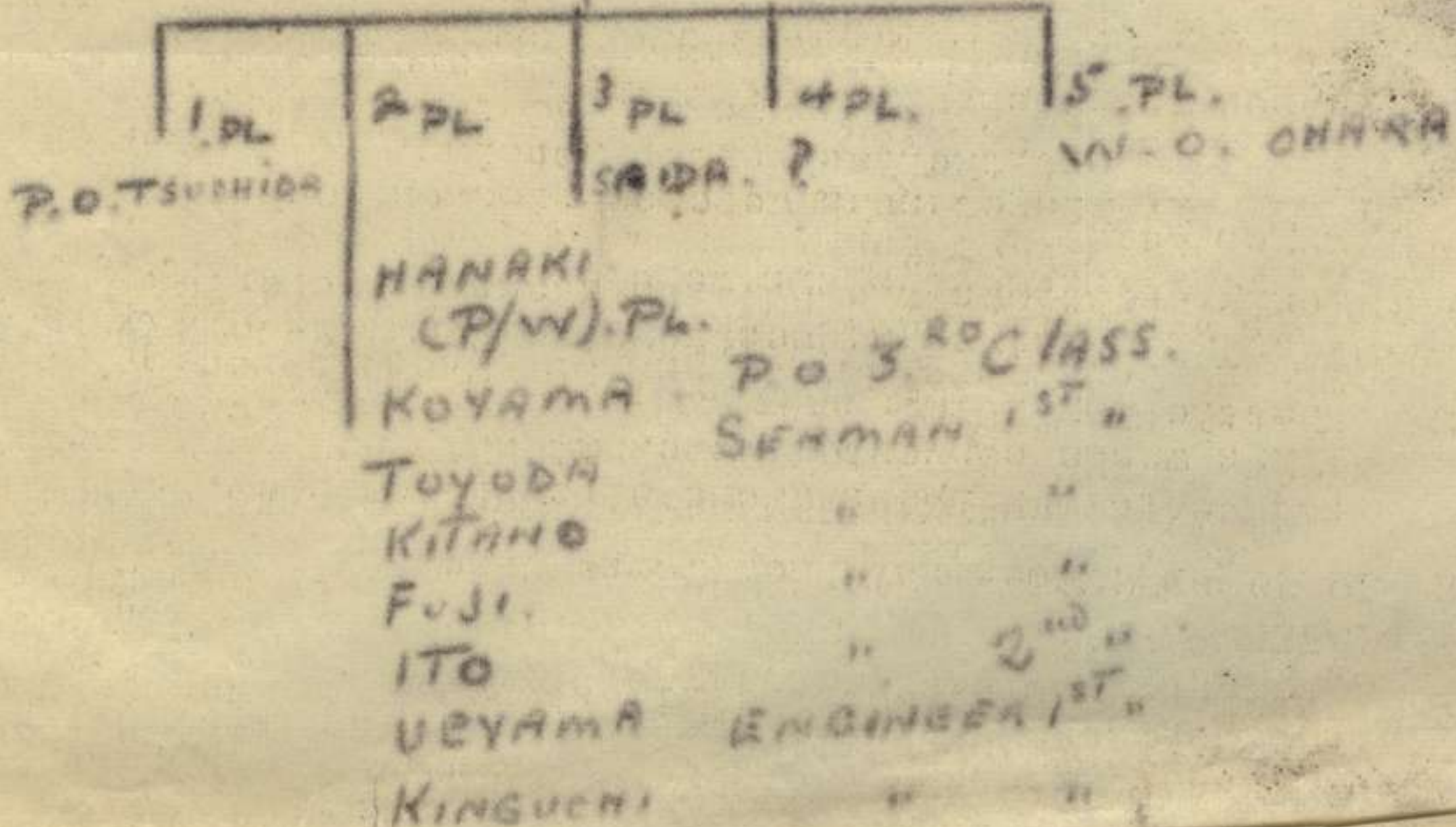
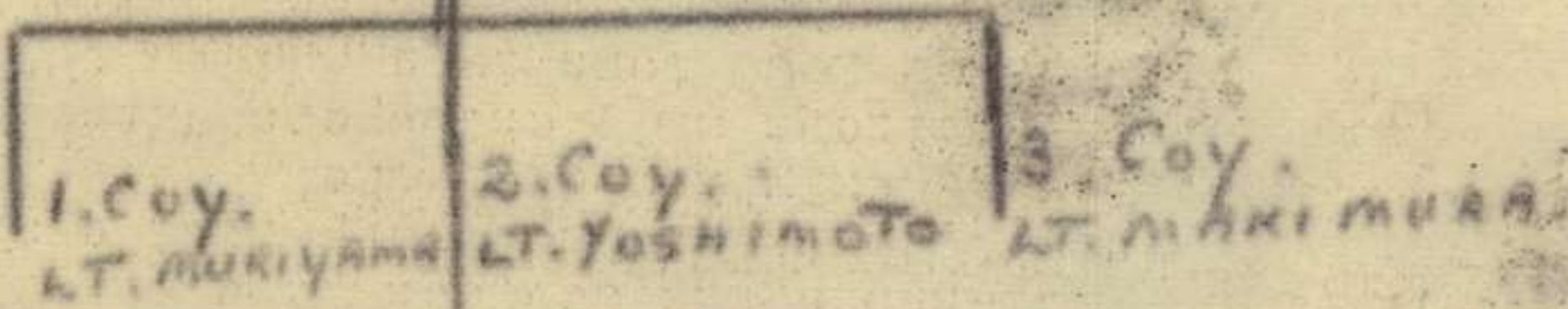
EACH DESTROYER  
ABOUT 2000 TONS.

THESE ARE NEW  
SHIPS.

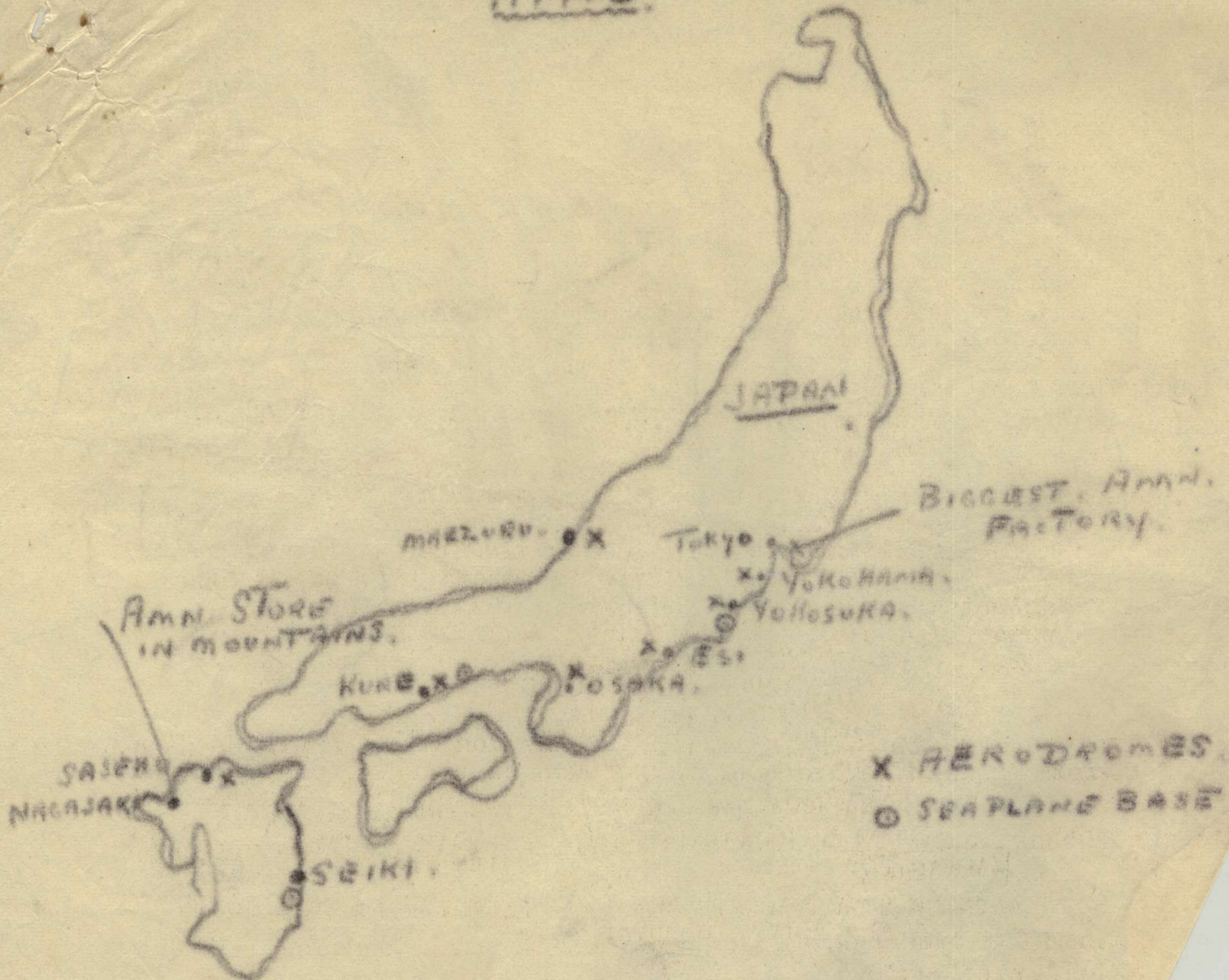
APP "B"

HYASHI BUTAI

YANO. DAITAI (BN).  
LT. COL. YANO.



APP. C.



TO BE MADE UP TO AND FOR SATURDAY IN EACH WEEK.

Army Form W.3008  
(Page 1.)  
(Adapted.)

AIF II/2/3

Serial no 14

17 x 69

# FIELD RETURN OF OFFICERS

42.14 Aust Inf Bde Unit

## PART A.—STRENGTH, SURPLUS OR REINFORCEMENTS REQUIRED.

1	2	3	4
Ranks.	Posted strength counting against authorized establishment (excluding attached).	Surplus to Establishment.	Reinforcements required (i.e. deficits on establishment).
*			
<i>Brigadier</i> *	1		
Lieut.-Colonels			
Majors	1		1
Captains	2		3
Lieutenants	5		1
2nd Lieutenants			
Quartermasters	3		
<i>6 Captains</i>			
Totals	12		5

\* Insert detail of higher rank as necessary.

## PART B.—PARTICULARS OF OFFICERS JOINED OR QUITTED DURING WEEK.

### Officers JOINED during week.

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.

### Officers QUITTED during week.

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.

## PART C.—DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS WHOSE RETURN TO THE UNIT IS PARTICULARLY REQUESTED.

Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts, if known).

**PART D.—NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS ON STRENGTH.**

**(i) Officers posted to Unit (Total to agree with column 2 of Part A).**

1	2	3	4	5	6
Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Whether present with Unit (Insert Yes or No.).	If not present with Unit, state how employed.
Brig	MA 7	Wootton G. J.	Brig Genl	No	Abroad
Major	MA 48	Denniston G. J.	B. Col.	No	Duty
Capt	SX 214	Shute W. R.	SC	No	
Capt	MA 210	Hall G. J.	Brig Genl	No	
Capt	SX 462	Piper W. H.	FO	No	
Capt	SX 174	Siddons G. J.	SC (H)	No	
Major	SX 364	Freeman G. J.	L.O.	No	
Major	SX 11002	Lawrence G. J.	L.O.	No	
Major	SX 14346	Rees G. J.	AD	No	
Captain	MA 70219	Thompson G. J.	Captain	No	
Captain	MA 197	Holmes G. J.	Captain	No	
Captain	VX 46840	Blake G. J.	Captain	No	
<p>* Approval has been requested for these appointments.</p>					

**(ii) OFFICERS ATTACHED FROM OTHER CORPS.**

Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Date of Attachment.	Nature of attachment.
Major	VX 17342	Patterson G. J.	AAOC	26 Jul 42	OC 2/47 LAD
Major	VX 14877	Boone D. B.	AAOC	28 Jul 42	A/Bde Sup O.
Major	OX 2101	Ashwin W. J.	2/12 Bn	8 Oct 42	A/L.O.
Major	SX 508	Nolan G. J.	2/10 Bn	6 Oct 42	
Major	OX 372	Jackson G. J.	2/9 Bn	26 Oct 42	A/L.O.

HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde  
(Unit.)  
7 Oct 42  
(Date of Despatch.)

*[Signature]*  
(Signature of Commander.)  
S. B. 18 Aust Inf Bde  
(Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which Unit is serving.)







AIF II/2/3

Serial No 15

17X 69

**FIELD RETURN OF OFFICERS**

*48 18 Aust Inf Bde Unit*

**PART A.—STRENGTH, SURPLUS OR REINFORCEMENTS REQUIRED.**

1	2	3	4
Ranks.	Posted strength counting against authorized establishment (excluding attached).	Surplus to Establishment.	Reinforcements required (i.e. deficits on establishment).
*			
<i>Brendan</i> *	1		
Lieut.-Colonels			
Majors	1		1
Captains	2		3
Lieutenants	4		2
2nd Lieutenants			
Quartermasters	2		1
Totals	10		7

\* Insert detail of higher rank as necessary.

**PART B.—PARTICULARS OF OFFICERS JOINED OR QUITTED DURING WEEK.**

**Officers JOINED during week.**

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.

**Officers QUITTED during week.**

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
Lieut	<i>Saunders D J</i> <i>SX 11002</i>		<i>7 Nov 42</i>	<i>Attending Staff School Junior Army - 18 Nov 42 Mar 43</i>
Chaplain	<i>Helmars R A</i> <i>1X 197</i>	<i>AACo B</i>	<i>2 Nov 42</i>	<i>Not available to Aust Army HQ</i>

**PART C.—DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS WHOSE RETURN TO THE UNIT IS PARTICULARLY REQUESTED.**

Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts, if known).

**PART D.—NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS ON STRENGTH.**

(i) Officers posted to Unit (Total to agree with column 2 of Part A).

1	2	3	4	5	6
Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Whether present with Unit (Insert Yes or No.).	If not present with Unit, state how employed.
Brigadier	MX 7	Wentworth J F	Brigadier	No	Army Band 6 Contn
Major	MX 48	Dominion J A G	B.M.	Yes	
Capt	SA 214	Short W B	SC	Yes	
Capt	MX 210	Stall J H	Brigadier	No	Ad 26 Army ABSC
Capt	SA 1412	Peter W H	I.P.	No	Ad 26 Army ABSC I
Capt	SA 1741	Anderson R J	SC(L)	Yes	
Capt	SA 364	James R J	I.P.	Yes	Ad 26 Army ABSC I
Capt	SA 11346	Rees D W	AD	Yes	
Capt	NA 10219	Wright J D	Wright	No	Ad 26 Army ABSC I
Capt	VX 46510	Blake S	Blake	No	Ad 26 Army ABSC I
<p>X approved for term requested for due affls</p>					

(ii) OFFICERS ATTACHED FROM OTHER CORPS.

Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Date of Attachment.	Nature of attachment.
Capt	VX 17382	Patterson G D	ABSC	26 Jul 42	Ad 26 Army ABSC
Capt	VX 14897	Boonle D C	ABSC	26 Jul 42	Ad 26 Army ABSC
Capt	SA 2101	Shannon W J	212 Bn	30 Oct 42	Ad 26 Army ABSC
Capt	SA 508	Nelson J A	210 Bn	26 Oct 42	Ad 26 Army ABSC
Capt	SA 372	Jackson G J	214 Bn	26 Oct 42	Ad 26 Army ABSC

HQ 18th Aust Inf Bde  
(Unit.)

*[Signature]*  
(Signature of Commander.)

14 April 42  
(Date of Despatch.)

18th Aust Inf Bde  
(Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which Unit is e)

A.I.F. II/2/3  
17 x 69

**FIELD RETURN OF OTHER RANKS.**

549 18 Quaterly (Unit) 14 Nov 19 42 (Date).

To be furnished by all units and all Headquarter units.)

**Part A. Strength, Surplus or Reinforcements required.**

1	2	3	4
Detail.	Posted strength counting against authorized establishment (excluding attached).	Surplus to Establishment.	Reinforcements required (i.e., deficits on establishments).
W.Os. Class I.			1
W.Os. Class II.	3	1	
Squadron or Company Quartermaster-Serjeants			
Staff Serjeants	2	1	
Serjeants	4	1 X	2
Corporals	7	1	1
Troopers, Privates, &c.	41	2	14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>

\*These totals should agree with the details shown in Part D on page 2 of Army Form W.3009.

**Part B. Other Ranks attached from other Corps.**

Detail.	Unit and Corps to which they belong.	Detail.	Unit and Corps to which they belong.
1 WO1 1 Sgt 1 Pte 12 Pte	2/7 Quaterly LAD AAOC	1 Sgt & 1 Pte 17 ORs 1 Pte 1 Pte 1 Pte	2/7 Quaterly Pro Coy 2/10 Bn 2/12 Bn AAOC 2/16 Coy 2/19 Bn

**Part C. Description of other ranks whose return to the unit is particularly requested.**

Army No.	Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts if known).
				X A222 has been submitted for this Sgt (2/16)

*40.18 Aust Inf Bde* Unit.

**PART D. Detail of Surplus or Reinforcements required as shown in Part A of Army Form W. 3009.**

Detail of Specialists, Tradesmen, etc.	Surplus (a)	Reinfts. Required (a)	Detail of Specialists, Tradesmen, etc.	Surplus (a)	Reinfts. Required (a)	Detail of Specialists, Tradesmen, etc.	Surplus (a)	Reinfts. Required (a)
Ammunition Examiners			Fire Control Operators			Panel Beaters		
Armament Artificers			Fitters			Pattern Makers		
Armourers		<i>1 Sgt</i>	Fitters and Turners			Pharmacists		
Artificers, Artillery			Fitters, Cycle			Photographers, dry plate		
Axemen			Fitters, Drivers			Photographers, wet plate		
Bakers			Fitter's Mates			Photo-Writers		
Battery Surveyors			Fitters, M.V.			Plate Layers		
Battery Comdrs. Asst.			Fitters, Railway Signal			Plumbers		
Blacksmiths			Fitters, Signal			Predictor Numbers		
Boilermakers			Grinders			Printers		
Bricklayers			Gun Layers			Radiator Mechanics		
Butchers			G.P.O. Assistants			Radiographers		
Camouflage Modeller			Gun Operators			Range Takers		
Carpenter and Joiner			Hammermen			Riggers		
Clerks <i>Administrative</i>		<i>1 W/O 1 W/C</i>	Height Takers			Riveters		
Clerks, Engineering		<i>1 Sgt</i>	Helio Operators			Saddlers		
Clerks, Supply			Instrument Mechanics			Saddle Tree Makers		
Clerks, Technical			Instrument Mechanics, Surgical			Saw Doctors		
Coachmakers			Instrument Operators			Sawyers		
Computers			Intelligence Duties			Shoemakers		
Concretors	<i>1</i>	<i>16 M</i>	Joiners			Signallers		
Cooks			Leather Stitchers			Signwriters		
Cooks, Hospital			Linesmen			Stokers, Stationary Engine		
Coppersmiths			Linesmen, Signals			Storemen, Technical		
Dental Clerk Orderlies			Lithographers			Surveyors		
Despatch Riders			Machinists			Surveyors, Engineering		
Dispensers			Masons			Tailors		
Draughtsmen			Masseurs			Telescope Identification Numbers		
Draughtsmen, Architectural			Mechanics, Dental			Textile Refitters		
Draughtsmen, Mechanical			Mechanics, M.T.			Tinsmiths		
Draughtsmen, Signal			Mechanics, Typewriter			Toolmakers		
Draughtsmen, Topographical			Mechanics, Wireless			Turners		
Driver Mechanics			Millwrights			Vulcanizers		
Driver Operators			Miners			Wagon Erectors		
Drivers, Transportation Plant			Moulders			Watchmakers		
Electrical Fitters			Nursing Orderlies			Watermen		
Electricians			Nursing Orderlies (Mental)			Welders		
Electricians, Eng. Units			Nurses, Trained			Well Borers		
Electricians, Signal			Observation Post Assistants			Wheelers		
Engine Artificers			Operating Room Assistants			Whitesmiths		
Engine Hands I/C			Operators, Signal			Wiremen		
Equipment Repairers			Opticians			Woodturners		
Farriers			Painters					
<i>Driver M.T.</i>	<i>16 M</i>	<i>1</i>						
<i>3 Lt Sgt</i>	<i>12</i>							
<i>General Duties</i>		<i>13</i>						
Totals (to agree with Columns 3 and 4 of Part A.)	<i>6</i>	<i>16</i>						

Notes—(a) If rank other than Private is involved give details on back.  
(b) Authorised Trades or Specialists not included in list above will be added as required in spaces provided.

*40.18 Aust Inf Bde*  
Unit.

Signature of Commander.

Date of Despatch *14 Nov*

*Albion House*  
Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which unit is serving.

TO BE MADE UP TO AND FOR SATURDAY IN EACH WEEK.

Army Form W.3008  
(Page 1.)  
(Adapted.)

AIF 5/2/3

Serial No 16

17x 69

**FIELD RETURN OF OFFICERS**

*HO 18 Aust L of Base Unit*

**PART A.—STRENGTH, SURPLUS OR REINFORCEMENTS REQUIRED.**

1	2	3	4
Ranks.	Posted strength counting against authorized establishment (excluding attached).	Surplus to Establishment.	Reinforcements required (i.e. deficits on establishment).
*			
<i>Brigadier</i> *	1		
Lieut.-Colonels			
Majors	1		1
Captains	2		3
Lieutenants	6		
2nd Lieutenants			
Quartermasters	2		1
Totals	12		5

\* Insert detail of higher rank as necessary.

**PART B.—PARTICULARS OF OFFICERS JOINED OR QUITTED DURING WEEK.**

**Officers JOINED during week.**

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
<i>Capt</i>	<i>L. Monte D.L.</i>	<i>AASC</i>	<i>19 Nov 42</i>	<i>Application for promotion as Lt Col submitted</i>
<i>Lieut</i>	<i>Sherrin M.J.B.</i>	<i>212 Bn</i>	<i>19 Nov 42</i>	<i>Decommissioned as Lt O (Application for promotion)</i>
<i>Lieut</i>	<i>Alfred Palmer M.A.</i>	<i>219 Bn</i>	<i>19 Nov 42</i>	<i>Decommissioned as Lt O (Application for promotion)</i>

**Officers QUITTED during week.**

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
<i>Capt</i>	<i>Hall W.H.S.</i>	<i>AASC</i>	<i>19 Nov 42</i>	<i>Resigned to be decommissioned as Lt Col.</i>

**PART C.—DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS WHOSE RETURN TO THE UNIT IS PARTICULARLY REQUESTED.**

Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts, if known).

**PART D.—NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS ON STRENGTH.**

(i) Officers posted to Unit (Total to agree with column 2 of Part A).

1	2	3	4	5	6
Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Whether present with Unit (Insert Yes or No.)	If not present with Unit, state how employed.
Brigadier	MX 4	Wootton G	Bde Comd	No	Adm Comd 2nd Div
Major	N3 48	Dennis A	T.M.	Yes	
Captain	SX 214	Kent W R	S.C.	Yes	
* Captain	VX 46847	Konrad D R	Act Supt	No	ADS (Adm Comd)
Lieut	SX 1482	Fisher W J	F.O.	No	Adm Comd 2nd Div
Lieut	SX 1761	Weldon K J	S.C.(L)	Yes	
* Lieut	OX 360	Francis D J	L.O.	No	Adm Comd 2nd Div
* Lieut	OX 2101	Ashwin M J	L.O.	Yes	
* Lieut	OX 17544	McCulloch A G	L.O.	Yes	
Lieut	OX 14346	Wain D W	AD	Yes	
Major	MX 70214	Kennedy D J	Major	No	Act 2nd Aust Inf Bn
Major	VX 46890	Berke D	Major	No	Adm Comd 2nd Div
* Approval has been requested for these appointments					

**(ii) OFFICERS ATTACHED FROM OTHER CORPS.**

Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Date of Attachment.	Nature of attachment.
Lieut	1217382	Patterson B D	AAOC	26/6/42	Act 2nd Aust Inf Bn
Lieut	22598	McLennan J A	240 B	10/1/42	Act 2nd Aust Inf Bn

4th Aust Inf Bn  
(Unit.)  
21 Nov 42  
(Date of Despatch.)

*[Signature]*  
(Signature of Commander.)  
S.L. 18 Aust Inf Bn  
(Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which Unit is serving.)

AIF II/2/3

**FIELD RETURN OF OTHER RANKS.**

19x69

Serial No 16  
4014 Aust Inf Bn (Unit) 21 Nov 1948 (Date)

To be furnished by all units and all Headquarter units.)

**Part A. Strength, Surplus or Reinforcements required.**

1 Detail.	2 Posted strength counting against authorized establishment (excluding attached).	3 Surplus to Establishment.	4 Reinforcements required (i.e., deficits on establishments).
W.Os. Class I.			1
W.Os. Class II.	3	1	
Squadron or Company Quartermaster-Serjeants			
Staff Serjeants	2	1	
Serjeants	4	1	2
Corporals	7	1	1
Troopers, Privates, &c.	44	2	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>

\*These totals should agree with the details shown in Part D on page 2 of Army Form W.3009.

**Part B. Other Ranks attached from other Corps.**

Detail.	Unit and Corps to which they belong.	Detail.	Unit and Corps to which they belong.
1 W.O. 1 Sgt 12/11	4014 Aust LAD	1 Sgt 7 2/11 1 Pte	2/7 Aust Prov Coy
12 Pte	ADCC	15 DR	2/10 Aust Inf Bn

**Part C. Description of other ranks whose return to the unit is particularly requested.**

Army No.	Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts if known).
		* Azzur		has been submitted for the Sgt.

418 18 Aust Inf Bde Unit.

**PART D. Detail of Surplus or Reinforcements required as shown in Part A of Army Form W. 3009.**

Detail of Specialists, Tradesmen, etc.	Surplus (a)	Reinfts. Required (a)	Detail of Specialists, Tradesmen, etc.	Surplus (a)	Reinfts. Required (a)	Detail of Specialists, Tradesmen, etc.	Surplus (a)	Reinfts. Required (a)
Ammunition Examiners			Fire Control Operators			Panel Beaters		
Armament Artificers			Fitters			Pattern Makers		
Armourers	11/1/18	15/1	Fitters and Turners			Pharmacists		
Artificers, Artillery			Fitters, Cycle			Photographers, dry plate		
Axemen			Fitters, Drivers			Photographers, wet plate		
Bakers			Fitter's Mates			Photo-Writers		
Battery Surveyors			Fitters, M.V.			Plate Layers		
Battery Comdrs. Asst.			Fitters, Railway Signal			Plumbers		
Blacksmiths			Fitters, Signal			Predictor Numbers		
Boilermakers			Grinders			Printers		
Bricklayers			Gun Layers			Radiator Mechanics		
Butchers			G.P.O. Assistants			Radiographers		
Camouflage Modeller			Gun Operators			Range Takers		
Carpenter and Joiner			Hammermen			Riggers		
Clerks	12/1/18	12/1/18	Height Takers			Riveters		
Clerks, Engineering		15/1	Helio Operators			Saddlers		
Clerks, Supply			Instrument Mechanics			Saddle Tree Makers		
Clerks, Technical			Instrument Mechanics, Surgical			Saw Doctors		
Coachmakers			Instrument Operators			Sawyers		
Computers			Intelligence Duties			Shoemakers		
Concretors			Joiners			Signallers		
Cooks	1/1/18	1/1/18	Leather Stitchers			Signwriters		
Cooks, Hospital			Linesmen			Stokers, Stationary Engine		
Coppersmiths			Linesmen, Signals			Storemen, Technical		
Dental Clerk Orderlies			Lithographers			Surveyors		
Despatch Riders			Machinists			Surveyors, Engineering		
Dispensers			Masons			Tailors		
Draughtsmen			Masseurs			Telescope Identification Numbers		
Draughtsmen, Architectural			Mechanics, Dental			Textile Refitters		
Draughtsmen, Mechanical			Mechanics, M.T.			Tinsmiths		
Draughtsmen, Signal			Mechanics, Typewriter			Toolmakers		
Draughtsmen, Topographical			Mechanics, Wireless			Turners		
Driver Mechanics			Millwrights			Vulcanizers		
Driver Operators			Miners			Wagon Erectors		
Drivers, Transportation Plant			Moulders			Watchmakers		
Electrical Fitters			Nursing Orderlies			Watermen		
Electricians			Nursing Orderlies (Mental)			Welders		
Electricians, Eng. Units			Nurses, Trained			Well Borers		
Electricians, Signal			Observation Post Assistants			Wheelers		
Engine Artificers			Operating Room Assistants			Whitesmiths		
Engine Hands I/C			Operators, Signal			Wiremen		
Equipment Repairers			Opticians			Woodturners		
Farriers			Painters					
5.000 M	1/1/18	1/1/18						
1/1/18								
General Duties		10						
Totals (to agree with Columns 3 and 4 of Part A.)	6	15						

Notes—(a) If rank other than Private is involved give details on back.  
(b) Authorised Trades or Specialists not included in list above will be added as required in spaces provided.

418 18 Aust Inf Bde Unit.

Signature of Commander.

Date of Despatch 21 Nov 42

Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which unit is serving.



TO BE MADE UP TO AND FOR SATURDAY IN EACH WEEK.

Army Form W.3008  
(Page 1.)  
(Adapted.)

Serial No 16

AIF 1/2/9

**FIELD RETURN OF OFFICERS**

17 X 69

40 18 Aust Inf Bde Unit

**PART A.—STRENGTH, SURPLUS OR REINFORCEMENTS REQUIRED.**

1	2	3	4
Ranks.	Posted strength counting against authorized establishment (excluding attached).	Surplus to Establishment.	Reinforcements required (i.e. deficits on establishment).
*			
Brigadier	1		
Lieut.-Colonels			
Majors	2		
Captains	2		3
Lieutenants	7	1	
2nd Lieutenants			
Quartermasters	1		2
Totals	13	1	5

\* Insert detail of higher rank as necessary.

**PART B.—PARTICULARS OF OFFICERS JOINED OR QUITTED DURING WEEK.**

**Officers JOINED during week.**

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
Major	Blenkett J.G.	2/10 Bn	27 Nov 42	Accommodated in Bn (L)
Lieut	Sinton J.G.	2/12 Bn	27 Nov 42	Accommodated in T.O.
Lieut	James D.B.	2/12 24 Hvy Unit	23 Nov 42	Accommodated in Bn Hvy C.H.
Captain	Wotton R.A.N.	A.A.C.H.D.	25 Nov 42	Transferred to Bn Hvy C.H.

**Officers QUITTED during week.**

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
Lieut	Piper H.M.	2/10 Bn	22 Nov 42	Standing leave staff depot Brisbane
Captain	Raymond D.P.	A.A.C.H.D.	25 Nov 42	Transferred to 1st Hvy Bn
"	Blake D.	A.A.C.H.D.	25 Nov 42	Transferred to 1st Hvy Bn

**PART C.—DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS WHOSE RETURN TO THE UNIT IS PARTICULARLY REQUESTED.**

Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts, if known).

**PART D.—NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS ON STRENGTH.**

(i) **Officers posted to Unit** (Total to agree with column 2 of Part A).

1	2	3	4	5	6
Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Whether present with Unit (Insert Yes or No.).	If not present with Unit, state how employed.
Major	MX 7	Whitton J. J.	Infantry	No	at 2/12 Aust Inf Bde
Major	MX 48	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 1430	Brinkley J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 214	Stewart J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	MX 11877	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 1741	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 511	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 3611	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 17549	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 2101	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 19346	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major	SX 5695	Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
Major		Warrington J. J.	Infantry	No	
* Approval has been requested for these appointments.					

**(ii) OFFICERS ATTACHED FROM OTHER CORPS.**

Substantive Rank and higher temporary rank, if held.	Personal Number.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Date of Attachment.	Nature of attachment.
Major	1X17342	Paterson J. J.	AAOC	20 Jul 42	OC 401 HAD
Major	SA 592	Nelson J. J.	2/10 Bn	6 Oct 42	

48.14 Aust Inf Bde  
(Unit.)  
28 Nov 42  
(Date of Despatch.)

*[Signature]*  
(Signature of Commander.)  
48.14 Aust Inf Bde  
(Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which Unit is serving.)





ALLIED LAND FORCES  
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA

Advanced Headquarters  
24 Nov 42.

INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES - NEW GUINEA.

New Guinea Force have recently forwarded a Summary covering the principal activities of Intelligence Staffs and Unit Sections during operations in New Guinea. It is evident that most of the training that units have been carrying out before proceeding to the operational area has been on the right lines, but certain aspects naturally require greater attention, and as usual many peculiar tasks were thrown on Intelligence personnel.

This circular aims to point out important features of the work so that these may be included in training programmes, whether at Intelligence Schools, in field work, or in exercises prepared by formation and unit Intelligence officers for their own personnel.

2. It is suggested that the contents of this Summary are of particular interest to battalion and company commanders, because it has become very evident that, in jungle warfare, a complete understanding of Intelligence responsibilities must exist between unit and company commanders and their Intelligence personnel.

3. The important aspects of Intelligence work in this type of warfare can be summarised under the following:-

- (i) The necessity for friendly relationships between Intelligence Staffs and between Intelligence personnel and unit personnel;
- (ii) Fitness of Men and Equipment for tropical conditions;
- (iii) Maps and Sketches;
- (iv) Patrols;
- (v) Miscellaneous Matters.

4. (i) Friendly Relations: Almost every report received indicates the necessity for

(a) Close personal touch between Intelligence Staffs of higher formations and those of subordinate formations

(b) Battalion Intelligence Officers and Intelligence personnel to be well and favourably known to all Company officers and troops. This can be effected prior to operations by having unit Intelligence Officers give talks to the troops on various matters in respect to the collection of information, of security, and on subjects of general interest. Also, it is important that commanders give their Intelligence Officers priority lists of tasks required of them, and that at all times Intelligence Officers be kept in the operational picture.

(ii) Fitness of Men and Equipment for Tropical Conditions: The personnel of brigade and battalion Intelligence Sections must if possible be in an even greater state of fitness than the troops, because very often, due to reconnaissance and guiding duties, they have to cover more ground than the troops themselves. Fatigue and the incessant wetness both through rain and sweat introduce many problems. Maps and stationery become sodden and even mouldy, air photos sticky, pencils become unusable, carbon paper deteriorates quickly. It is quite impossible to carry any 'fancy' gear, and the following is probably the limit of material that can be carried:-

Maps showing tracks  
 Compass  
 Binoculars  
 Message Pad and carbon  
 Notebooks and pencil  
 Diary or log  
 Tracing paper  
 Blank grid traces

and a small canvas bag or an oilskin to hold this material.

(iii) Maps and Sketches: This was a constant and most difficult responsibility of Intelligence Sections. Few maps were available, and those that were issued were very incomplete. It became the job of Intelligence Sections to correct provisional editions of maps and to collect topographical material for Survey Sections. A ready familiarity with airplane photographs was essential so that information which was contained could quickly be put to use. It is essential to be able to quickly determine the scale of a photograph and to be able to grid it. Intelligence Officers and men were often required to make a quick appreciation of the country ahead and produce a reasonably accurate sketch of some section of it.

(iv) Patrols: A very considerable proportion of the time of Intelligence Sections was taken up in organizing patrols and in the collation of patrol reports. Patrols were used to locate the enemy, to locate tracks, to guide parties of troops, to seek suitable supply dropping areas for aircraft, and to find areas which could be used for advanced landing grounds. The whole supply problem in future operations will be closely associated with air co-operation and all troops need to become familiar with the requirements of our aircraft in respect to dropping areas and landing grounds.

It is of course impossible for unit Intelligence Sections to carry out even a small percentage of the patrol work required, and it is essential for this to be recognised in units. During training periods, Intelligence personnel should be used to train all company personnel in this work so that during operations dozens of men are available for such important tasks, and these men being taught how to observe and how to report will ensure a constant stream of information coming back from the front. Intelligence personnel who were good 'bushmen' proved to be the ideal type for this work.

Experience showed that friendly civilians and natives who came into our hands during an advance should not be sent back until we are certain that they can be of little use to us. On many occasions had such people been held their services would have been invaluable in locating tracks, guiding parties and in making contact with natives behind the enemy lines.

Finally, it has been proved essential that a comprehensive patrol map should be kept at brigade and battalion HQ day by day, as only by so doing can it be certain that important areas are not missed.

(v) Miscellaneous Matters

(a) Communications: This is not an Intelligence responsibility but very often becomes one. W/T communication was often impossible, land lines were gradually laid down, but there was always a period when runners were necessary, and Intelligence personnel were often called on for this work due to their knowledge of the country. Several sections pointed out that 208 W/T sets were quite successful, but greater use could have been made of them if all ranks were familiar with the Morse Code, and some battalions have already commenced to teach the code to all ranks.

(b) Observation Posts: The jungle country does not lend itself to the establishment and use of Observation Posts, but at times very good use was made of them, and it is generally agreed that greater use was possible. This matter must therefore be kept well in mind in training.

(c) Captured Equipment: It is impossible for Intelligence Sections, even with the assistance of F S Sections, to be responsible for the collection of all captured equipment. This is normally the responsibility of Salvage units, but it is essential that Intelligence personnel should be able to assess quickly the value of such material and the necessity for the

prompt despatch to the rear of important material. Documents have given us considerable information during the fighting: these normally can be handled by Intelligence personnel. It is evident also that Japanese readers should be as far forward as possible so that commanders can quickly be given any operational information that may be obtained from documents.

(d) Meteorological Information: In this type of country a further responsibility of forward units is to report meteorological information for our aircraft. They must be able to judge height of clouds, the degree of visibility, and the value and vulnerability of targets both for bombing and ground strafing.

(e) Daily News Sheet: "Bush wireless", furrphys and rumours are rife. Cover plans are essential for any operations, but a lot can be done to prevent rumour-mongering by the issue of a daily news sheet to the troops. There is a necessity also for propaganda amongst the natives to maintain our prestige, to combat rumours circulating amongst them, and at times to use offensively to mislead the enemy, i.e., to create misleading information knowing that it will quickly spread by "Bush wireless".

5. In brief, the following require special attention today in Intelligence training:-

1. Intelligence Officers and personnel to become well and favourably known;
2. Physical fitness - a vital necessity;
3. Ability quickly to read maps and air photographs, to read the ground, to describe it and to reproduce it;
4. To conduct patrols and to teach all unit personnel the art of finding their way through close country, and of reporting what they see;
5. To understand the requirements of the Air Force so that they may give the maximum assistance.

*J. D. Rogers* Brig Gen.

for. Major General,  
Deputy Chief of the General Staff.

DISTRIBUTION LIST

HQ First Aust Army	55	GSI(a) Adv LHQ	1
HQ Sec Aust Army	37	GSI(B);GSI(c);GSI(x); FSS;Adv LHQ	1
HQ 2 Aust Corps	31	GSI LHQ	3
HQ 3 Aust Corps	43	D of Svy Adv LHQ	1
HQ NG Force	80	DE in C Adv LHQ	1
HQ NT Force	22	DSD LHQ	1
HQ Tas Force	8	G (SD) Adv LHQ	1
1 Aust Arm'd Div	15	DMT, LHQ	2
2 Aust Arm'd Div	15	LGQ LHQ	1
3 Aust Arm'd Div	15	AG LHQ	2
LHQ Hy Wireless Gp	1	DA & QMG Adv LHQ	1
Aust Spec Wireless Sec	1	SO in C LHQ	1
No 51 Spec Wireless Sec	1	DNI, LHQ	1
No 55 Spec Wireless Sec	1	FFLO, LHQ	1
HQ Q'ld L of C Area	2	G-2, GHQ, SWPA	3
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RMC Duntroon	2	Allied Naval Forces, GHQ	1
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S of Sigs	1	HQ, AIF ME (for 9 Aust Div)	1
S of Guerilla Warfare	1	DMI War Office, London	1
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BGS(O) Adv LHQ	1	GSI, HQ BF Aden	1
G(Ops) Adv LHQ	1	G-2 USF New Caledonia	1
D of AFV's Adv LHQ	2	Dir Gen Public Relations	1
BGS(I) Adv LHQ	1	War Diary	2

Sufficient copies are fwded for distribution to battalion and equivalent units (including US Army units).



SECRET

192

INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY
 UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER  
 DATE 1 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

A145-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

1 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1198	I690		0820	This H.Q. closing HAGITA HOUSE, reopening No 1 HOUSE 1100/1. all informed.	18 BDE.					Message to Milne Force, 7 Bde, 17 Bde, 2/9 Bn, ATP 4 Bty. 101 ATK. Regt.
1199			1100	H.Q. 18 BDE re-opened No 1 HOUSE.						
1200	I202	1300	1130 2	Full location statement from 7 Bde. as at 0900 L/31. ref map. MILNE BAY prov. 2 inch.	7 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.)
1201		1310	0700	2/9 Bn. sitrep - situat.	2/9 Bn.					S.C. informed (M.)
1202	PHONE		1815	Nil sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. 1 destroyer sighted at 07°45'S 154°28'E bearing 305°. Speed 15 knots. 17 unknown ships at TONOLEI. 6 " " " " FAISI. 1 cruiser & 2 cargo vessels sighted at 03°56'S. 150°19'E. bearing 225°. Speed 15 knots.	BASE OPS.					S.C. informed (V.). Mashed on air sightings chat.
Nov. 1203	I692		0900	Sun site M4 (065998) conducting test shoot 1100 L/2 to 1200 L/2 bearing 12°. Sun site M3 (032985) conducting practice shoot 1430 L/2 to 1730 L/2 bearing 95° to 120° target moving barge. A Hy. Bty. (065997) conducting test shoot 0900 L/2 to 1300 L/2 bearing 110°.	18 BDE					Message to 2/9 Bn, ATP 4 Bty, 101 ATK. Regt, 2/47 L.A.D. passing on inform. contained in Force OIR 55. S.C. informed (M.)

SECRET

193

INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY
 UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER.  
 DATE 2 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-44-0

2 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1204		1030	0700	<p>Sitrep - sitnor. 'D' Coy. moved to NOI STRIP and took over the defences.</p> <p>'C' Coy. patrol NOWLA relieved by 2/5 Aust. Inf. Bn. 2/5 Bn. patrol reached GWENA GWENA RENA in preparation for the relief 'A' Coy. patrol 2 Nov/42.</p>	2/9 Bn					S.C. informed (M.).
1205	204	1220	1915	<p>Sitrep. MAC. Coy Patrol of one sec. leaving TAUPOTA 0600 hrs 2 NOV. to contact 2/6 Bn. patrol KAPO. Landing strip WEDAU now ready for use. 2/7 Bn. sitnor. 2/6 Bn sitnor. MAPO patrol nothing to report. 2/5 Bn. ref. maps. WAIGANI 1/31680.</p>	17 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
1206	203	1220	0900	<p>ref. map SAMAKAI one mile to 4 miles.</p> <p>Sitrep - sitnor. One pl. 'A' Coy. 2/7 Aust. Inf. Bn. on patrol from AHIONA (2343) to ANNIE INLET (L1453). Probable duration of patrol 2 NOV to 4 NOV. Locations unchanged. all informed.</p>	17 Bde.					S.C. informed (M.).
1207	I206	1630	0940	<p>Location statement as at 0900 L/2.</p> <p>Ref. map. MILNE BAY prov. 2". 'A' Coy 61 Bn. OS8026 @ LAU LAU 13. 8 PL. 'A' Coy. 25 Bn. has relieved 18 PL. 25 Bn. otherwise unchanged.</p>	7 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
1208	PHONE		1835	<p>NIL sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY.</p> <p>Two destroyers + 2 transports sighted near GASMATA.</p>	BASE OPS.					S.C. informed (M) Marked on air sightings chart.

SECRET

194

INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY
 UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER  
 DATE 3 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.  
 4 NOV/42.  
 5 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec A1F-2M-441-G.

3 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1209	202	0900	0835	Sitrep - sitnor. Locations unchanged.	17 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
1210	PHONE		1840	NIL sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. NO interceptions.	BASE OPS.					S.C. informed (V.). Marked on air sightings chart.
1211	209	1915	1740	Sitrep as at 1740 NOV 3/4. ref map. WAIGANI 1/31680. 2/5 BN. 14 pl. + one sec 873 000 - one sec. 935045 - one sec 931920. otherwise locations unchanged. sitrep.	17 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
4 NOV.	1212	202	1000	0845	Sitrep - sitnor. Locations unchanged.	17 BDE.				S.C. informed (M.).
	1213		1245	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. GOMINI R. patrol returned to line, replaced by 2/5 BN. * MR MC COLM attached to H.Q. Milne Force as L.O.	2/9 BN.				S.C. informed (M.).
	1214	PHONE	1830	NIL sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. TONOLEI:- 8 cargo ships (adv. 10,000 tons). 6 cargo ships (adv. 5,000 tons), 3 by. emier, 2 destroyers. 1 cargo ship sighted at 06°25'S. 154°42'E. Course 240°. Speed 10 knots.	BASE OPS.					Marked on air sightings chart.
	1215	207	1930	1810	Sitrep - sitnor. Locations unchanged.	17 BDE.				S.C. informed (M.).
5 NOV.	1216	I101	0820	2000/4	Sitrep to 1800 2/4. Sitnor.	17 BDE.				S.C. informed (M.).
	1217	PHONE	1820	NIL sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. 140/1 vessels, 6 possible 6,000 ton cargo boats, 2 possible 10,000 ton transports, 6 unknown vessels sighted at 06°40'S. 156°20' E. Course 190° at 1140/L.	BASE OPS.					Marked on air sightings chart.

SECRET

195

INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 5 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

6 Nov/42.

7 Nov/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

5 NOV.

6 NOV

7 NOV

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1218		1840	0700	Sitrep - situor.	2/9Bn.					S.C. informed (M.)
1219	205	1845	1805	Sitrep as at 1800 hrs 5 NOV. Location unchanged - situor.	17BDE					S.C. informed (M.)
1220		0915	0700	Sitrep - situor.	2/9Bn					S.C. informed (M.)
1221	PHONE		1845	NIL sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. NO interceptions. MR PIPER attached temporarily to H.Q. MILNE FORCE.	BASE OPS.					Marked on air sightings chart.
1222	01317	1900	1535	Firing practices. (1) 2/5 Fd. Regt. granted permission black gun shoot, launch drawn target, 8 guns, 7 NOV. 0900L to 1400L. Area:- Bamboos Struiga Bay to GABAGABUNA. Max. range 800 yds. 5 rounds each gun. 2/5 Fd. Regt. responsible all safety arrangements (2) 7 Bds. rifle range Route 10, in use 7, 9, 10 to 14 Nov. all informed.	MILNE FORCE.					S.C. informed (M.) Message I694 to units for inform.
1223		0950	0700	Sitrep - situor. Wiring commencing in H.Q. bay area.	2/9Bn.					B.M. informed (M.)
1224	203	1100	0907	Sitrep - situor. MAC Cox. reports patrol left TAUPOTA 0700/7 to search for JAP in PUNI area. otherwise situor.	17BDE.					S.C. informed (M.)
1225	PHONE		1845	FAIR BOUGAINVILLE. 1 merchant vessel (5,000 tons), 1 destroyer 8 U/I vessels. @ KAVIENG:- 1 battle cruiser (8-10,000) 1 cruiser (5-7,000 tons), 3 destroyers (1500-2000), 3 flying boats @ sighting at 0045Z @ sighting at 2346Z	BASE OPS.					B.M. informed (M.) Marked on air sightings chart.
		*	1730	B.M. returned from PORT MORESBY.						

SIGHTINGS.

8 NOV

NIL in the lanes to MILNE BAY.

NIL in VIDIA ST.

KAVIENG:- 1 merchant vessel (6-8,000 tons), possibly a tanker, 1 cargo vessel of 2-3,000 tons.

ST GEORGE CHANNEL:- One large cruiser  
04° 18' S. 152° 37' E. course 270°. Speed 25.

FAISI:- 2 heavy cruisers, 1 light cruiser,  
20 cargo vessels, 9 destroyers + minilayer at 0150Z = 1250L.

Marked on air sightings chart.

SECRET

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INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY
 UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER  
 DATE 7 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.  
 8 NOV/42.  
 9 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN					
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks	
7 NOV	1226	206	1930	1850	Sitrep - sitnor. MAC Coy. PUNI patrol nothing to report.	17BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
8 NOV.	1227	I104	0850	1945 7	Sitrep to 1800 hrs - sitnor.	7BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
	1228	202	0920	0900	Sitrep. Location as at 0900 hrs has unchanged - sitnor.	17BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
	1229		1005	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. Work continued with fire lanes and defensive posts DONADONA - DOUPI. * B.M. attached temporarily to H.Q. MILNE FORCE.	2/9BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
	1230	204	1843	1800	Sitrep. Locations as at 1800 hrs unchanged - sitnor.	17BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
	1231	I105	2015	1930	Sitrep to 1800 L/S - sitnor.	7BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
9 NOV.	1232		1030	0700	Sitrep - sitnor.	2/9BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
	1233	202	1030	0900	Sitrep as at 0900 hrs 9 NOV. Sitnor.	17BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
	1234	204	1840	1745	Sitrep - sitnor. Locations unchanged.	17BDE.					
	1235	PHONE		1845	MIL sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. 1 transport of approx 5,000 tons sighted at 160°, on lower tip of NEW <sup>IRELAND</sup> (NEW BRITAIN) out of commission. <u>Leith</u> Transport ship mentioned beached on lower tip of NEW BRITAIN.	BASE OPS.					Marked on air sightings chart.

SECRET

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INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 10 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

11 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

10 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1236	I102	0900	1930 <sup>9</sup>	Locations. As at 1900 hrs. 4/9. 25 Bn. H.Q. 048003 - H.Q. Coy. 046003 - E Coy. 049003. otherwise unchanged. Ref. map. MILNE BAY. prev. NO2. otherwise sitnor.	7 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
1237		0930	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. Work on B-5 defences positions continued.	2/9 Bn.					S.C. informed (M.).
1238	302	1025	0910	Sitrep - sitnor. MAC company reports 'TIER YO' left 0600 hrs, estimated time of arrival GILI 1900 hrs.	17 BDE.					S.C. informed (M.).
1239	PHONE.		1930	Nil sightings in sea lanes to MILNE BAY. Number of zeros off BUWA heading towards MILNE. 4 of them attacked a B25, which shot me down. 0315Z $\approx$ 1415L. 6 transports sighted near FAISI. 190° course. Speed 12 knots. 4 probable battleships in BUIN-FAISI area. 48 ships in that area. Sighted 1145K. A destroyer was sighted pos. 06°50'S 148°25'E course 90°. Speed 25 knots. on 9 NOV. CATALINA attacked, but bombs missed.	BASE OPS.					B.M. informed (M.).
11 NOV.	1240	0900	0700	Sitrep - sitnor.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. informed (M.).
	1241	202	1050	0900	Sitrep as at 0800 hrs 11 Nov. sitnor.	17 BDE.				B.M. informed (M.).
	1242	205	2140	1855	Sitrep - sitnor. Location of mints with map refs. on second edition MILNE BAY prev. two inch will be forwarded to-morrow.	17 BDE.				B.M. informed (M.).

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INTELLIGENCE

ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 12 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

13 NOV/42

14 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

12 Nov.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN					
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks	
1242	I123	0900	1840	Sitrep to 1800 hrs - sitnor.	7 BDE.					B. M. informed (M.)	
1243	202	0920	0830	Sitnor.	17 BDE.					B. M. informed (M.)	
1244		1047	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. boys continue to cut fir lines, underground & build def. posns.	2/9 BN.					B. M. informed (M.)	
1245			1110	17 Bde are preparing a def posn to NORTH of present 61 Bn posns. Area NOT to be occupied	2/9 BN LO.						
1246	I697		1450	att. cutting taken from 'Courier Mail' of 7 OCT/42. is fwded in the interests of security.	18 BDE.					Message to G31 MILNE FORCE together with letter & newspaper cutting.	
1247	205	1900	1824	Sitrep - locations as at 1800 hrs unchanged - sitnor.	17 BDE.					B. M. informed (M.)	
1248	I126	2100	2010	Sitrep to 1800 4/12 - sitnor.	7 BDE.					B. M. informed (M.)	
13 Nov.	1249	202	0930	0825	Sitnor.	17 BDE.				B. M. informed (M.)	
	1250		1020	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. 'A' Coy on counter attack exercise.	2/9 BN.				B. M. informed (M.)	
14 Nov.	1251	201	1045	0909	Sitrep as at 0800 hrs - sitnor.	17 BDE.				B. M. informed (M.)	
	1252	I130	1930	1800	Sitrep to 1800 4/14 sitnor.	7 BDE.				B. M. informed (M.)	
	1253		1930	1800	Sitrep. Ref. map. M.B. prov. 2 ins equal to mile. 'C' Coy. 2/6 BN. see 056036 def. posns as follows in preparation: 13 PL. 046028-14 PL. 052024-15 PL. 049033 - PL. 'B' Coy. 2/7 BN at JUNGLE COURSE NO 3. otherwise normal.	17 BDE.					B. M. informed (M.)



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INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 15 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

16 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

15 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1254	202	0935	0815	Sitrep as at 0800 - sitrep.	17BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
1255	204	1045	0910	MAC Coy. reports. 'JEANNY 1' arrived TAUPOTA 0100 hrs., left 0700 hrs, E.T.A. Gilli 1700 hrs. U1 aircraft heard flying low, approached from west 0400 hrs, believed circled and headed NORTH. otherwise sitrep.	17BDE.					B.M. informed (M.) (uptd)
1256		1050	0700	Sitrep - sitrep.	2/9Bn.					Sent to H.Q. Milne Force.
1257	206	1810	1800	Sitrep as at 1700 hrs - NORMAL.	17BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
1258				80 Sqn. with 19 P39's at TURNBULL FIELD as from 14 NOV/42.	L.O. MILNE FORCE.					B.M. informed (V.)
1259				approx 20 tanks arrived FALL RIVER.	L.O. MILNE FORCE.					B.M. informed (V.)
1260				'STRELLA' patrolling RAYEN CHANNEL.	L.O. MILNE FORCE.					B.M. informed (V.)
1261		0940	0700	Sitrep - sitrep.	2/9Bn.					Forwarded to H.Q. Milne Force.
1262	205	1215	1000	Sitrep as at 0700 hrs 16 NOV. Location changed - C Coy. 2/6 Aust. Inf. Bn. bases are 056026. ref. map. MB prov. 2 inch 1 mile scale section. all informed.	17BDE. ✓					B.M. informed (M.)

16 NOV.

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INTELLIGENCE

~~ACTION~~ ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 16 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

17 NOV/42.

18 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

16 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1263	206	1840	1807	Sitnor.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
1264	I 128	1900	1845	Sitnor.	7 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
1265	01418	2200	2115	2/9 Bn. reports to command 18 BDE. forthwith.	MILNE FORCE.					B.M. informed (M.)
	*			Bds. bnd. returned from Pt Moresby to 18 BDE.						
17 NOV.			1100	0700	Sitrep - sitnor.	2/9 Bn.				B.M. informed (M.)
	203	1100	0835	Sitrep. Locations as at 0800 hrs 17 Nov. unchanged. Sitnor.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
	I 132	2030	1800	Sitnor.	7 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
18 NOV.			1615	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. Work on defensive posns. continuing. 'C' Coy. partial counter attack to GORNEY AERODROME.	2/9 Bn.				B.M. informed (M.)
	PHONE		1020		17 Bds. report HAGITA FORD passable to all traffic. Foot bridge passable.	17 BDE.				B.M. informed (V.)
	I 133	1840	1820	Sitnor.	7 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
	205	2030	1908	Sitnor - locations unchanged.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
	01459	2230	2200	b ancel message 01418 re. 2/9 Bn. see serial 1265	FORCE.					B.M. informed (M.)
	*				Bds. bnd. detached to act as G.O.C., Milne Force.					
			2000		2/9 Bn. patrol to WAGA WAGA returned 1900 hrs. Nothing to report.					B.M. informed (M.) Force informed (Phone).

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INTELLIGENCE

ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 19 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

19 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1275			2am 18	5 ships sighted outside BUNA proceeding N.N.W. direction, speed 25 knots. All B17's + planes from PORT MORESBY and TURNBULL FIELD attacking. 5 sighted off GASMATA, also to be attacked.  Blue prints of pill box sent to 'D' Cox, 2/9 Bn, at GURNEY FIELD. Capt. BARNES making one as specimen.	L.O. FORCE.					B.M. informed (V.).
1276	0359		0835	Further to serial 1273:- 2/9 Bn. now under operational command Milne Force @ ATP 4 Bty 101 A/TK. regt, Bde carriers reserve, 2/10 Bn. Tpt. det. under comd. 2/9 Bn. for admin. purposes and trg. In view 2/9 Bn. moving from present location, these sub units revert to direct comd. this H.Q. will NOT repeat NOT more until ordered by this H.Q. 2/9 Bn. will advise sub units referred to of contents this message. ACK.	B.M. 18 BDE.					Message to 2/9 Bn.
1276	I135	1110	0950	Location statement. Change in location as at 0900 hrs. 4/19. 4 Bty. 101 A/TK. Gun C1. 029969. - 'D' Tp. H.Q. 022007 - D2.036002. - Gun D4.022007, for maintenance. MILNE BAY. PROV. 2 NUMBERS.	7 BDE.	✓				B.M. informed (M.)

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INTELLIGENCE

~~MOVING~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER

DATE 19 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

20 Nov/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

19 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN					
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks	
1277		1200	0827 18	Sightings:- 1) 5 ships. 08° 07' S. 148° 40' E. Speed 25 knots. Course 330°. 100 miles N.W. of BUNA.	2) 9 Bn. L.O.						
			1414 18	2) 2 Lt. cruisers. 06° 30' S. 148° E. Course 180°.							
			1431 18	3) 2 destroyers, 1 Lt. cruiser 70 miles S.W. GASMATA Course 230°.							
			1431 18	3 destroyers. 40 miles S. GASMATA. Course 300°-240°.							
			1715 18	1 Warship. S.E. from CAPE NELSON.							
			2219 18	Bonvoy in BUNA BAY. NO aerial attack last night.							
1278	203	2045	2015	Sitrep. Locations unchanged. Sitnor.	17 BDE.						B.M. informed (M.)
1279	01474	2300	2155	During the absence on duty of MAJOR-GEN. CLOWES, BRIG. G.F. WOOTTEN will administer comd. MILNE FORCE from 18 NOV. all informed.	MILNE FORCE						B.M. informed (M.)
20 NOV.	1280	0930	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. Butting of fire lanes etc. continuing in Coy. areas of responsibility.	2) 9 Bn.						B.M. informed (M.)
	1281	204	1205	0820 Sitnor as at 0800 hrs.	17 BDE.						B.M. informed (M.)
	1282	PHONE	1250	HAGITA FORD passable to ALL vehicles.	5) SEC. SIGS.O.						S.C.(L.) informed.
	1283		1300 <del>0800</del> 19 NOV	U.S. Force at DOBADURA is moving on ANGO. (S.W. of BUNA). U.S. Troops are at WARISOTA.	2) 9 Bn. L.O.						B.M. informed (V.)

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INTELLIGENCE

~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 20 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

21 Nov/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

20 Nov.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN					
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks	
1283 (cont)		1300	0837 19	NO enemy aircraft at BUNA.	2) 9 Bn. L.O.						
			P.m. 19	LAE DROME:- 1 bomber + 15 fighters sighted.							
			19	BUNA:- One aerial force from PT. MORESBY attacked convoy in BUNA (one mentioned on 18 NOV) and scored a direct hit amidships on a Lt. cruiser, and sank one destroyer.							
			1730 19	One destroyer + 1 cruiser sighted off HILDSBACH, proceeding N.W. towards SALAMAUVA. Believed to be remnant of convoy attacked at BUNA as per above.							
				Locations:- GTP. 18 Pds. H.Q. 062997. Gun posns. { 058994 - 062997 - 069007 ✓ 075015							
				CTp. 25 Pds. H.Q. 025978. C1. 008968 - C2. 025978 - ✓ C3. 025979 - C4. 038991.							
				2/8 FD. Coy. are responsible for defence of WAIGANI etc.							
				2/5 Bn. responsible for etc from FORCE-WAIGANI (eastern end).							
1284.	206	1825	1800	Itiner.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.).	
1285.	I136	2050	2020	Itiner.	7 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.).	
21 Nov	1286	I141	2000	1850	Itiner.	7 BDE.				B.M. informed (M.).	

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## INTELLIGENCE ACTION DIARY

 UNIT 18AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER.  
 DATE 21 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.  
 22 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

21 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1287	204	2000	1925	Sitnos.	17BDE.					B.M. informed (M.).
1288	I138	2000	1600	Location. bkg of location 4 Bty 101 ATK. Ref. map. M.B. Prov. 2. No 2. Sun B1. 005967. B3 008 977.	7BDE. ✓					B.M. informed (M.).
1289	I139	2000	1615	Locations 3 Bty 2/1 ATK. Bty. HQ. with HQ I Tp and Guns I1 + I2. 029 912 - K Tp. H.Q. 044014 - K Tp. Sun K1 045002 - K2 046016 - K3 054007 - K4 051017. LH.Q. 047003 - Gun L1 054006 - L2 063003 - L3 048004 - L4 048 998. Gun I3 075016 - I4 065014. Ref. map. MB prov 2. No 2.	7BDE. ✓					B.M. informed (M.).
22 Nov.	1290.	I705	0921	Force advises 2/5 Fd. Regt. registering targets 23, 24, 25 NOV. from 0900 to 1700 hrs. Target areas BILOBULOLO - GAMAR. - coast KILABO - WILES BRIDGE - ITALIDUN and Nothing 97 coast LONE TREE - NIHANHA, North to Nothing 97. Safety precautions arranged.	18 BDE.					Troop Force 01496 conveyed to 2/9 Bns + units U/C for inform.
	1291	202	0930 0837	Sitrep - sitnos.	17BDE.					B.M. informed (M.).
	1292		1115 0700	Sitrep - sitnos. bcp. continue to develop their areas of responsibility.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. informed (M.).

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## INTELLIGENCE ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 22 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

22 NOV

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN					
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks	
1293		18 NOV		2 Bn. 128 Regt (U.S.A.) at DOBUDURA as dir. no. 1 Coy. 3 Bn. working on strip there. 128 Regt. planned attack CAPE ENDAIADERE, 19 NOV. 1 Bn 128 Regt. on coast vicinity of BUNA. 126 Regt. 1 Bn. main party closing EMBOGO, remainder moving BOFU.	2/9 Bn. L.O.	✓				Inform. from FORCE. B.M. informed (V.).	
		19 NOV.		Photographs BUNA 18 NOV, show new shelters NORTH DROME. Adv. H. Q. 7 Div. opened at POPONDETTA. 2/31 Bn. 1 mile South of GONA. Adv. H. Q. 25 Bde. with 2/25 Bn. at North of JIMBOPU. 2/33 Bn at JIMBOPU moving to GONA on 20 NOV. 16 Bde. attacking to clear enemy out of area South of SOPUTA. 2 Bn. 128 Regt. in contact with enemy North of GIRUA R. Our fwd. Hqs. in contact with enemy GIRURATHWA. One of our Bdes. held South of SOPUTA but we to attack this place this morning. Another Bde. is advancing on GONA.		✓					
		20 NOV		Sightings:- RABAUL HBR:- 1 cruiser, 1 destroyer, 1 submarine, 5 large vessels + 400/11 vessels. 10 vessels in BUKA passage. KAVIENG:- 12 ships. at sea:- 4 destroyers 06° 45' S. 150° 00' E. Course 230°. Speed 30 knots. Heading for BUNA.		✓					

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## INTELLIGENCE ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 22 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

22 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN						
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks		
1294	204	1900	1825	Sitrep - sitnor.	77 BDE.					B.M. informed (M)		
1295	PHONE.		2000	Route 18 becomes Route 19. On all maps Route 1 - b stage No becomes Route 20. Track from Route 3 NORTH to GURNEY FIELD remains Route 10.	CAPT. THOMPSON (FORCE)	✓					B.M. informed (M)	
23 NOV.	1296		0950	0700	Sitrep - sitnor.	2/9 BN.					B.M. informed (M)	
1297			1230	1615 27 1700 22	2 Destroyers sighted 06°45'S. 149°00'E. course 270°. " " " 06°50'S. 149°30'E. " 260°. " " " 06°40'S. 148°25'E. Southwly.	Lt. REA. acting as FORCE L.O.					B.M. informed (V.)	
			1920 22		B25's bombed above destroyers. One direct hit claimed on stem of one vessel; but destroyers continued maneuvering at high speed.							
			21 0900 22		4 destroyers sighted. " " " going N.W. through VITIAZ ST.							
					N.G.F. Int. Sum to 1000 hrs. 22 NOV. states 'BEAU FIGHTERS' + A 20's bombed + strafed LAE 'drome. 6 ZEKES were probably destroyed and 7 others were strafed + probably damaged. SALAMAUVA: 3 barges with truck on board strafed and sunk. 8 ZEKES, 15 D in Bombs intercepted by P4's approaching BONA. 1 ZEKE was destroyed. 1 P40 is missing. Enemy a/c did NOT reach target.							



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## INTELLIGENCE ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 23 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

24 NOV/42.  
25 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

23 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1298	204	1845	1820	Sitnor.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M).
24 NOV. 1299	204	1030	0800	Sitrep - sitnor. Ref. map. 2 miles one mile - outpost ref. 986044 relieved by air 13 pl. 'C' Coy. 2/7 Bn.	17 BDE. ✓					B.M. informed (M).
1300		1115	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. Adv. party of 2/7 Bn. with 'D' Coy. GURNEYFIELD boys continued to clear undergrowth and develop fire pans in their defensive pans.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. informed (M).
1301	PHONE		1800	'B' Coy. 2/7 Bn. relieved 'D' Coy. 2/9 Bn. at GURNEY AERODROME at 1645 hrs. 'D' Coy. 2/9 Bn. now with 'A' Coy 2/9 Bn.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. informed (V).
1302	201	1855	1815	Sitnor. all informed.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M).
1303	I144	1935	1845	Sitrep - sitnor.	7 Bds.					B.M. informed (M).
25 NOV. 1304	204	0940	0828	Sitnor.	17 Bds.					
1305		0950	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. (see serial 1301). Bn. on exercise for two days EAMEANENE - KALOHI CK. area.	2/9 Bn.					
1306		1030	? 24 NOV.	9 BEAUFORTS attacked enemy destroyers in HUON gulf - 5 which were sighted in the afternoon. at midnight, bombs were seen to hit on the stern of a destroyer. other torpedoes had no effect. A burning destroyer was seen with	Lt. Resa from FORCE.					B.M. informed (V).

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INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 25 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

26 NOV/42.

27 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

25 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN												
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks								
1306 (cont)																		
1307	PHONE	1930	1800		Sitnor.					7 BDE.								B. M. informed (M.)
1308	207	1805	1755		Sitrep @ 'B' Coy 2/7 Aust. Inf. Bn. relieved 'D' Coy of 2/9 Aust. Inf. Bn. at 994998 MAP REF MB prov. 2 inches to 1 mile. otherwise sitnor. all informed.					17 BDE.								B. M. informed (M.)
26 NOV.																		
1309	202	0915	0820		Sitnor - all informed.					17 Bde								B. M. informed (M.)
1310	I146	1920	1800		Sitrep - sitnor.					7 BDE.								B. M. informed (M.)
1311	205	1920	1830		Sitnor - all informed.					17 BDE.								B. M. informed (M.)
1312	206	2020	1910		'B' Coy. 2/7 Bn. relieved by 'D' Coy. 2/9 Bn. at 1730 hrs to-day. 'B' Coy. returns own base 2/7 Bn. aka. all informed					17 BDE.								B. M. informed (M.) 2/9 Bn. returned from Bn. exercise.
27 NOV.																		
1313	202	1000	0835		Sitnor - all informed.					17 BDE.								B. M. (L) informed (M.)
1314			1035	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. Bn. returned from exercise 'D' Coy. + M. G's resumed role of defence of GURNEY FIELD - 1600 hrs.					2/9 Bn.								B. M. informed (M.)
1315	I711		1015		Range - route 90 closed until further notice for improvement. 2/5 Fd. Regt. allotted range both incl 30 NOV to 14 Dec. for work + firing. all informed.					18 BDE.								Message to units for inform.

SECRET

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INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER.  
 DATE 27 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.  
 28 NOV/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

27 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1316		1330	1225 26	<p>1) lighted a LAE 'dome' 3 Zeros + 13 bombers. P38's dir bombed LAE. one zero destroyed and a direct hit on a building in use near 'dome'.</p> <p>2) One A/C heavily bombed and strafed BUNA area in the morning of 26 Nov.</p> <p>3) 11 enemy A/C bombed and strafed our troops at DOBODURA + also one small boat off CAPE <del>ENDAIADERE</del> ENDAIADERE.</p> <p>4) allied A/C losses in BUNA area: 1 transport plane shot down, 1P40 + 1A20. Enemy lost 5 Zeros.</p> <p>5) Posn. at BUNA unaltered. 16 Bds. on outskirts of BUNA, where the enemy are heavily well in + offering tough opposition.</p> <p>6) 25 Bds. on the outskirts of GONA.</p> <p>7) 21 Bds:- 2/14 Bn. and element of 2/27 Bn, Bdr. H. G. and air section of 2/1. Fd. Regt. carried by air to POPONDETTA.</p>	L.O. 2/9 Bn from Fores.					B.M. informed (V.)
1317	01550	1855	1700	<p>Gunsite M5 proof shooting 28 Nov.          3 rounds per gun. Shooting between 0900/1300 hrs. Bearings 350 to 10 degrees magnetic. Angles 10-45-70 degrees. all informed.</p>	MILNE FORCE					B.M. informed (M). Message I712 to units for info.
1318	207	1945	1820	Straf - situos.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M).
28 NOV.	1319	I148	0730 1925 27	Straf - situos.	7 BDE.					B.M. informed (M).

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INTELLIGENCE ~~REPORT~~ ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 28 NOV/42 hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

28 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1320.		1000	0700	Sitrep - sitnor.	2/9 Bn					B.M. informed (M.)
1321	202	0930	0755	Sitnor - all informed.	17 Bde.					B.M. informed (M.)
1322		NOV 27.		<p>1) 25 Bde. held up on outskirts of GONA. a few days ago 100 JAPS were estimated to be at GONA. Between 60 and 70 barges were destroyed along the beach near GONA. Two only are recoverable.</p> <p>2) One ln. American tps. is 800 yds. off BUNA MISSION. One ln. American tps. is held up between CAPE <del>(KAWAKERE)</del> <sup>ENDAIADERE</sup> and the new BUNA strip.</p> <p>3) One ln. American tps. passed through 16 Bde. and set now an enemy flank at SUPOTA.</p> <p>4) One A/C has bombed and strafed BUNA very heavily - non-stop. We have at least one Battery 25 pounders at BUNA.</p>	2/9 Bn L.O. from Force.					B.M. informed (V.)
1323		1400		<p>Gun site M1.008007 - M2.019011 - M3.030988. FORCE. ✓</p> <p>-M4.065998 - M5.985009 - M201.994984.</p>						
1324	204	1930	1845	Sitnor - all informed.	17 Bde.					B.M. informed (M.)
1325	I149	2028	1940	Sitrep - sitnor.	7 Bde.					B.M. informed (M.)
1326	PHONE			2/9 N. reported Four flares on GURNEY FIELD (EAST) Seen by 'D' Coy.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. informed (V.)

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INTELLIGENCE

~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 29 NOV/42. hrs. to hrs.

A146—Mob. Print Sec A1F—2M—4/41—G.

29 NOV

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1327	PHONE		0230	Air raid - rec. <del>Enemy</del> Enemy a/c. circled Milne Bay for approx. 45 minutes. A.A. engaged.	BASE OPS.					B.M. informed. (V.) 2/9 Bn. informed. (phone).
1328	202	1035	0850	Sitnor - all informed.	17 Bde					B.M. (L) informed. (M.)
1329		1135	0700	Sitrep - sitnor. baps. continued to develop poms. by drawing of underground and developing fire poms.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. (L) informed. (M.)
1330				Further to serial 1327:- Air raid. Up to 1200 hrs. 29 NOV. it was reported that 31 bombs were dropped of which 9 were dud's. Bombs were of 250 Kilograms = 550 lbs. Casualties:- 1 Australian + 2 Americans slightly wounded. Oil 'JEEP' damaged, 2 signals wires broken down and 1 tent destroyed. Number of planes not known. 27 NOV 27 submarines were sighted from. at 0017 hrs. 08°15' S. 148°35' E. 30 miles north of BUNA. Course 170°. Visibility unlimited.	L.O. 2/9 Bn. from FORCE					B.M. (L) informed (V.)

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INTELLIGENCE ~~ACTION~~ DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.

LOCATION FALL RIVER.

DATE 29 Nov/42 hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

29 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN					
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks	
1330 (cont.)			2037 28	3) 14 subs. sighted <del>at</del> 07°10'S. 148°30'E.							
			2050 28	4) 5 subs. sighted at 06°55'S. 148°30'E. Course 200°.							
				5) 1 sub. sighted at 07°43'S. 148°07'E. Course 290°.							
				6) 1 large. sub. sighted at 07°35'S. 148°10'E. Headed for LAE.							
				Shedding was difficult owing to poor visibility							
			27 Nov.	7) 4 destroyers sighted at 148°50'E. 05°10'S. Speed 15 knots.							
			28 Nov.	8) BUNA heavily bombed + strafed. Field dump hit, causing very large fire. One bridge was bombed and hit. One B25 is missing.							
				9) One destroyer sighted at 07°40'S. 148°25'E.							
				10) BUKA PASSAGE:- 2 transports of 7,000 tons each sighted.							
				11) ARAWA area (NEW BRITAIN) full of enemy. Main enemy force reported at RING RING and vicinity GASMATA' dome.							
				12) LAE 'DROME:- 20 fighters seen leaving 'drome. 5 damaged bombers, 1 div bomber, and 47 fighters (including 22 probably damaged) on 'drome.							
			0615 28 Nov	13) BOUGAINVILLE IS:- 1 tanker, 1 cargo vessel, and 1 destroyer sighted. at 0330 hrs. seen proceeding West. 1 atoll and 12 destroyers remained.							
				14) 2/5 Aust. Fo. Regt. was strafed by 2 ZEROS at CAPE SUDEST. 5 men were killed and 24 wounded.							

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## INTELLIGENCE ACTION DIARY

UNIT 18 AUST. INF. BDE.  
 LOCATION FALL RIVER.  
 DATE 29 Nov/42. hrs. to hrs.  
 30 Nov/42.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-441-G.

29 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	Time	INFORMATION ITEM	Origin	ENTERED IN				
						Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1331	207	1900	1855	Sitrep - sitnos. all informed.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
1332	208	2012	2005	Ref. Map S.E. New Guinea 3 inches 1 mile. Standing patrol 13 Pl. 'B' Coy. 2/5 Bn. relieved by 9 Pl. 'A' Coy. Locations as follows Pl. H. 7 + 1 sec NOWLA 873000. 1 sec GWENA GWENA RENA 935045. 1 sec GOMI FORD 931920.	17 BDE. ✓					B.M. informed (M.)
1333	01578	2235	2200	ref. on 01395. 15 NOV. calibration on shoot will now take place 30 NOV, 1, 2 + 3 DEC. between 0830 - 1630 daily. Direction of fire HIWILA IS. all informed.	MILNE FORCE					B.M. informed (M) I712 to all units for info.
30 NOV. 1334	204	0955	0850	Sitnos - all informed.	17 BDE.					B.M. informed (M.)
1335	-	1215	-	29 Nov. LAE. Beaufighters strafed Drome before dawn. 29 Nov. GONA. A20s bombed and strafed. PAOs used as dive bombers. B17s bombed - direct hits on ammo dumps and buildings. <u>Sighting and Attacks</u> <u>BUKA</u> . 1 des 2 tpls (5000 + 2000 tons) arrived from South via West Coast at 2314/28. These left at 0250/29 on Westerly course making up a convoy of 2 large and 3 small (at least). Last seen 50mls NW BUKA at high speed on NE course. <u>At Sea</u> A destroyer 2100/28 - 0510 5748.50E Course 270° B17s attached at 0510 5146.50E. 1 direct hit left destroyer stationary and burning. 2 direct hits badly damaged a second. Third hit directly without apparent damage. 2 of these made off on course 340° after attack.	MILNE FORCE By Lt. Lieut McColum. Maps.	Marked	Entered	RELAE.		B.M. informed

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Intelligence ACTION DIARY
 UNIT 18 Aust Inf Bde.  
 LOCATION Fall River.  
 DATE 30 Nov 42. hrs. to hrs.

A146-Mob. Print Sec AIF-2M-4/41-G.

30 NOV.

Serial No.	Register No.	T.O.R.	INFORMATION		Origin	ENTERED IN				
			Time	ITEM		Int. Map	Location Diagram	Sub-diary	O. of B.	Counter action taken and remarks
1335 (at)	-	1215		<p><u>Sighting and attacks</u></p> <p>A destroyers 0516 S 148.25 E Course 80° 10 knots          These four bombed 05.00 S 148.08 E 0615 hrs.          29. 1 destroyer damaged          last seen 1 doing 3 knots others circling.          0518 S 148.00 E course 60° 20 knots 0730 hrs          29 above 4 destroyers again sighted.  <u>Hostile Air Action night 28/29.</u>          Force Report 31 bombs. in groups of six.          Our heavies fired 360 rounds.</p>	<p>Mylne          Force          Lt Lieut          HAMM COX</p>					
1336		1215	0700	Sitrep - sitnor.	2/9 Bn.					B.M. informed (M.)
1337	206	1305	1145	<p>Ref. map M.B. two inches equals one          mile. Pioneer pl. 2/5 Aust. Inf. Bn.          now to EANEANENE area 975 998.          Engaged in bridging work. all          informed.</p>	17 Bds.	✓				B.M. informed (M.)
1338	210	2300	1800	Sitnor - all informed.	17 Bds.					B.M. informed (M.)



R Bae<sup>ny</sup> File 18 bde Nov. 42.

SECRET

Subject: RA NOTES ON OFFENSIVE BY EIGHTH ARMY  
23 OCT - 4 NOV 42

786

HQ First Aust Army (AIF)  
31 Mar 43  
G(SD)5436

List 'C' (Branches and formations down to  
and including infantry brigades)

1. The attached RA notes on the Offensive by the Eighth Army on the EL ALAMEIN position are distributed for information and should be studied by all staffs.
2. The open desert nature of the country in which these operations were carried out should be kept well in mind as the lessons learnt may not be applicable in all types of country.

*M. Hoase*

Maj-Gen.  
GS First Aust Army.

Subject: R.A. Notes on the Offensive by Eighth Army from  
23 Oct - 4 Nov on the El Alamein Position

(For Distribution down to C.O.'s of all Arty Units)

1. In forwarding the attached report of B.R.A. Eighth Army, I must make the following observations; some of which merely stress what is to be found in the report, others I have discussed with B.R.A. Eighth Army and he agrees to their insertion.
2. The following very special conditions under which the battle was fought must be stressed.
  - (a) While the wiring of the German positions in the southern sector was very strong, that on the front attacked was inadequate and did not present a serious problem.
  - (b) The enemy apparently possessed an almost complete knowledge of our battery positions. Although he had considerable superiority in medium and heavy artillery he made little use of it. He apparently made no use of these in any way to counter our artillery, nor did he make use of alternative positions to avoid our C.B. efforts. In fact, his artillery was most inefficiently handled.
  - (c) In the desert it is a waste of time to attempt to conceal anything by camouflage from the camera in an aircraft. All that can be attempted is to deceive, hence the necessity for irregularity in gun positions. The enemy did not appear to be aware of this, hence the great proportion of C.B. locations derived from air photographs.
  - (d) The ground over which the battle was fought was almost dead flat, and there were no O.Ps. with any appreciable command.
  - (e) We enjoyed almost complete air superiority. This, together with the inefficiency of the enemy artillery permitted far greater concentrations of guns and vehicles close up than would have been possible in other circumstances.
3. With regard to the Div Arty of Armd Divs I would call attention to para 10 of the report: The present organisation of an Armd Div was designed early this year. Since then a division thus constituted has practically never been used with both its Armd and Motor or Lorried brigades in close co-operation. Nothing has therefore been learnt regarding the control of the Div Arty of Armd Divs, since the Regts have always been grouped with their respective brigades.
4. During night attacks, the greatest difficulty of the infantry has always been that of keeping direction. This was, on one occasion, solved by stationing Bofors A.A. guns well forward on the extremities of the start line. They fired periodically on the line of advance. The tracer showed clearly the flanks of the attack.
5. Coloured smoke is used by the Germans to mark objectives, flanks of advance, etc. It would also be of use in situations where it is difficult to distinguish ones own ranging rounds. I am making a separate report on this question.

(sd) A. Maxwell  
 Major-Gen. Royal Artillery.

S E C R E T

H. Q. R. A. Eighth Army

R. A. Notes on the Offensive by Eighth Army from  
23 Oct - 4 Nov on the El Alamein Position

Note:

These notes cover the period of the battle from its start on the night 23/24 Oct to the breakthrough on the 4 Nov. The object of the main attacks were to wear down the enemy's resistance and to make a gap through which our armour could be passed. The main attacks were made by the infantry of 30 Corps in the north, though subsidiary attacks were made by 13 Corps in the south. The two armoured divs of 10 Corps entered the salient made on the first night by the main infantry attack at dawn on the following day, in an effort to break through. Various armoured divisions and bdes remained in the salient until the final breakthrough occurred. The situation was thus peculiar in that two Corps were deployed in a rather small area, in which there was considerable congestion. The bulk of the artillery of 10 Corps assisted in the support of the infantry attacks of 30 Corps, including the initial attack. The majority of the attacks were made by night in bright moonlight. During the period under review, our armoured action consisted generally of long range tank gun duels with enemy tanks.

The ground was generally flat and featureless, but with slight undulations and ridges which when captured gave fair observation. Some of our forward gun positions were overlooked by the enemy F.D.Ls. prior to the first attack, but they were occupied by night and were not spotted.

The enemy had held his position for nearly four months and had had ample time to prepare his defensive layout which consisted of outpost, battle and reserve positions in great depth and with many extensive minefields but with only thin belts of concertina wire. During the operation he launched several local counter attacks, many with tanks, most of which were unsuccessful, a few only gaining a very limited success.

1. Fire Plans

(1) In the first main attack, made in bright moonlight by four divs of 30 Corps on the night 23/24, the frontage of attack was some 7,000 yds, and 360 - 25-prs which included 72 - 25-prs from 10 Corps and 48 med guns were used to give support. In addition for the initial phases some 48 - 25-prs of 4 Ind Div on the southern flank of the attack were available to assist, making a total of 408 - 25-prs. The concentration of artillery at this stage was thus about one 25-pr per 17 yds of the frontage of attack. The attack was to go to a depth of some 4,000 yds. The artillery was under the command of the C.C.R.A. Ample time was available for preparation. A tentative allotment of Artillery in support of each Div was made by the C.C.R.A., and preliminary fire plans were then made by Divs and later adjusted by the C.C.R.A.

As the enemy dispositions were well known from overprinted maps showing his defences as seen on air photos, and in the case of his forward defences, from reports of ground observers and patrols, the fire plan took the form of concentrations on all prepared defensive localities, the fire lifting from locality to locality at an average rate of 100 yds in 3 minutes. As the infantry paused on their first objective, the programme lasted till Z + 185. In two localities where the enemy defences were less well defined the support took the form of a barrage. The average rate of fire was about 2 r.p.g. per min.

For 20 minutes before zero all guns were used on Counter Battery neutralisation.

At various phases of the attack up to three med regts and four field regts were used on C.B. tasks, but at other times all available guns, including the Med Arty were concentrated on the enemy's forward localities.

The fire plan was undoubtedly successful, and the infantry reached their first objective, except for a few isolated pockets of resistance. Prisoners commented on the devastating effect of the fire. The effect of the C.B. fire is discussed in greater detail in para 5 below: It was unquestionably successful in practically silencing the hostile artillery.

(ii) In the attack carried out by troops under command of 2 N.Z. Div by moonlight on the night 1/2 Nov, little was known of the enemy defences, and in consequence, as adequate guns were available, the fire plan consisted primarily of a creeping barrage. This barrage had the merit of simplicity, it was absolutely straight, started on a grid line on a frontage of 4000 yds and moved exactly at right angles to the opening line to a depth of 4000 yds at the rate of 100 yds per 2½ mins. The barrage did not extend beyond the frontage of the Inf attack, but five field and three med regts were employed on concentrations on known and likely enemy localities in the barrage lane, and on the flanks of the barrage to about 2000 yds on each side. The number of guns employed on the barrage was 192 and on concentrations 168. This gave one 25-pr per 21 yds of the barrage, excluding the concentrations in front of it. The average rate of fire was 2 r.p.g. per min. As before, the attack was preceded by concentrations of all available guns on hostile btys.

The barrage was very successful and the infantry gained their objectives with comparatively few casualties. As in the first attack the enemy artillery was to all intents silenced.

(iii) In the subsidiary attack carried out by 13 Corps in the South on the night 23/24 Oct, support was by a mixture of barrage and concentrations preceded as in 30 Corps by concentrations on enemy btys and located A/Tk guns for 30 mins. No med arty was available. The operation of mine lifting took a long time owing to heavy opposition and at one period enemy artillery opened very heavy fire. A repetition of the original C.B. programme was ordered and the effect was excellent.

(iv) Several smaller attacks were carried out, and were generally supported by concentrations. In a night attack by 51 Div, supported primarily by the Arty of 10 Corps, there was no clearly defined start line, and the enemy was some distance away. In order to ensure getting the infantry up to the barrage, the opening line (1,500 yds in front of the inf) was fired at a slow rate of fire (half "very slow") for 55 mins. The inf concerned are convinced of the value of this fire as a means of getting troops under these conditions formed up in the right place facing in the right direction. On another occasion a similar type of fire was used in 13 corps, with complete success.

It is considered that in desert warfare, the barrage should always pause on the opening line long enough to ensure that the infantry have time to close up to it. It should also pause for a considerable time a few hundred yards beyond the final objective thus indicating the objective to any infantry who may have been temporarily held up.

(v) The chief artillery lesson to be deduced from these series of successful attacks against very strongly fortified positions - some admittedly not held in great strength, others held by troops, a large proportion of whom were Italians of a not very high category, but some, particularly on the front of attack, held entirely by determined and experienced German infantry - is the value of centralised control of artillery and that a really heavy concentration of artillery fire put down on a carefully thought out plan will so neutralise the enemy, that infantry, unsupported by armour, will be able to gain their objectives without undue casualties. This deduction merely confirms what is

already known, but none the less should be noted as the need for adequate artillery support is so frequently overlooked in training and in operations. Nearly all prisoners captured speak of the great effect of our artillery fire. Unfortunately no occasion arose when the action of armour was supported by heavy concentrations of artillery fire.

(vi) Another lesson is that the reports of our patrols as to the position of enemy localities can rarely be accepted in the desert unless confirmed by air photos. Their reports were, however, invaluable in deciding whether known localities were or were not occupied at night. Fixing the correct targets for concentrations is often very difficult and it was found that air photos plus the very accurate information recorded by the C.B. sections were the best sources of fact.

(vii) It will be noted that the average rate of fire during the support for the two main attacks was only 2 r.p.g. per min, though at times the rate was considerably greater. This rate may seem slow, but it must be remembered that both attacks were made by night, went to a depth of 4,000 yds and that the initial attack took 3 hours to which must be added some  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour of counter battery fire. In the attack by troops under command of the N.Z. Div the rate of fire was to some extent limited by the time available in which to bring forward ammunition. Observers commented on the accuracy of the fire, and it is considered that this was to a great extent due to the rate of fire not being excessive for laying by night and for the time during which it had to be continued. Moreover a comparatively slow rate of fire enables individual detachments and guns to be rested, guns in turn to be maintained, and does not cause overheating.

## 2. The effect of Field and Medium Arty fire on Tanks.

(i) When enemy tanks in any number, but not too dispersed, were seen from O.Ps. concentrations of arty fire were generally put down on them. Opinions differ as to the extent of damage caused to enemy tanks by such concentrations. This is to some extent due to the fact that the target was quickly obscured by dust, and that there were frequently derelict tanks already in the area. In one case a regimental concentration was fired on some 30 enemy tanks with the result, it is alleged, that 5 were set on fire, a few others were stopped and the remainder withdrew. In another case the fire of two div artys plus 3 med regts was concentrated on a map square in which some 60 tanks of 21 Panzer Div were temporarily halted. The casualties to tanks are unknown but it is thought several were hit and the division put up a smoke screen and disappeared. On a third occasion a med regt fired a regimental concentration on to 15 to 20 enemy tanks. After the dust had cleared, 5 were seen to be on fire and it is thought others were being towed away. Probably in many cases no tanks were destroyed or even hit, but as far as is known on every occasion on which a heavy concentration of arty fire was put down on to enemy tanks, they either withdrew or changed direction. Such fire invariably makes the enemy tanks close down, and also prevents them refuelling and replenishing ammunition in the forward area before launching an attack, a proceeding they have carried out in the past.

(ii) There seems no doubt that a direct hit from a med arty shell will knock out a tank at any range and cases are quoted of this occurring at 9,000 yds and in a previous battle at 17,000 yds. A 25-pr H.E. at long ranges only knocks out the tank if it hits the track or if it lands on top of the tank where the armour is thin, when it penetrates and generally sets the tank on fire. A near miss is not effective, and the fact remains that the chances of obtaining direct hits with any form of indirect firing must be small.

(iii) The conclusion is that 25-pr, at anything but short ranges is not a good killer of tanks but that heavy concentrations are effective in disorganising enemy tank formations and upsetting their plans. The effectiveness of such concentrations is increased if the fire of mediums can be included. Casualties to enemy tanks must depend on the extent of their dispersion - the greater the dispersion the less the probable casualties.

(iv) Firing direct in its secondary role a troop of 25-prs can knock out tanks at short ranges, but as an A/Tk weapon a 25-pr is far inferior to the 6-pr.

### 3. Regimental and Divisional Artillery Concentrations

(i) Apart from concentrations of Artillery fire on enemy tanks, and concentrations which formed part of fire plans, concentrations were put down on other targets such as enemy M.T. and A/Tk guns, nearly always with good effect. It is considered that such concentrations should be fired with a zero hour, which is time of arrival of shell on target. The effect of a large number of shells arriving simultaneously from different directions is then very great. On three occasions when subjected to this type of fire, crews of enemy tanks were seen to jump from their tanks and run away.

(ii) The technique of putting down concentrations varied. In one Corps a standard concentration, both for fd and med regts known as a "stonk" was evolved, in which the fire of btys and regts was distributed over an area of definite size on a pre-conceived plan based on one map reference and the bearing of the front of the concentration. In other cases the fire of btys or regts was super-imposed on a single map reference, and in the case of regimental concentrations moved from place to place in a large target area. Both methods should be understood. Each is suited to a definite type of target. Standard ammunition expenditure as for "LL" calls was generally used. The basis of all concentrations was a map reference which could sometimes be taken from the map, but was more often found by preliminary registration. The time allowed from the giving of orders by the C.R.A. to zero hour was usually about 10 minutes but regts were usually ready within five minutes.

(iii) In one div at least fifty divisional concentrations are said to have been fired, and in addition each regt fired between 20 and 40 regimental concentrations during the battle. The experience of the battle confirms the great effect of heavy concentrations of artillery fire. They can only be fired if communications are good, when the command of artillery is centralised, and, in desert warfare, when all regts are surveyed in. (Comment - This applies in all types of warfare).

### 4. Command of Artillery and the passage of orders

(i) The need to be able to arrange quickly for heavy concentrations of arty fire on to targets of a fleeting nature, and to make and issue to the guns, fire plans which nearly always involved more than one div arty, was very apparent throughout the battle. The problem is one of command and communications. In 30 Corps during the various phases of the battle the artillery was either centralised under the C.C.R.A. or under Cs.R.A.

In attacks involving only one Div the gunner part of the fire plan was made by the C.R.A. concerned, even though an additional Div Arty was placed at his disposal. The C.C.R.A. retained command of the bulk of the Corps Arty and received details of the fire required from the C.R.A. concerned. He assisted when necessary by providing additional clerical staff.

It is considered that this is the best system.

(ii) In the 30 Corps battle, the whole problem of the control of the arty was exceedingly complicated since both 10 and 30 Corps Arty were deployed in the same area facing the salient, which was in due course to become the gap through which 10 Corps would pass and a proportion of the guns of 10 Corps assisted in 30 Corps attacks. Throughout the battle confusion and friction was only avoided by the closest liaison between the two C.Cs.R.A. and there is no doubt that in any battle of this type the closest touch is also necessary between a C.C.R.A. and Cs.R.A. When it so happened that Cs.R.A. were located close together the advantage was at once apparent, and in more than one case it enabled the fire of the bulk of two div artys to be concentrated on important targets of a fleeting nature.

(iii) Command of 30 Corps, and of its Divs, was generally exercised by the Commander from a small Tactical H.Q. well forward. During much of the battle it was essential that the C.C.R.A. and Cs.R.A. should be forward at these H.Qs, but Commanders would not allow them to have their staffs and clerks with them, as to do so would have made the H.Qs. unduly large. If a fire plan has to be got out at a time when H.Q. R.A. is at the Main H.Q., it is essential for the C.C.R.A. or C.R.A. concerned to rejoin his H.Q. as only by so doing will he have the staff, communications, and facilities for producing the detailed orders and tracings which are necessary. This practice was followed by the C.C.R.A. 30 Corps. In the case of one C.R.A. who himself got out a fire plan without an adequate staff from his Div Tac H.Q., great difficulties were encountered, the plan was only ready just in time, and the C.R.A., who became involved in minute details, was physically and mentally exhausted by the process. When a C.C.R.A. is forward away from his own R.A. H.Q. he must have with him a W/T set.

(iv) The need for liaison officers from regts with R.A. H.Qs and at times from Div Artys with Cs.C.R.A. was most apparent throughout the operations. In many cases, particularly in armd divs, it was impossible to bring up wire laying vehicles, or indeed to maintain any wires laid owing to the great congestion of tanks, guns and vehicles in the gap that was being made. Details of fire plans can not normally be sent by wireless and orders could only be sent by liaison officers who have frequently to undertake against time difficult cross country journeys often near partially uncharted minefields, in order to get the orders to regts and btys. The time taken often necessitated simple fire plans, and the fact that no guns failed to get their orders can only be attributed to Cs.C.R.A. and Cs.R.A. insisting on the duties of L.Os. being carried out by determined, resourceful and highly trained officers. To use inexperienced officers is to risk the complete breakdown of the fire plan.

##### 5. Counter Battery Fire

(i) All the three med regts available were concentrated in the north under the CCRA 30 Corps. At all times a proportion of the fd arty was allotted to C.B. tasks. To control the med arty group and run the C.B. organisation, a C.O. was taken from one of the med regts to perform the duties of C.C.M.A., and special buried telephone lines were provided. The necessity for such an appointment was obvious during the battle, without such a commander, the C.C.R.A. would have been seriously overloaded, and the efficiency of the C.B. measures would have suffered.

(ii) Before the attack the enemy was believed to have in action 200 fd guns, 40 med guns, and 14 heavy guns which could bear on the front of the main attack. It was necessary that the position of these guns should be known, and that nothing should be done which might cause any of them to move at the last moment. Consequently, on the northern part of the front, for over two weeks prior to the attack, a silent C.B. policy was adopted, except for certain destructive shoots against particularly active btys, and neutralisation shoots against roving guns. Whilst many hostile btys were manned by Italians, who are perhaps comparatively easily neutralised, a proportion were manned by Germans. Since it was impossible to neutralise all the enemy guns during the attack, the policy of employing all available artillery on C.B. immediately prior to zero hour was adopted. In 30 Corps during this period, 25 known hostile btys within range were subjected to really heavy concentrations of up to 20 to 1 and in no case of less than 10 to 1, whilst during the attack more normal concentrations were again put down for short periods on selected btys. Some doubt was expressed by inf comds as to the wisdom of C.B. fire immediately before zero hour, but they are now satisfied that it had no evil effects on surprise. Its value lay in the really heavy concentrations that were possible, and it was certainly successful as the enemy arty though active between attacks was practically silent during attacks.

(iii) The main source of information was air photos, which are discussed in para 6 below. Next in importance comes flash spotting, for which special towers were built. Flash spotting was carried forward and towers moved up throughout the battle. All hostile btys located by

Flash spotters were immediately bombarded. Apart from its value in giving a good many locations, flash spotting is invaluable at night in showing which hostile btys are active, and its use for this purpose in conjunction with neutralising fire acted as a definite deterrent on the enemy's firing at all by night. The flash spotting towers were of definite value as landmarks, and during the first few days of the battle they were illuminated at night. Sound rangers, who did useful work prior to the attack, were not used during the period of active operations.

(iv) In spite of the fact that we had a very considerable measure of air superiority, the R.A.F. were not prepared to send out Arty/R without the escort of about a sqn of fighters. No Arty/R was used during the period of preparations. An Arty/R sortie was sent out on three successive days when much of the enemy's arty had been forced to move and many new locations were unknown. Though successful shoots against enemy tanks and M.T. were carried out, no hostile btys were spotted. As these sorties failed to locate enemy guns, and entailed using many fighters defensively instead of offensively, and as air photos eventually produced the bulk of the information required, the use of Arty/R was discontinued. Arty/R therefore played no useful part in the battle. Had the A.C. sqns been equipped with aircraft with a better performance than those of the enemy, such as Mustangs, the situation might have been different.

(v) C.B. shoots included concentrations against enemy A/Tk guns, often easily located from air photos largely because the German usually sites an A/Tk gun, a mortar and a heavy M.G. close together in a group.

(vi) The congestion of guns, tanks and vehicles in the base of the gap can only have escaped heavy casualties because of our great air superiority, and because, probably due to difficulties in bringing forward supplies of amm, but also to the effect of our C.B. measures, hostile arty fire was never really heavy. The lessons are that over-congestion can and must be risked when a considerable measure of air superiority has been obtained, but that under such conditions effective C.B. fire is most important.

(vii) Apart from the apparent success of the heavy concentrations immediately prior to the attacks, it is of interest to note that the experience of the battle confirmed the official teaching that C.B. programmes take a long time to work out. One programme, which included concentrations for med arty on to defended localities, took seven hours to compile. It was usually necessary to issue the programme well in advance, and amend it up to the last minute as C.B. information came in.

(viii) It should be noted that in this battle, the enemy arty was most reluctant to leave its well-prepared battle positions, unless forced to do so by the advance of our infantry. The enemy's own C.B. work was poor and few casualties were caused by enemy shelling when our arty was properly under cover. At no time did he put down the concentrated fire of several of his btys on one of ours, his C.B. fire being limited to a few salvos from one bty.

(ix) There is no doubt that our C.B. measures were most successful, and it is considered that they played a large part in the enemy's defeat. No one with experience of this battle now doubts the value of this type of fire, or that the considerable quantity of ammunition used was well expended.

C.B. fire based on guess work or inaccurate information is, however, useless and the results achieved were only obtained after the C.B. organization had been fully developed and practised, and after much hard and careful work by experienced officers.

## 6. British versus enemy Artillery

There is no doubt that even before the battle, our arty had achieved a moral superiority over the enemy's arty, partly due, no doubt, to the enemy's difficulties of ammunition supply, though he had a practically unlimited supply of 25-pr amm and a number of our guns from which to fire it, and he left behind a lot of his own ammunition during his subsequent



retreat. The enemy put up flash spotting towers and we destroyed them, he hardly fired at ours, though he had them marked on his maps, even with our names. The enemy was reluctant to fire at night: we fired whenever we wished. Our C.B. measures were most effective, the enemy's singularly indifferent.

## 7. Value of Air Photographs

(i) The value of vertical air photos prior to and throughout the battle was immense. Practically all C.B. locations and the exact whereabouts of enemy defended localities were based on air photos, though in the latter case the information was taken from overprinted maps prepared from photos prior to the battle by an R.E. Photo Survey Section. In a desert of the type in which the battle was fought, oblique photos are of no use to the gunner as it is impossible to co-relate the photo with the ground.

(ii) The technique for obtaining the co-ordinates of hostile btys in the conditions obtaining in the desert, where there is little detail to put on maps is of considerable importance. Before the battle a photo plot had been gradually built up covering the whole battle area. As the photos, taken from time to time, generally by Tac/R were at various scales, with varying and often excessive tilt, and in the first instance with incomplete overlap, this process took many weeks. Once done, however, it was comparatively simple by comparing the photos taken from day to day during the battle with the original photo plot to fix the co-ordinates of fresh hostile btys seen on new photos. The whole of the technical work involved was carried out by an R.E. Survey Section, located at the (A.C.) Wing H.Q.

(iii) Though this worked excellently in the recent operations, when ample time for preparation was available, it is clear that in mobile operations in a desert country, suitable aircraft should be made available to take survey photographs at the correct scale and with the necessary overlap, of any likely battlefield some days before it is reached. The value of such photos in any battle will far outweigh the loss of flying time during which the aircraft are diverted from their normal role.

(iv) The special arrangements, that it was found necessary to make some time before the battle in order to obtain C.B. information quickly from new air photos, are also of interest. A C.B. section consisting of one trained C.B. officer and two clerks was established at the H.Q. of the R.A.F. Army Co-operation Wing. Here it was in close touch with the A.L.O. and the R.E. Photo Survey Section, and the personnel could do their detailed examination of photos in comparative comfort, including the use of electric light by night. This C.B. Section had copies of all gridded mosaics, and received all C.B. Intelligence reports, H.B. lists and demands for new photos direct from Corps C.B.Os. In conditions of static warfare when telephonic communications were available, the officer having examined a photo could obtain the co-ordinates of a new bty and phone them to the Corps C.B. office. Before the battle the photo printing facilities of the R.A.F. were limited and the time taken, between photos being taken and reports being received by the C.B.O. at Corps, was usually about 36 hours. After the battle started the printing facilities were increased and special copies of prints were in the hands of the C.B. section 4 - 5 hours after the plane had landed. On 1 Nov photos were taken at 1000 hrs and a detailed interpretation together with the co-ordinates of 19 new hostile bty positions were received by the Corps by 2200 hrs, i.e. 12 hrs later. Before these special arrangements were made, prints reached the Corps C.B.Os two or three days out of date.

## 8. Medium Artillery

(i) Much more med artillery could profitably have been used, not only because its range is longer than that of fd arty, but because its neutralising effect is far greater. As resources were limited to three regts, they were all used in support of the main attack in the north. Of the three med regts, two were mixed regts each of one bty of 4.5 guns and one of 5.5 guns and the third was entirely 4.5 guns.

The effect of the much greater shell power of the 5.5 is appreciated, but with no heavy arty available, the extra range of the 4.5 was found to be invaluable, as they alone could reach the majority of the enemy's heavy guns, but some of these batteries were out of range. For this theatre of war the mixed regt is recommended.

(ii) In the first attack, C.B. fire was kept up after the normal fire plan was finished and the med arty programme lasted for 5½ hrs, but the guns were firing more or less continually for 20 hrs, and the ammunition expenditure during the first 24 hrs was over 300 r.p.g. To avoid exhaustion detachments were made up with drivers before the battle started to 12 or 13 men. Generally detachments were never exhausted, though they suffered considerably from lack of sleep. On the fourth night in particular lack of sleep was really felt, and the men slept in relays within 10 yds of guns firing, and even enemy bombing failed to wake them.

(iii) Experience prior to this battle has always shown that med arty is a favourite target for enemy Stukas. In consequence troops of med arty are always deployed in a diamond or square formation with guns from 100 to 150 yds apart. When so deployed the troop is no longer a worth while target. This dispersion makes the maintenance and supply of Tannoys (system of communication for passing orders, with loud speakers at guns) very important.

(iv) Med guns lose muzzle velocity quickly, and as a result of the experience gained, it is considered that they should be calibrated before every battle, and every third day during battle.

(v) After the first night of the battle, the average number of guns per bty in action was seven 4.5" and five 5.5". The chief cause of guns going out of action was the need to adjust the packings in buffers.

#### 9. Anti-Tank Artillery

(i) In spite of the number of A/Tk guns now available within the divs there were several demands for reinforcements of A/Tk artillery, but this was only necessary because of the long flanks of the gap which had to be protected, in addition to the front, during periods of re-organisation. The enemy made several counter attacks with tanks, and a certain number of guns were temporarily lost through being overrun. In the case of one Bn this was due to running out of ammunition, which is thought to be due to the A/Tk guns being fired in moonlight, which is bound to be expensive in ammunition, and to opening fire at too long ranges. In other cases the cause is not yet known, but there is no evidence to suggest that it is due to the inability of the 6-pr, properly sited, to knock out any enemy tank. The 6-pr is a most effective weapon. A case occurred where a 6-pr firing at a range of 150 yds knocked out two German Mk III tanks, halted side by side, with one round. The need to get A/Tk guns forward in attack was illustrated by a reverse to the Fighting French, who were easily driven back after a successful advance by a few light tanks, as largely owing to the difficult nature of the ground, they had failed to get their A/Tk guns forward.

(ii) In the phase of the battle under review, the battlefield was not dominated by the tanks on either side, and both we and the enemy lost many tanks with no gain in ground, or without inflicting material casualties on unarmoured troops. It would seem that the anti-tank gun properly used in adequate numbers, unless neutralised by artillery fire, is the master of the tank which is very reluctant to advance in face of its fire.

(iii) Great difficulty was experienced in the co-ordination of the siting of A/Tk guns. Infantry A/Tk guns are usually deployed on a Coy or Platoon basis, and considerable readjustment is necessary after deployment. There is however within the inf bde no special co-ordinating authority to do this, and no one officer with whom the C.O. of the anti-tank regt can deal. The task of the A/Tk regt commander may thus become impossible, and the best layout was seldom obtained. In one

armoured div it was found necessary to attach to the lorried inf bde a senior R.A. officer whose duty was to co-ordinate the inf A/Tk guns. Possibly an officer with these duties should be appointed to all inf bde H.Qs. He would occupy much the same position as the Bde M.G. officer did in the past.

#### 10. Measures to deal with Enemy Anti-Tank guns

The methods of dealing with the enemy anti-tank guns met with varying success during the battle. In cases where such guns had been in action for some time, and had been located on air photos, counter battery concentrations were generally successful. As the enemy's position was being gradually penetrated, the enemy was very quick in building up in front of our penetration new anti-tank gun screens. The presence of such guns only became known when our tanks moved forward and they checked our further advance. There was then a tendency for the tank units to expect the gunner to destroy these guns. This was generally a difficult, and often impossible, task as the ground never gave enough command to allow of their accurate location, and it was only when enemy guns were ill-concealed that they were destroyed, or in some cases forced to withdraw, by observed fire. In the infantry attacks, some A/Tk guns were hit by the barrage or concentrations, and all guns were invariably overrun by the infantry without difficulty. General Von Thoma, Commander of the Afrika Korps, stated after he had been captured that he attributed his defeat more than anything else to the destruction of over 50 of his A/Tk guns by our arty fire. On few, if any, occasions did armoured divs attempt to advance under a pre-arranged fire plan, such as those which were so successful in the purely infantry attacks, nor was smoke asked for, or used. It would seem that if armoured divs are to act as more than weapons of pursuit, and are to get forward in face of even hastily organised and weak A/Tk gun opposition, they must study the use of smoke and pre-arranged fire plans consisting of heavy concentrations of arty fire, designed to neutralise the enemy detachments whilst the tanks either alone or in co-operation with the infantry of armoured divs move forward to positions from which they can themselves neutralise the detachments with M.G. fire prior to and whilst closing with the guns.

#### 11. Anti-Aircraft Artillery

(i) The handling of divisional Lt. A.A. Arty is peculiar in a featureless desert in that btys are normally sited to protect definite units or formations, rather than as in a European theatre of war to protect defiles through which many units or formations may be passing. In the pursuit, which occurred after the battle, this custom led to a reluctance on the part of subordinate formations to leave what they regarded as their own A.A. to protect the Sollum Pass, which was in continual use and required continuous protection.

(ii) Heavy A.A. was retained under the command of Army. During the battle a bty was profitably sited well forward in the battle area, and brought down several enemy aircraft.

(iii) The presence in the forward area of several Lt A.A. btys recently arrived from home with little experience drew attention to the need for the strictest discipline in the control of A.A. fire. There was a tendency for Bofors guns to waste ammunition on aircraft well out of range and even to fire at our own aircraft, and it was noticeable that both these habits were most infectious.

(iv) Within 30 Corps, the control of A.A. Arty was centralised under the C.C.R.A., and an A.A. staff officer was appointed for the period of the battle, by taking an officer from an A.A. regt. He was found useful, but the need for such an officer permanently on a C.C.R.A.'s staff in this theatre of war cannot be judged from the experiences of this battle which was initially of a static nature and passed suddenly to a phase of extreme mobility when decentralisation of A.A. resources to divs became essential.

## 12. Survey

(i) The value of accurate survey in this battle can hardly be overstressed. It was essential to success. Not only did the success of our C.B. measures depend on it, but in a type of country where there are few easily recognised features, it is often exceedingly difficult if not impossible to identify on the ground known enemy localities for the purpose of registration, or to locate on the map localities seen by ground observation. Apart from photos of actual defences, features which can be seen can however be roughly fixed by shooting, always provided that the bty concerned is on the permanent grid. The only rule was for all btys to be on the permanent grid at the earliest possible moment, particularly as only then are photos of real value.

(ii) There were several acute differences of opinion between formations regarding the location of their leading troops. In some cases locations differed by 1000 yards. Units claimed to have captured an objective when they were still over 1,000 yds short of it. There were only two certain methods of deciding where troops were. One by shooting on to an adjacent feature and deducing the co-ordinates, or two by the troop concerned firing at dusk two or three flares which were resected by the flash spotters. The accuracy and finality of these methods is not yet generally recognised by the other arms.

## 13. Air Burst Fuzes

A reasonable number of 210 fuzes was available. These fuzes were supplied for air burst ranging and for this purpose they were invaluable, both prior to and during the battle. Air burst ranging was found to be the best answer to the problem of bringing accurate fire to bear on hostile btys whose exact co-ordinates had been obtained from air photos.

Some of these fuzes were however used for their man killing effect with H.E. against known 88 mm A/Tk guns, and important entrenched localities (known to be strongly held) which were to be attacked. After such attacks dead, who it is considered can only have been killed by air burst H.E., were found at the bottom of slit trenches. The American S.P. 105 mm with which one regt is equipped, is provided with a proportion of time fuzes, and air burst H.E. was used against A/Tk gun detachments. In the opinion of observing officers, its neutralising effect was far quicker and more effective than that of H.E. burst on the ground. There is no doubt that H.E. burst in the air is very effective, and there is unquestionably a need for a time fuze to be made available in considerable quantities for all types of gun.

## 14. Ammunition Expenditure

For any major attack no restriction was placed on ammunition expenditure. The limiting factor was the ability of 2nd line and unit transport to dump what was required. For the initial attack ample time for preparation was available. The divs on the front of the main attack were never limited in amm, but after the first two days divs on the southern and central parts of the front in both Corps were limited to 40 r.p.g. per day.

The number of 25-prs in action during the battle was 834. The total number of 25-pr rounds fired in the Army during the 12 days 23/24 Oct to 4/5 Nov was over one million rounds. The average expenditure of 25-pr amm was 102 r.p.g. per day over that period. Further details in r.p.g. are given in Appendix 1. The med arty fired an average of 133 r.p.g. per day 4.5", and 157 r.p.g. per day 5.5" during the period. Exact figures are not at present available for expenditure of A/Tk amm but it is thought to have been in the nature of 2 r.p.g. per day for 6-pr, and 1 r.p.g. per day for 2-pr, in the northern sector. Many A/Tk guns did not fire. Bofors expenditure within divs, which was often excessive owing to regts recently arrived from home firing at aircraft out of range, is thought to have been about 14 r.p.g. per day.

(Sgd) S.C. Kirkman. Brigadier,  
B. R. A.  
Eighth Army.

24 Nov 42.

## APPENDIX 1.

Formation	No. of guns at start of battle before regrouping	<u>25-pr ammunition expenditure in rounds per gun</u>												Total expenditure in r.p.g.	Average daily expenditure in r.p.g.
		Oct								Nov					
		24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4		
10 Corps	192	28	49	33	80	106	49	95	137	34	309	38	85	1043	87
13 Corps	288	190	71	71	30	10	24	25	18	47	28	37	27	578	48
30 Corps	354	577	64	84	103	58	159	48	209	90	314	80	123	1909	159
Total 8 Army in r.p.g. per day	834	317	63	68	73	52	86	51	120	59	208	54	80	-	-
Total r.p.g. during period		317	380	448	521	573	659	710	830	889	1097	1151	1231	1231	-
Average expenditure per day over period		317	190	149	130	115	110	101	104	99	110	105	102	-	102

Notes: 1. The above figures are approximately correct.

2. The figures cannot be cross checked, as Regts were moved between Corps, and the total numbers of guns in each Corps varied.

3. The above figures do not agree exactly with 'Q' figures for ammunition issued, as before the battle Corps and Divs had accumulated small "private" dumps, which were expended during the first few days.

EIGHTH ARMY

Some Brief Notes for Senior Officers

on the

CONDUCT OF BATTLE.

INTRODUCTION

1. These notes deal with the conduct of battle and indicate certain points which are essential for success in any battle.  
When studying war it is essential for every officer to have firmly fixed in his mind the basic fundamentals on which everything depends; it is so easy to become involved in a mass of detail; we must first be clear as to the fundamentals on which all the detail is based.  
These fundamentals are set out below.
2. A thorough understanding of battle is essential before a commander can organise and conduct efficient training.  
A good training instruction is one which indicates clearly how the battle will be fought; subordinate commanders can then organise their training accordingly.  
These brief notes on the conduct of battle have therefore also a training value.

MORALE.

3. Morale is the big factor in war. Officers and other ranks have got to be imbued with that infectious optimism which comes from physical wellbeing; they must be brought to that stage of physical and mental fitness which will enable them to take on any enemy with complete confidence; they must be full of offensive eagerness and have the light of battle in their eyes.
4. In the end it is the initiative and fighting spirit of the regimental officers, and men in the ranks, that wins the battle.  
If this fighting spirit is absent then you fail, however good may be the higher leading.
5. The question of "surrender" must be clearly understood.  
No man who is unwounded, and has weapons and arm with which to continue fighting, must surrender to the enemy.  
If apparently surrounded and cut off, troops must quickly organise defensive localities and continue to hold out; by so doing they continue to embarrass the enemy, and the localities they hold will be of great use in the further development of our own operations.  
The situation may appear hopeless, but nothing is ever hopeless so long as troops have stout hearts, a high morale, and have weapons with which to fight.
6. A high morale, great determination, and "drive" are equally important in the higher ranks. Senior commanders who become depressed when things are not going well, and who lack the drive to get things done and the moral courage and resolution to see their plan through to the end, are useless in battle. They are, in fact, worse than useless - they are a menace - since any lack of moral courage, or any sign of wavering or hesitation, has very quick repercussions down below.  
It is when the issue hangs in the balance that resolution and courage are so necessary; it is easy to be optimistic when things are going well.
7. To win battles, therefore, you require an army in which the morale is right on the top line. The troops must have confidence in their commanders and they must have the light of battle in their eyes; if this is not so you can achieve nothing.

INTENTION AND PLAN.

8. A commander must be quite clear, before the operation starts, as to how he will fight the battle. His object, his intention, and his plan to achieve his intention, must be explained clearly to all commanders in his army right down to and including unit commanders; the very best results will be obtained if the army commander explains these things himself personally to all commanders in each corps in turn, emphasising the vital points.

Finally, the regimental officers and men in the ranks, must be told the relevant details, the part they are to play, and what is wanted.

If these things are done, every officer and man will enter the battle knowing how his actions will influence the whole battle, and he will then give of his best; the full fighting power of the army will thus be developed in such a way that nothing will be able to stand against it, and ultimate victory will be assured.

9. Having decided how he will fight the battle, a commander must pursue his object relentlessly. Many outside influences may attempt to suggest alternative methods, or generally to shake his confidence in his own plan and in his own ability to see it through. But he must have complete faith in his own plan and in his own ability; nothing short of this will be of any use. He must then impress his will on his opponent and make him dance to his own tune throughout.

10. If he starts with the initiative he must never lose it. If the enemy starts with the initiative, it must be wrested from him at the earliest opportunity.

Every commander must understand clearly that without the initiative he cannot win.

11. A strong will, and firm determination are essential if the victory is to be won. Indecision and hesitation are fatal.

GENERAL CONDUCT OF BATTLE OPERATIONS.

12. The whole essence of modern tactical methods is:

- Concentration of effort.
- Co-operation of all arms.
- Control.
- Simplicity.
- Speed of action.

13. In fluid fighting on ground giving scope for manoeuvre, certain important areas of dominating ground must be held as "pivots". These areas must be strongly held by inf, arty, and anti-tk guns and mines; they must be able to hold out against attack by armoured or unarmoured forces. Such areas form bases or "pivots" for offensive action by armoured and mobile forces and arty, supported by air striking forces. They must be able to hold out unaided.

14. It is armoured forces and arty, together with air power, that will enable a commander to confirm the victory. So long as armoured formations remain "in being" and can manoeuvre, they will dominate the battlefield.

But they must have freedom of action, and they must not be hampered by calls from the inf to assist in beating off armoured attack on inf localities; such localities must be made so strong that they can look after themselves. The armour must be free to manoeuvre, and will then operate so as to gain armoured superiority in the whole battle area; only in this way will the enemy be destroyed. The available armour must be used concentrated; on no account must it be so dispersed that it can be dealt with piecemeal by the enemy.

15. The garrisons of inf "pivots" must be active in assisting armoured and mobile forces operating in the vicinity. A definite force must be held available for offensive action outside the locality, especially by night.

16. Whatever may be the task of an armoured formation, its first step towards achieving success will nearly always be to secure ground which dominates the battle area. This ground is required as a firm base from which to operate offensively, and upon which subsequently to reorganise. It must be so important to the enemy that he will be forced to attack our armour on it, i.e., on ground of our own choosing.

On approaching such ground the enemy may attempt to establish a strong anti-tk front in order to hold off the armoured formation while he deals first with some other threat; he must be prevented from establishing such an anti-tk front, by means of arty and machine gun fire and by troops moved forward for the purpose. In this way the armoured formation will retain its power to manoeuvre as may be necessary.

#### CO-OPERATION.

17. I cannot emphasise too strongly that successful battle ops depends on the intimate cooperation of all arms, whether in armoured or unarmoured formations. Tanks alone are never the answer; no one arm, alone and unaided, can do any good in battle.

To get successful results:-

- The air forces,
- The tank,
- The gun,
- The anti-tank gun,
- The machine gun,
- The infantry,
- The engineers,

have all got to work in the closest cooperation.

A special necessity will be coordination of all measures for anti-tank defence; weapons, minefields, and ground must all be used with the most complete coordination.. Ground once secured must be organised for defence quickly, anti-tank guns brought into posn at once and protective minefields laid; reorganisation on objectives must be quick and good.

#### COMMAND AND CONTROL.

18. In very mobile and fluid ops the normal system of command in depth is quite unsuitable.

The commander who is fighting the battle - usually the corps or divisional commander - has got to be able to exercise full control, and to give quick decisions in sufficient time to influence the fast moving tactical battle. Enemy reactions to our moves and thrusts will be immediate, and a commander will be able to adjust his dispositions to the situation as it develops only if he is well forward.

Static parts of the battle area which have a purely holding role can look after themselves. The commander should move with his armoured and mobile forces, which are operating so as to gain that armoured superiority which alone can lead to the final destruction of the enemy.

The composition and positioning of small tactical HQ requires much study, and practice is essential by means of skeleton exercises and exercises with tps.

#### TACTICS OF THE OFFENSIVE BATTLE.

19. When two forces are in close contact and open flanks do not exist, the battle will resolve itself naturally into definite phases. These phases are set out below. The length of any phase will depend on a variety of factors the chief of which will be the strength, armament etc etc of the enemy. When resistance is slight, the phases may not be definite and distinct; each phase may merge into the next one quite quickly.



20. The "Break-in".

The first step will be to break in to the enemy posns. This initial break-in must be very carefully planned; tactical surprise is always possible and must be obtained. It is, in effect, a fight for posn and at the end of this phase, i.e., having broken in, you must be so positioned that you are well placed to begin at once the next phase: you must, in fact, have gained the tactical advantage as a result of the opening clash.

Armoured divisions should not be used for the "break-in" battle: they should be launched for the "break through".

21. The "Dog-fight".

- (a) This expression is used to describe the fighting that will develop after the break-in against a good and determined enemy. The ops will take the form of a hard and very bloody killing match, in which you aim to reduce the enemy's strength to a state which so cripples him that a final blow will cause the complete disintegration of the whole enemy army. This is the worst case; if such action is not necessary, and the ops take some easier form, then so much the better.
- (b) Following the "break-in" the initiative must be retained by developing a thrust at once on some axis which has been planned beforehand. The thrust line must be rapidly switched as opposition becomes too stiff, and another thrust be developed quickly on some other axis. A number of quick thrusts are thus delivered, all very powerful and very ruthless.
- (c) The various axes of ops, or thrusts, must be so related to each other that the enemy is led gradually to believe that your main subsequent effort is going to be in a certain area. Having thus deceived him you put in a really hard blow at some other point which is so selected that he will be thrown off his balance.
- (d) In order to operate in this way the army must be re-grouped after the initial "break-in", and subsequently as necessary so as to have reserves available for developing new axes of ops. It is not possible to develop a new thrust quickly unless reserves are available. Two or three inf bdes should always be in reserve available for such action. As reserves are used, fresh ones must be collected so that the tempo of the ops can be maintained.
- (e) Centralised control of the arty will be essential in fighting of this sort. The CCRA of the Corps must be placed in command of the arty of the corps; this will enable a very large concentration of guns to be brought to bear quickly to support a new thrust, and the success of the thrust will thus be assured. The quick development of a mass of arty to support a new thrust, or to deal with counter attacks, will depend mainly on communications and survey. A div arty should be able to put a div concentration on a given area in eight minutes: the effect of such a concentration on an enemy counter-attack, or other threat, will be devastating.
- (f) Given careful planning and staff work, tactical surprise can always be obtained in modern battle ops, both in the "break-in" battle and in subsequent thrusts.
- (g) The initiative having been gained in the break-in battle it must never be lost. This will necessitate thinking ahead, always having small reserves available, rapid development of fresh thrusts, and centralised control of the arty; if these things are done then the enemy can be made to dance to your tune all the time.
- (h) The use of armoured divisions in the dog fight is to be avoided. But cases may arise when they do become involved, e.g., if they are moved forward before the result of the "break-in" is accurately known.

22. The "Break-through".

When it becomes clear that the time for the "break-through" is approaching, armoured and mobile troops must be in reserve ready to be launched into enemy rear areas.

The final blow is then put in on an axis which is likely to give good results and where opposition is expected to be weak. (See para 21 (c)).

The penetration thus made must be rapidly developed and the armoured forces launched; these armoured forces must be prepared to fight their way forward into open country, should the inf attack not open the way completely.

23. The Pursuit.

If the previous phases have been wellplanned and carried out, the final launching of strong armoured forces into enemy rear areas should result in the complete disintegration of the whole enemy army.

The role of the armoured forces will be:-

- (a) To destroy the remaining enemy armoured formations.
- (b) To dislocate and destroy enemy HQ, communications and rear areas generally, and cut off his retreating columns.
- (c) By acting as above and by keeping the battle fluid, to create favourable opportunities for the higher commander to complete the victory by the combined action of his whole forces.

TACTICS OF THE DEFENSIVE BATTLE.

24. In this type of battle the enemy has the initiative to begin with the aim must be to wrest it from him at the earliest moment.

It must be remembered that good defences will not in themselves win the battle; if the enemy is allowed to retain the initiative and to develop his plans no defences, however strong, will prevent him from achieving his object.

Success in battle can be achieved only by vigorous offensive action. In the defensive battle the initiative can be regained only by the offensive action of reserves.

Without the initiative you cannot win.

25. A commander must be absolutely clear in his own mind as to how he will fight the defensive battle if attacked. On no account must he wait on events and then try and form a plan. His initial plan will aim at holding securely the key localities, and, by skillful use of arty and minefields, shepherding the enemy into certain areas where he will be subjected to fire from all sides and reduced eventually to a state where he is ripe for counter-attack.

26. Dominating ground must be held strongly by inf formations, with a strong anti-tank defence and centralised arty control. These inf "pivots" must be so strong that they will hold out unaided against any attack; inf garrisons must not rely on armoured units for help in beating off attacks.

The armour will then be free to manoeuvre for offensive action, and will be able to base its manoeuvre on securely held "pivots".

27. The armour must be kept concentrated. It must be so positioned that it can pass rapidly to offensive action. The area where it is located should be so selected that if the enemy decided to attack our armour he will have to do so on ground of its own choosing.

Armoured units in posn, in hull-down posns, must be covered by a good screen of anti-tank guns, and concentrated arty fire must be able to be brought down quickly against any enemy attack.

28. The general layout of dispositions must be carefully thought out, and be such that enemy thrusts can be dealt with without difficulty and will have no repercussions on your own plans. Never re-act to enemy thrusts or moves. A commander must pursue his own object and work continuously on his own plan; once he has to re-act to enemy thrusts he will begin to dance to the enemy tune, and once this happens he will be in trouble. The answer is balanced dispositions, so thought out that you can wrest the initiative from the enemy very soon after he has attacked.

29. As a general guide, dispositions must be such that the enemy will be forced to capture the whole position before he can achieve his object; successful enemy penetration in one area must not lead to the complete disintegration of the whole force.

This will necessitate a careful study of the ground so as to determine those key areas, the retention of which, in your possession, will frustrate all the enemy plans and will prevent him from achieving his object. There will always be at least one such area, and it must be organised a strong "keep" within the posn.

The defensive layout is then built up in accordance with the principles outlined in paras 25 to 28.

Arty control must be centralised so that corps or divisional concentrations can be put down quickly on dangerous enemy threats.

All ranks must understand that there will be NO WITHDRAWAL and NO SURRENDER. (See para 5).

30. The defensive battle will then resolve itself into certain definite phases, as is the case in the offensive battle. It will depend on the conditions of the problem and on the general situation as to whether the phases are long drawn out or short or merge quickly into each other.

These phases are set out below.

### 31. Period Before Attack.

This is the time to be very offensive on a limited scale so as to interfere with and upset enemy preparations for attack.

Concentrated arty fire on a definite plan will be very effective; heavy air bombing will shake the enemy morale. Large scale raids should be prepared against selected objectives, and these will be launched, under strong arty support, at the right moment.

A number of large scale raids launched on the same night that the enemy has planned to attack, and put in before such an attack will have good results.

### 32. The Enemy Attack.

This may overrun certain areas and effect penetration. It will be important to get early and accurate information of the fronts on which the enemy has put in his attacks, the location of the enemy flanks, and the direction of his main thrusts; this will enable the enemy intentions to be decided.

### 33. The "Holding" Battle.

Once the enemy intentions have become clear, plans must be made to hold him. The flanks, and especially the "hinges" of the penetration must be strengthened; arty should be used to shake the morale of his fwd tps and harass all avenues of approach; air forces must attack and hold off his reserves. Arty and air must be used in a concentrated form with repeat attacks against the most dangerous targets.

By these means you stabilise the battle and hold the enemy, while you prepare to deal hard blows with reserves so as to cause the enemy to re-act to your thrusts and thus lose the initiative. It will be necessary, very early in the holding battle, to re-group and to form reserves by drawing tps, incl arty, from those areas not seriously threatened. Constant re-grouping will be necessary if the holding battle is prolonged.

34. Regaining the Initiative.

This can be done only by offensive action. The aim will be to develop thrusts which force the enemy to re-act and will thus get him dancing to your tune. Such thrusts are often best delivered against the base of his penetration so as to close the gaps through which he has come and thus endanger his line of supply. Once you have discovered the sore point which causes him to re-act most violently, attack that point ruthlessly.

35. The Counter-offensive.

Once the enemy has been severely mauled in the "holding" battle and has begun to re-act to your thrusts, he will be ripe for a real heavy blow; this should be designed to throw him back in confusion and, if resources admit, to lead to his complete defeat.

The period when this blow can be delivered must be foreseen in advance, so that the necessary tps can be ready in reserve for the purpose. This final blow must have great punch behind it and be supported by the maximum arty and air support.

FOUR ESSENTIALS FOR SUCCESS IN BATTLE.

36. The Stage Management of battle operations.

It is difficult for a formation or unit to recover if it is put into the battle badly in the first instance. The stage management of the battle must be good from the very first start; the general layout of dispositions must be sound initially. If formations are launched into battle badly, and dispositions are not balanced, then the fighting tps are beset with difficulties from the start and fight at a disadvantage.

A good "kick-off" is essential, whether acting offensively or defensively; it is becoming increasingly difficult to rectify initial errors.

All ofrs must understand the stage management of battle, and the conduct of battle operations, on their own level.

37. Individual and Sub-unit Efficiency.

Once battle is joined the issue passes to the junior commander and his sub-unit. Success will now depend upon a high standard of initiative and skill on the part of the junior leaders, and on the tactical efficiency of units and sub-units.

It is essential that the standard of junior leadership, sub-unit efficiency, and individual efficiency of the soldier in field-craft and skill in the use of his weapons, should be very high; if it is NOT, we fail however good may be the higher leading.

38. Battle Drill.

(a) Battle drill must be highly developed. By means of this battle drill we ensure a common line of approach to the sub-unit battle problem, and a common procedure within the sub-unit.

The fact that every officer, NCO and man is taught this common procedure ensures full cooperation in the battle area, even when casualties necessitate changes in junior commanders and reinforcements to replace wastage.

(b) Battle drill must be our servant and NOT our master. A good system of battle drill, wisely used, will enable deployment to be speeded up, and the sub-unit to develop its maximum battle power quickly.

(c) Battle drill must not be regarded as peculiar to the inf, or as applicable only to the sub-unit. Every unit of every arm must develop a battle drill suitable to its own special needs. In units and formations the main points about battle drill will be the correct positioning of commanders, the composition and disposition of recon parties, and so on.

39. Morale and Toughness.

Unless morale is high, the tps are fit and tough, and all ranks have a good fighting spirit, you can achieve nothing (See paras 3, 4 & 5).

RISKS IN BATTLE.

40. It will be exceptional to win a battle without taking certain risks. It requires a nice judgment to decide what risks are legitimate and justifiable, and what risks are definitely not so. A commander who is not prepared to take a chance, and who tries to play for safety on all occasions, will never reap the full fruits of victory.

SOME GOLDEN RULES IN BATTLE.

41. Whenever the situation is vague and indefinite, and information of the enemy is scanty, act as follows:-

- (a) Reconnoitre widely for information.
- (b) Keep your main force concentrated.
- (c) Direct your force onto some ground which, if in your possession, will assist your further operations and give you the advantage over the enemy.

42. Strive always to gain and keep the initiative. Given the initiative you can make the enemy dance to your tune. Without the initiative you cannot win. You can gain, and keep, the initiative only by vigorous offensive action.

43. Whenever making plans in battle, always think in terms of two formations or units below you. This will prevent you giving a task which it is not possible to carry out. A Corps Commander should think in terms of Brigades. A divisional Commander should think in terms of Battalions. And so on.

44. Always operate from a firm base. <sup>more</sup> The/uncertain and indefinite the situation, the more necessary it is to obey this rule.

45. Be offensively minded. Even when forced on to the defensive, remember that a defended locality is merely a firm base from which to develop offensive action either by fire, or by movement, or both, as may be suitable.

46. Always maintain balanced dispositions so that there is never any need to re-act to enemy thrusts.

47. Always so plan and organise your operations that they are in keeping with the standard of training of your troops. Inf that are inexperienced and have had little training cannot carry out difficult manoeuvres; in such cases the arty must be used to help the inf by barrage fire, which, if they follow it closely, will lead them onto the objective.

FINAL ADVICE.

48. Finally I offer the following six bits of advice to any officer who may have to hold high command in the field:-

- (a) Have a good Chief of Staff.
- (b) Avoid being involved in detail. Details are the province of the staff; if the commander becomes involved in details he will have no time to think out the larger problems.
- (c) When the issue hangs in the balance radiate confidence in the plan and in the operations, even if inwardly you feel otherwise.
- (d) Pursue your object ruthlessly.
- (e) Never worry.
- (f) Never bellyache.

TRAINING.

49. The object of all training is success in battle. Therefore, all commanders must understand clearly the requirements of battle; then, and only then, will they be in a position to organise the proper training of their formations and units.

In fact, the approach to this is via the battle.

50. The preceding paragraphs outline the main fundamentals which will govern the conduct of our battle operations in Eighth Army. Training will be directed to ensuring that we can fight the battle in accordance with these fundamental principles.

(B.L. MONTGOMERY) General  
G.C.C.-in-C. Eighth Army.

December 1942.

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(B.L. MONTGOMERY) General  
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December 1942.

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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

SECRET

HQ MILNE FORCE  
27 Oct 42

Subject: LESSONS FROM RECENT OPS WESTERN DESERT.

7 Aust Inf Bde  
17 Aust Inf Bde  
18 Aust Inf Bde

Enclosed is one (1) copy of ALF SM 19767 "Notes on Main Lessons of Recent Ops in the Western Desert".

*Whitby Capt*  
for Col.  
GS MILNE FORCE.

18 Bde

M481

SECRET

Subject - WESTERN DESERT OPS

HQ NG FORCE,  
7 Nov 42.

6 AUST DIV	(19)	G(I)	GS1/02082
7 AUST DIV	(9)	I(a) & File	
32 U.S. DIV	(9)	Q	(5)
MILNE FORCE	(14)	ADPR	
HAT FORCE	(2)	CE	
DRAKE FORCE		CSO	
KANGA		ADV COMD GP GHQ	(3)
SIGS 1 AUST CORPS		ADV LHQ	(3)
SIGS NGF		NOIC	
2 AIR SC		ADV ECH 5 AF	(3)
CCRA		ANGAU	
CRE CORPS TPS		COSC	(3)
C in C		COIC	
GOC		WAR DIARY	(2)
BGS		BMB	
DA&QMG			
G(0)			

1. The att notes are fwded for general info.
2. They are to be distributed on a basis of one copy to bde comds in fwd areas and one copy to lt-cols in rear areas.

*John Manogue Lt Col*  
for Brig  
GS NG Force



## THE WESTERN DESERT

Once again the battle in the Western Desert has flared up, but this time at the bidding of the Allied Forces.

For some months past, comparative quiet reigned and apart from normal patrolling and occasional air clashes, little was heard of this theatre of operations.

However, during this time, considerable activity was going on behind the lines of the 8th Army. Reinforcements of Men, Guns, Tanks, etc were gradually moved up and into position in preparation for the big day. The force was a truly representative one, consisting of British, Australian, New Zealand, South African, Fighting French, Poles, Greeks and Indians.

The concentration of this force was completed without incident by dawn on 28 October. The offensive started at 2200 hrs on the same day after an intensive bombardment of enemy positions by no less than 800 guns. The Allied line stretched from EL ALAMEIN South West to DIER EL MUNASSIB and HIMEIMAT RIDGE on the Northern edge of the great QATTARA Depression, supposed to be impassable to vehicles and so acting as a natural flank protection. The main operation was undertaken by the 30 Corps in the Northern sector along the sea with the 9 Aust Div under command on the extreme right. Other units in this Corps being 51 Highland Division, 2 NZ Div and 1 SA Div and two armoured divs in support.

### PHASE I - ATTACHED

13 Corps in the Southern sector was, on a smaller scale, to support the main thrust. The Australians opened the attack with the 26 Bde advancing Northwards and 20 Bde West. The 24 Bde holding as firm base at EL EISA on the coast and assisting with comprehensive diversion. This operation left us with an open right flank. But the attack was successful after what was described as a difficult operation solidly and gallantly executed.

Other formations of 30 Corps were also successful on the left of the Australians in spite of having to contend with numerous enemy mine fields. Our armoured units had supported well and so the opening phase had started the machinery for the great drive.

In the South the 4 Ind Div, 50 and 44 British Divs were pushing forward slowly but surely with the Fighting French protecting the left flank to the South of HIMEIMAT, but encountering considerable trouble on mine fields.

At the close of this phase the position was as shown below -

PHASE II - ATTACHED

Numerous enemy counter attacks were launched against the 9 Aust Div front both from the South and West but in every case they were beaten off with considerable loss to the enemy. Many guns and much equipment was being collected and a steady stream of prisoners coming in. One lot remarking that their comrades could not stand up to our intensive barrage and had run away.

By 25 Oct our line had been firmly established with the 2 and 24 Arm'd Bdes working fairly well to the West in the central sector.

At 2230 hrs on 25 Oct 13 Corps in the South launched further attack Westwards, but once again mine fields held up our armoured units but numerous PWs were taken.

Our plan to attack further North with part of 9 Aust Div on 25 Oct could not be carried out on account of continuous enemy counter attacks. However, plans were made for another general offensive on the 26 Oct.

This attack was duly launched at midnight 25/26 Oct by 9 Aust Div attacking North once again and reaching their objective after inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. 51 British Div also pressed forward to the West for about 2000 yds. 10 Corps consisting mainly of armoured units and mobile infantry was moving forward from their position in rear of 30 Corps in an endeavour to break through when the opportunity

offered. There was continuous pressure by 50 Brit Div in the Southern Sector and numerous localities had been captured.

By 28 Oct, the position was in hand to such an extent that 10 Corps was relieved of the responsibility for security of local defence of positions captured in order to break through Westwards into less restricted areas. However, 1 Armd Div had not succeeded in effecting this.

One important feature known as KIDNEY RIDGE to the West of our Central Sector still remained as a threat to our movement Westwards and so 7 Mot Bde was sent to attack North and South of the position. This was successful. The N.Z. and S.A. Div had in the meantime gained some ground and advanced their FDL's to the enemy second mine field.

At this stage a general reorganization of the 30 Corps was in progress. The boundary with 13 Corps being approximately 24 miles from the Coast. The main enemy concentration was built up in the area of KIDNEY RIDGE opposite the centre of 30 Corps and included 15 and 21 Panzer Divs. A further thrust Northwards by 9 Aust Div using 2 bdes was partly successful. 24 Bde on the left reaching their objective but 26 Bde were held up on their FDL by mine fields. Immediately enemy counter attacks developed but were beaten off.

This left us on rather an irregular line. Starting from the right flank it ran NE to a point 29 thence SW and again turned South East where we were linked to the 51 Brit Div. The right flank being some distance from the Coast. A further attack enabled us to advance this right flank considerably and causing our position to be improved. In doing this one pocket of resistance was left in the rear of our lines. An attempt by some 30 tanks to get round our right flank to assist in extricating this pocket was partly successful - however the gap was mined behind them and our forces were attacking the enemy with considerable success.

Numerous instances occurred of enemy personnel being new to

the desert losing their way and as a result we captured one-cook complete with cookhouse and orderlies, a medical truck with three officers and equipment, while other of the enemy had been misinformed of the true situation, being told that our front had been driven back and so driving in themselves. They realised their error on being promptly captured.

Further South armoured units of the 10 Corps were steadily pushing through the gaps in the minefields and breaking through to harrass the enemy's mobile units which showed a reluctance to join battle.

The 2 NZ Div which had been in reserve took over on the left of the AIF with 51 Div South of them.

A general attack by these two divs was carried out Westward, and after penetrating more mine fields the objective was reached, a total distance of some 4000 yds. In order to assist this attack a considerable diversion was created in the South by 4 Ind Div and 50 Div while 44 Div patrolled forward to maintain contact with any possible enemy withdrawal in this area. They completely deceived enemy.

The Royals and 4 SAAC moved forward behind our Westwards thrust and broke through SW and NW respectively.

The latter struck serious opposition but the Royals penetrated to the enemy's rear where they caused considerable damage to dumps and supplies.

The enemy reacted strongly to these thrusts and counter attacked on the Aust front from NW and NE. However, our line held firm.

A composite 'Maori' Bn made an attack NW between the Aust and the 2 NZ Div linking up this sector while the 1 Armd Div 9 Armd Bde were fighting furiously well forward of our most Westerly positions where a bridgehead had been formed by the 2 NZ Div on the North and 51 Div on the Southern side and 1 Armd Div Western end. A further thrust SW by the 2 Squadrons of 51 Div gained important ground and they captured many prisoners.

By the 2 Nov our line was becoming firm from the 9 Aust Div in the North as far South as 50 Div. Further South still the 44 Div and 4 Ind Div were operating in a mobile role protecting the flanks and patrolling.

PHASE III -- ATTACHED

In all we had gained some 25 miles on the main front and the Royals were reported to have penetrated a further 25 miles behind the enemy. Signs during the night 2/3 Nov indicated that the enemy might be attempting to break contact and evacuate the area.

In the South opposite 13 Corps area sounds of explosions and movement of troops West indicated a withdrawal, and our troops were pushing Westwards. During all these operations our air forces co-operated to the fullest extent and on occasions made over 1000 sorties during one day.

Their bombing and strafing of enemy tanks assisted materially in staying off serious counter attacks which threatened our front.

Prisoners confirmed during this period numbered at least 4,000 with a high percentage of killed.

The latest information unconfirmed from the BBC states that at least 9,000 prisoners have been captured and approx 260 tanks with the enemy in full retreat.

In summing up, it appears that the success was due to the carefully laid plan in which our armoured units were spared as much as possible in the initial stages in an endeavour to wear down the enemy by a series of attacks delivered at strategic points and then allow the more mobile units to break through.

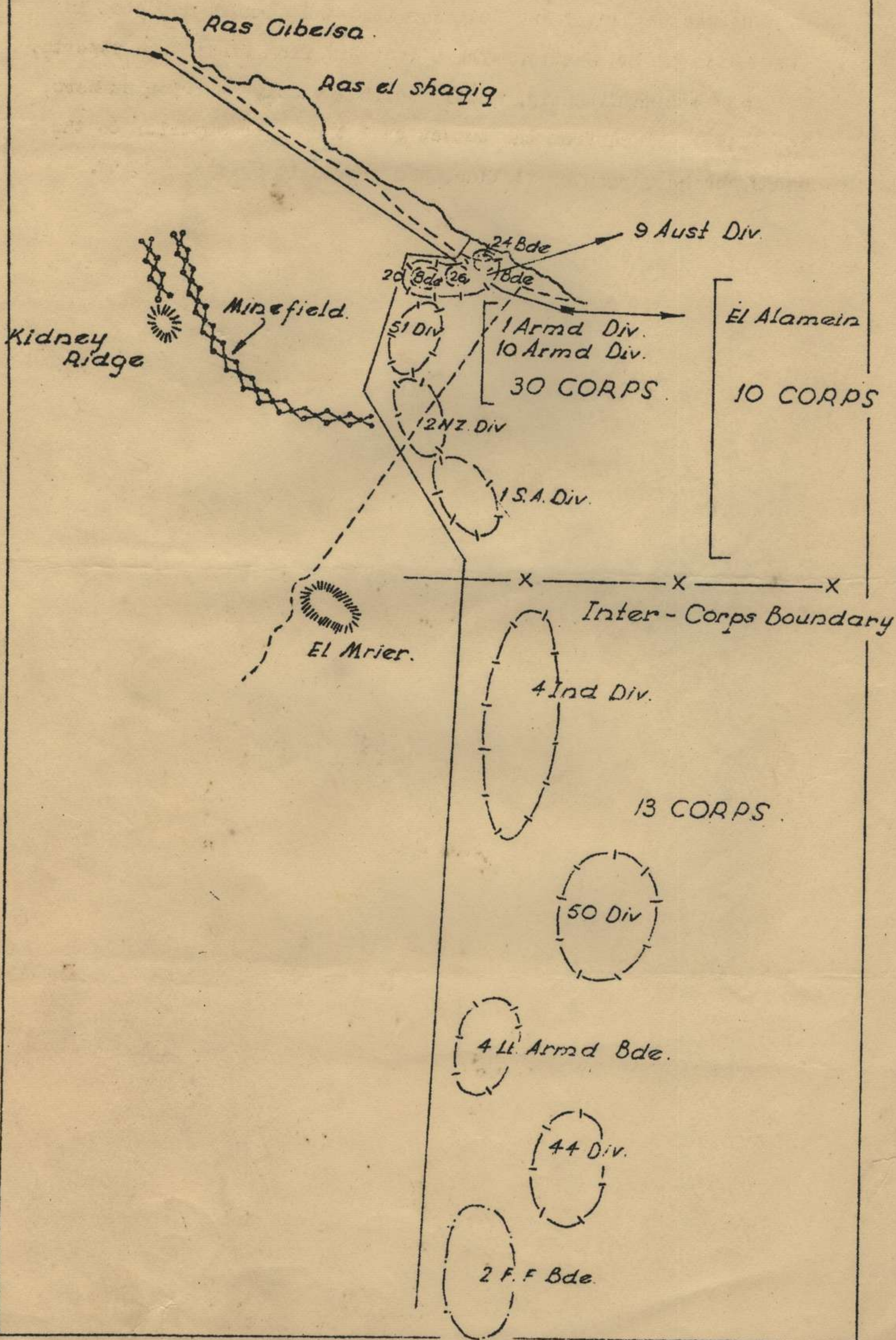
At the same time diversionary tactics and feints were successfully adopted to weaken the resistance.

In view of the extensive minefields laid by the enemy - in one instance on the Aust front no fewer than 5 major minefields had to be contended with, one being 300 yds in width - the progress was

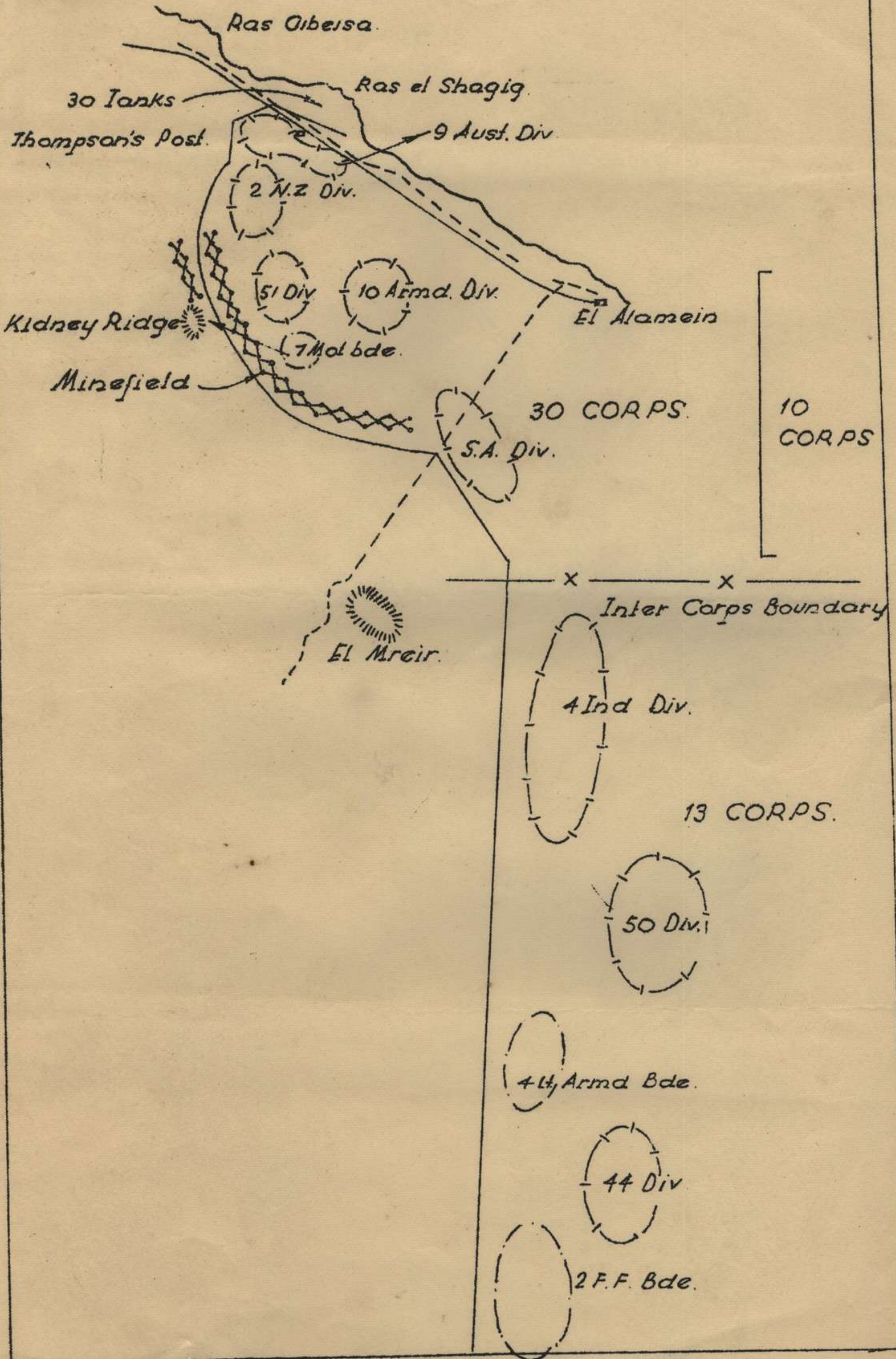
remarkably rapid. The enemy, on the other hand, did not appear to be capable of standing and fighting it out, with the result that fewer prisoners were taken than expected.

He was outfought and outgeneralled and soundly defeated in all phases of the battle. The 9 Aust Div, from first hand reports, has fought magnificently, mostly against vastly superior numbers, but they realised from the outset that they were superior to the enemy, be he German or Italian, and proved it by their feats.

PHASE 1

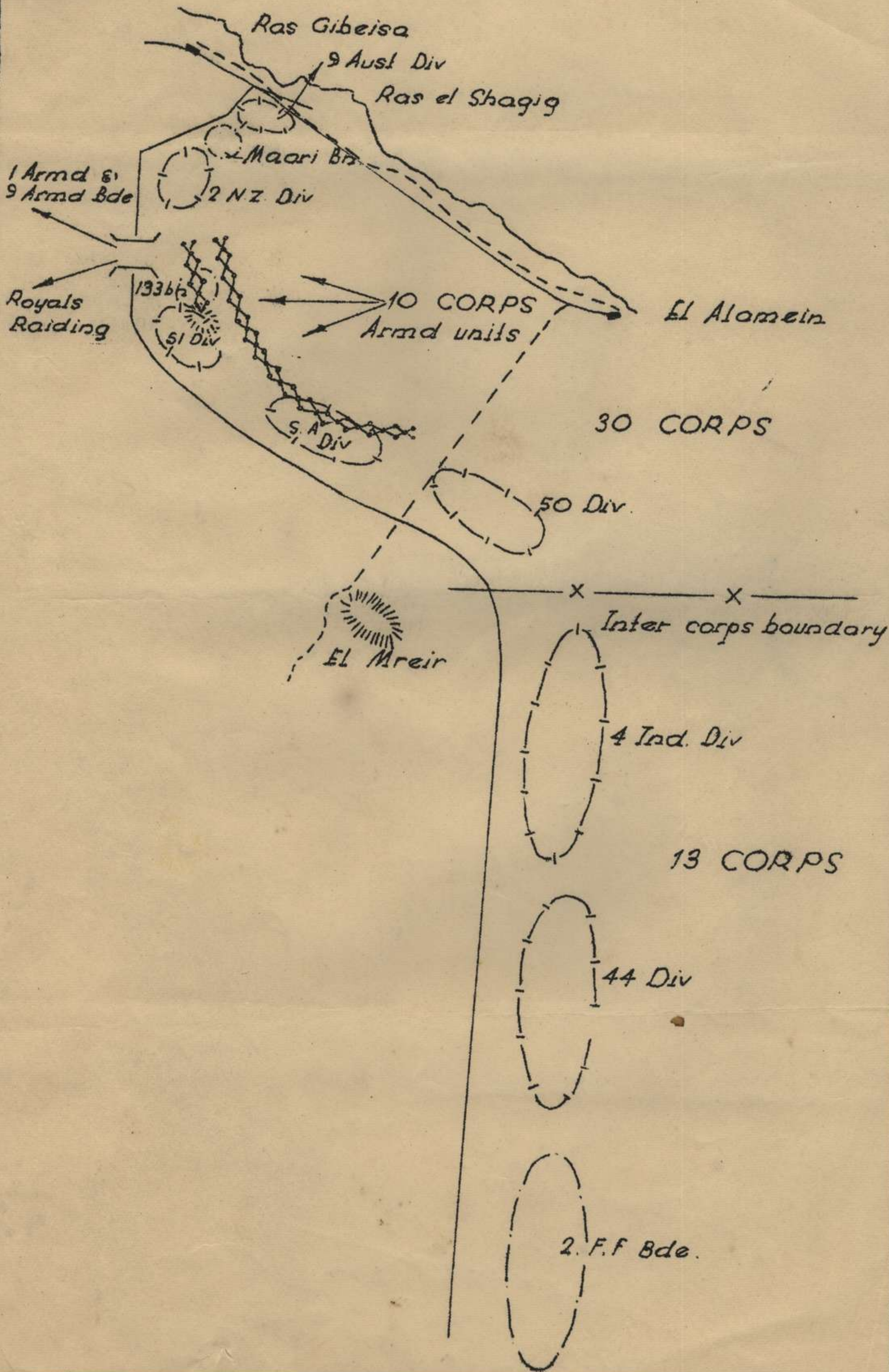


PHASE 2





: PHASE 3 :



ALLIED LAND FORCES IN S.W. PACIFIC AREA

SM 19767

L.H.Q.

15 Oct 42.

Adv. L.H.Q.	(10)	R.M.C. & Staff School	(4)
H.Q. First Aust. Army	(20)	(Australia)	
H.Q. Second Aust. Army	(10)	Regtl. Comdrs. School	
H.Q. 3 Aust. Corps	(16)	A.F.V. School	
H.Q. N.T. Force	(10)	S. of Arty. (Fd.)	
H.Q. New Guinea Force	(20)	S. of Arty. (A.A.)	
H.Q. Tasmania Force	(4)	S. of Arty (A.Tk.)	
H.Q. 1 Aust. Armd. Div.	(4)	S.M.E. (Fd.)	
H.Q. Q'land. L. of C. Area	(8)	S.M.E. (Frt. & A.A.)	
H.Q. N.S.W. L. of C. Area	(8)	S. of Sigs.	
H.Q. Vic. L. of C. Area	(8)	S.A.S.	
H.Q. S.A. L. of C. Area	(2)	O.T.S.	
H.Q. W.A. L. of C. Area	(2)	A.A.S.C. School	
H.Q. N.G. L. of C. Area	(2)	S. of M.I.	
		Guerilla Warfare School	
		R.A.A.F. School of Army	
		Co-operation.	
		J.O.O.T.S.	
		D.G. Public Relations.	

Copies for information to :- C. in C. (1); C.G.S. (10); L.G.A. (2); A.G. (1); Q.M.G. (1); M.G.O. (1); M.L.O. G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. (1); M.L.O. U.S.A.S.O.S. (1); H.Q. Allied Air Forces (1) Sec. Defence (1); Sec Army (1); Sec. Air Board (1).

NOTES ON MAIN LESSONS OF RECENT OPERATIONS IN THE WESTERN DESERT.

Copies of "Notes on Main Lessons from recent operations in the Western Desert" are issued herewith for issue down to Brigades.

*W. Mackay*

Lieutenant General,  
Chief of the General Staff.

If a commander is to exercise quick control he must be in a position to dispense with constant discussion with or reference to his subordinates. He must be able to decide what he is going to do and issue orders on the information immediately available. He cannot do this satisfactorily unless his information is accurate and up-to-date. What he requires is something in the nature of a running commentary. Detailed reports that are out-of-date long before they arrive are valueless. Frequent and regular information on the following points is required by all commanders:-

- Where the enemy is.
- What he consists of.
- What he is doing.
- Where our own troops are.
- What they intend to do.
- What troops are on the flanks and what they are doing.
- What losses have been inflicted on the enemy - rough estimate only.
- What losses have been suffered - personnel and material - rough estimate only.

The drill for passing back and collecting information regularly and quickly must be made perfect. It is a vital factor in connection with speed of control and action.

#### 4. Co-operation between armoured and motor brigade groups of armoured divisions

The armoured division is designed to operate as a whole. The armoured and motor brigade groups are complementary. They must be used in co-operation to support each other. If employed in separate tasks neither can give their full value.

The motor brigade group must remain mobile. If it is permanently allotted to the defence of one particular area the armoured brigade group will be tied to it with the result that the division as a whole will lose its freedom to manoeuvre and be unable to make full use of its mobility. This does NOT mean that the motor brigade group should not dig in or lay mines when forming a pivot for the armoured brigade group. It does, however, mean that a motor brigade group of an armoured division must at all times be able to move to fit in with the action of the rest of the division, and that it must not be allotted a task that necessitates its remaining permanently in the same position.

#### 5. Armoured action

- (a) The principle of fire and movement must be applied to armoured action.
- (b) When the enemy is attacking he must be brought to a halt by the fire of our anti-tank guns while the artillery concentrates upon the unarmoured portion of his force. A plan must then be made to attack him in flank or rear using the largest number of tanks possible.

supported by all available weapons. Artillery will be used either to provide concentrations of fire against the enemy supporting weapons, or to blind them by using smoke - M.M.Gs. and all available small arms must be used to neutralise enemy anti-tank guns, to force his tanks to remain closed down, and to prevent any movement of unarmoured troops with the tanks.

- (c) When we attack, the enemy must first be found and then engaged by the fully concentrated fire power of our artillery and anti-tank guns, while our tanks attack in full force against his flanks or rear. Grant Squadrons should not be allotted tasks in the pre-arranged fire plan. They should reserve their ammunition to support each other with fire against targets not destroyed by the artillery which open fire when the pre-arranged supporting fire or smoke has lifted. Squadrons and troops must then cover each other's advance to decisive range, one squadron or troop engaging the enemy while others take advantage of the effect of such fire on the enemy to advance, and so on until the enemy tanks can be engaged at decisive range or his position over-run.

A long drawn out fire fight with enemy tanks will never give decisive results and must be avoided. It is contrary to the principle of mobility which must be applied to all armoured action. Moreover it is an operation for which the Grant tank is particularly unsuited owing to the fact that the 75 mm gun cannot be used from a proper hull down position.

When it becomes necessary to hold the enemy by fire, tanks must be replaced by anti-tank guns and M.M.Gs., the tanks themselves being withdrawn under cover, but held in readiness to counter-attack if necessary. As early as possible the tanks must be withdrawn to reorganise for further offensive action.

If a situation arises in which our armoured forces are so reduced by losses and fatigue as to be incapable of offensive action it is essential to break off the engagement, and to resort to manoeuvre until the armoured forces can be got fit to resume offensive operations. Any other course will only lead to the final disintegration of armoured formations and units with no compensating advantages.

Definite rules are required for the reorganisation of armoured units that have become much reduced in strength as a result of battle casualties. Their preparation is in hand. Pending their publication units and formations must ensure that all personnel becoming surplus to fighting requirements are sent back at once to the T.D. regiment where they can be reorganised and re-equipped, priority being given to unit commanders and their headquarters, squadron and troop leaders, tank crews and specialists. It is criminally wasteful to retain such personnel unnecessarily in the battle zone where they are liable to become casualties when they are urgently required to be reorganised and re-equipped in the rear. In this connection see also paragraph 6 below.

#### 6. Importance of the initiative.

The great advantages that accrue to the side that has the initiative have again been obvious. In a defensive battle the power of a commander to regain the initiative depends on :-

- (a) Use of his armoured and mobile forces as a whole immediately a favourable opportunity occurs for counter-attack on a large scale, or a counter-offensive, with a definite object the achievement of which will force the enemy to abandon his own plan and conform to our action.

- (b) Concentration of all available resources and efforts on the counter-attack or counter-offensive decided upon, and maintenance of the chosen objective irrespective of events elsewhere.
- (c) The strength and fighting capacity of fresh troops available, and the rate at which they can be moved forward and employed.
- (d) The rate at which troops that have been heavily engaged can be reorganised, re-equipped and brought back into the battle.

As long as a commander is forced to use his reserves defensively to hold ground or plug holes he cannot hope to wrest the initiative from the enemy.

To make (a) and (b) possible the organisation of all armoured and mobile reserves under one commander with no purely defensive responsibilities seems to be essential.

The deployment of fresh troops, and the reorganisation and re-equipment of those that have been engaged depends on the efficiency of the administrative machine and the load that it can carry, and on the speed with which personnel, equipment and transport no longer required in the battle zone can be recovered. Rapid recovery and reorganisation of personnel, equipment and transport is therefore a governing factor in the struggle to regain the initiative, and in consequence is of the very greatest importance.

#### 7. Siting of defences.

##### (a) Battalion defended localities.

Neither motor nor infantry battalions with a proportionate allotment of supporting weapons on the present scale of provision, are strong enough to provide themselves with all round defence against an attack in force by tanks. Moreover there is not enough room inside a battalion locality for a proportion of the artillery to be sited to carry out a normal artillery role which is an essential feature of the defensive arrangement - see also paragraph 11 (a) below. Battalion defended localities must therefore be sited in groups sufficiently close to each other to ensure that the ground between them can be effectively covered by anti-tank, small arms and mortar fire. In addition each group must be so arranged that the artillery is protected from direct attack from any direction.

(b) Brigade defended areas must be sited so that from whatever direction attacks may come, each area can be supported by the artillery fire of neighbouring areas. If brigades have to be placed in isolated positions the general plan of defence must provide for their withdrawal in the event of the enemy obtaining liberty of action in the area in which they are sited. Otherwise the enemy will be able to concentrate against such brigades in turn and so destroy the troops allotted to the defensive system in detail.

(c) The artillery and anti-tank guns must form the framework of all defended localities and areas. The siting and organisation of defences is therefore primarily an artillery and anti-tank problem and must be treated as such. No defended area can hope to stop a tank attack if the anti-tank defence is not in depth. The 25-pr troops do not constitute the depth but only add to it. As far as resources permit there must be depth in the lay-out of the anti-tank guns in front of the 25-pr troop positions.

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- (d) The whole of the artillery of a group of mutually supporting defended localities or areas of a division MUST be under command of one artillery commander. The duty of this commander will be :-
- (i) To co-ordinate the observation available so that the maximum concentration of fire can be brought down in support of any one of the localities or areas.
  - (ii) To control ammunition expenditure.
  - (iii) In the case of a group of battalion areas, to co-ordinate the whole anti-tank defence.
- (e) All defended localities and areas must be covered by mobile outposts to give warning of approach, to deny close observation of the position to the enemy and to harass and delay his advance.
- (f) Every defended post, locality or area must be prepared to deal with attack from any direction. ALL ROUND DEFENCE IS ESSENTIAL.

### 8. Organisation of fire in defence.

All infantry sections and platoons, anti-tank gun sub-units, M.M.Gs. and mortars must know the arcs they are to cover, the ranges at which they are to open fire and the types of targets they are to engage. They must also know where, for how long and in what circumstances artillery defensive fire will be brought down, and how it is proposed to make use of smoke. Distances to tactical features must be paced out, NOT guessed. Range marks must be put up. The maximum ranges at which fire is to be opened by each different type of weapon must also be paced out and marked on the ground with cairns, tins or some other means.

The artillery must know the infantry, M.M.G., mortar and anti-tank fire plan. The fire power of a defended locality or area must be organised and co-ordinated like that of a Man of War. The commander of the garrison must control the fire and adapt it to the type of targets to be dealt with in much the same way as the captain of a fighting ship controls and directs the fire of his different weapons to destroy the enemy.

### 9. Action by infantry when attacked by tanks.

- (a) Infantry attacked by tanks must stand their ground.
- (b) Enemy tanks that have not been forced to close down have a considerable advantage over anti-tank guns, and do not necessarily have to close down on account of anti-tank gun fire. It is only effective small arms fire that can force them to do so. The heaviest possible concentration of small arms fire must therefore be directed against all attacking tanks from the moment they come within range.
- (c) When the attacking tanks close with infantry in position they must be attacked and destroyed with S.T. Grenades and molotov cocktails, with which every infantry post must be stocked. The following account of a recent engagement shows what can be done in this way by well trained and determined infantry -

"The armament of the section consisted of a Bren Gun, a Spandau, a Tommy Gun, a 2" Italian mortar, an A.Tk. grenade rifle, 25 sticky bombs, 50 grenades.

In the evening of 28 May, 28 German tanks advanced on Pt. 209 of 'W' formation. One came straight at the Section positions. The section waited until the tank was ten paces away and pelted it with sticky bombs.

The tank jerked to a standstill spanning the trench. The heat of the burning bombs drove out the crew. All were killed.

Five mins. later another tank attacked the section, then a third and then a fourth. All were dealt with in the same way; and all the crews were killed.

Half an hour later, three more tanks came up. The section had all taken cover under the first tank that had stopped over the trench. They were not observed by the Germans, who got out and examined their dead. One of them was a doctor. The section took them by surprise with grenades. The doctor, who shot at a member of the section with a pistol, was killed. Many of the other Germans were killed before they could reach their tanks.

The section then withdrew, as its amm. was exhausted, and reached TOERUK next morning.

The total loss inflicted in the enemy was 4 tanks knocked out and 28 Germans killed.

#### 10. Digging and concealment.

- (a) Troops must be made to dig in at once on taking up a position, however tired they may be. This applies to M.M.Gs, mortars, anti-tank guns and field artillery as well as to infantry platoons.
- (b) Posts must be kept concealed. Trucks must not be allowed to drive round stopping at posts in turn to deliver rations, etc., except during mirage hours or in darkness. The enemy will spend hours watching for such clues of the location of our posts.

#### 11. Use of small arms fire.

It has been reported that the enemy has on occasion moved tanks to the edge of a minefield, and then used them to cover, by their fire, the lifting of mines by men on foot. The obvious answer to such a method is well directed small arms fire. L.M.Gs. might be pushed forward on the flanks, and a pair of well trained snipers should make a very good bag if given such an opportunity.

#### 12. Employment of artillery.

- (a) However small the allotment of artillery may be it is absolutely essential to allot a proportion to normal artillery tasks and site it where it cannot be overlooked. If this is not done the defenders will have no means of neutralising the enemy's supporting weapons without disclosing the position of their own.
- (b) Whatever the task allotted 25-prs must be sited in troop positions so that the guns can support each other against enemy tanks. The rate of fire of the 25-pr is not high enough to admit of their being used in single gun positions, even when allotted for anti-tank defence as a primary role. The 25-prs are not good anti-tank weapons and their use in primary role as such should as far as possible be avoided.
- (c) 25-pr troop positions should be organised for all round defence with small arms weapons against the possibility of attack by infantry at night, in smoke or a duststorm.
- (d) In an attack arrangements must be made beforehand to ensure that artillery support will be available throughout all stages of the attack.

13. Employment of anti-tank guns.

(a) With armoured formations.

- (i) The anti-tank gun is not merely a defensive weapon. The use of anti-tank guns in close support of attacks by armoured formations must be developed.
- (ii) Protection of the flanks of armoured formations by anti-tank guns is essential. The object to be aimed at is to ensure that from whatever direction enemy tanks appear they will at once be met with a powerful force of anti-tank guns.

(b) With infantry formations.

- (i) Reports indicate a great tendency to use anti-tank guns from their portees. The rule is that anti-tank guns will never be fired from their portees except when there is literally no time to bring them into action on the ground.
- (ii) Anti-tank guns will always be dug in even if a position is only to be occupied temporarily.
- (iii) Not only must each anti-tank gun hold its fire until tanks are well within its own effective range, they must wait until tanks are within range of other guns of the defended locality. If guns open fire in turn they reduce the effect of surprise and run the risk of having the whole of the attackers fire concentrated on each in turn. It is of course useless for a gun to remain silent when it has obviously been located by the enemy tanks or supporting weapons.
- (iv) The Bren gun with each anti-tank gun must be used to force the enemy tanks to close down.

14. Local protection.

Every formation and unit is always responsible for its own local protection. No matter what armoured cars or artillery O.Ps. are operating in front every unit and formation commander must provide for his own local protection in all directions. Infantry battalions must use carrier or truck patrols for this purpose. If none of those are available the task must be carried out by men on foot.

15. Employment of infantry formations in a mobile role.

- (a) The proportion of infantry to supporting arms in infantry formations as at present organised is too high for mobile operations in open country. In such cases the proportion of infantry should be reduced to the strength required to protect the artillery by day or by night, and to take advantage of any opportunities for night attacks on enemy harbours. Infantry not required should be held right back and only brought forward when needed as reliefs or for some specific operation.
- (b) An infantry brigade group with the present complement of field artillery and anti-tank guns is too weak to carry out an independent task in mobile operations in open country. Divisions should therefore fight as such on



a reduced infantry scale as mentioned in (a) above keeping forward brigade groups within supporting distance of each other with a reserve directly under divisional control, all troops being fully mobile. An alternative arrangement is to employ two infantry brigades supported by the whole of the divisional artillery. This was done successfully by one division. No rule of thumb can possibly produce the correct balance between infantry and supporting arms for every occasion. The correct solution can only be arrived at by means of an appreciation.

- (c) Care must be taken that infantry not immediately required for fighting are kept in full training, or are usefully employed without being dispersed, so that they will be available and fit to fight when required. They must also be under properly organised control so that they can be moved as necessary to suit the tactical situation.

16. Minefields.

- (a) Minefields that are not covered by fire and properly patrolled will only cause the enemy slight inconvenience and delay.
- (b) Troops that have been allotted the task of holding a mined locality must prevent the enemy from breaking the minefield by every means in their power and whatever the cost. Fire plans must be prepared and action taken accordingly.
- (c) The anti-personnel mine is a nuisance to the enemy and a warning device for our own troops. An anti-personnel minefield does not constitute an impenetrable obstacle. The enemy will always be prepared to accept casualties to get through it.
- (d) All possible steps must always be taken to avoid disclosing the location of lanes through minefields. Special steps must be taken to cover those that cannot be concealed. Absolutely fool proof arrangements for closing all lanes in the event of attack are essential. Dummy lanes can be used to deceive and ambush the enemy.
- (e) There must be enough lanes to enable our own troops to move out without undue difficulty. One foot exit on each company front and one vehicle exit on each battalion front is the minimum.
- (f) The existence of minefields must never be allowed to induce a false sense of security. Commanders must take frequent action to make certain this does not happen. The deeper the minefield the greater the need for forward patrolling. Minefields can be used to economise in anti-tank weapons but not in infantry.
- (g) The principle of concentration at the decisive point applies to the allotment of mines and laying of minefields as much as to every other aspect of war. Small dispersed minefields are useless.
- (h) The use of dummy minefields offers considerable scope for deceiving the enemy. The enemy would probably have still made his long initial detour south of BIR HACHEIM if much of the minefield between BIR HARMAT and BIR HACHEIM had been dummy.

17. Discipline.

- (a) The very highest standard of individual and unit discipline is required to stand up to the strain and speed of mobile operations. Strict compliance with the rules for the destruction of vehicles and equipment that have to be abandoned in a withdrawal is essentially a matter of discipline. These rules have not always been carried out, with the result that the enemy has been able to make use of much of our abandoned transport and equipment. Much unauthorised baggage is carried with the result that vehicles are overloaded and break down. These matters must be put right. It can only be done by discipline.
- (b) March discipline requires constant attention particularly when troops used to freedom of movement in the desert are confined to roads. Overtaking on blind parts of the road, cutting in, double banking and closing up are the worst faults. Officers must make themselves responsible for the march discipline of their units and sub-units. When a vehicle breaks down it must be cleared off the road at once. When a traffic block does occur, the senior officer in the vicinity must take charge at once and get the block cleared and the traffic moving, using personnel from his own unit for temporary traffic control duty if necessary. It is only by individual discipline of all ranks, and initiative and energetic action by all officers that march discipline can be maintained and traffic blocks avoided. This is a matter to which all officers must give their close personal attention. Rules governing march discipline must be observed and officers are responsible for seeing that they are.

18. Artillery lessons in recent fighting.

Eighth Army Training Instruction No.1 is republished as Appendix 'A'.

C. in C. directs that the instructions contained in it are to be observed by all formations and units in the Middle East.

EIGHTH ARMY TRAINING INSTRUCTION NO.1/1942.ARTILLERY LESSONS IN RECENT FIGHTING.

1. The superiority of 8 to 5 in artillery with which the Eighth Army accepted battle on 27 May has failed to produce the results expected, though almost without exception guns have been fought with the utmost gallantry and determination.

The principal reasons have been :-

- (a) Defeat in detail, owing to employment in small bodies not under command of the highest Artillery Commander who can exercise collective control.
- (b) Failure to make a fire plan based on adequate r. reconnaissance, or in some cases to make a fire plan at all.
- (c) Confusion in the minds of many officers as to the two roles of the 25-pr as a Field Gun and as an Anti-Tank weapon.
- (d) Failure to use the Anti-Tank Artillery in accordance with the principles laid down in MIDDLE EAST TRAINING PAMPHLET NO.15 INSTRUCTION NO.2. (TACTICAL HANDLING OF ANTI-TANK UNITS.)
- (e) The great difficulty experienced by the Infantry under desert conditions in fulfilling their unchanging task of protecting their guns from close range small arms fire.

2. The lately introduced "Battle Groups" are based on gun power. If they are to achieve the results hoped for it is essential that these mistakes are not repeated. Particular emphasis is laid on the following points.

3. Just as command of two or three Battle Groups is exercised by the Brigade Commander, command of the Artillery in these Groups must be exercised through the Regimental Commander. If the Divisional Commander takes control of his Divisional Battle Groups, the CRA must take control of the Artillery, and signal facilities must be provided for him to do so.

4. Though it takes time to make a fire plan, this time must be allotted and can be reduced by training and practice. But no fire plan can be made until the Gunner is shown on the ground where his fire is required.

5. The primary role of the 25-pr is to engage all types of target, other than armour, with HE or smoke, in support of its own Infantry or armour. Its secondary role is to add to the depth of the anti-tank defence of any position, and to engage with AP shot any hostile AFVs which have broken through.

6. As M.E.T.P. No. 15 on the tactical handling of A.Tk. Units may not have reached all units, its main points are repeated below:-

- (a) Except when skirmishing, guns will always be fought on the ground and not on the "portee".
- (b) Fire will be held to the closest range possible.

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- t. (c) Guns must be sited to give each other mutual support, to give depth, and in defiladed positions wherever possible.
- (d) Concealment and digging are vital essentials.
- (e) Vehicles should be moved some distance from the guns.

7. Infantry, by their dispositions or action, must ensure the protection of their Field and A.Tk. guns from close range small arms fire. Without shrapnel Artillery can no longer protect its own front against this form of attack.

(signed) J.M. Whitely.

Brigadier,  
General Staff.

7 Jul 42.  
TS.