

WAR DIARY

1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT

MAY 1 1917 - NOVEMBER 30 1918

Transcribed by Keith Brannen 2010, Revised 2017

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
MAY 1917**

MAY 1 1917 - PEIZIERE

12.00-2.00 am. Bn. continued work commenced at 9.00 pm last night.

During the day hot baths established and supplied.

Blankets and Packs dumped preparatory (sic) to relief of front lines.

9.00 pm. Marched off by Coys. at 10 minutes (?) intervals(?), sections 20 yds. apart to relieve 1/6 BN. MANCH. R. in left half of 127 Bde. Sector.

A COY. (CAPT. PRESTON) took over OUTPOST LINE position, 6 posts, 5 LEWIS GUNS.

B COY. (CAPT. BARLOW M.C.) took over PIQUET LINE (LINE OF RESISTANCE) a series of unconnected trenches.

C COY. (LIEUT. FORBES) took over SUPPORT LINE.

D COY. (CAPT. MOORE) remained in CUTTING as RESERVE (3 L.M. Guns).

Bn H.Q. at "THE WILLOWS" X26 a50.

Transport proceeded through EPHEY along 3rd class road to X28 a09 with LEWIS GUNS, GRENADES, S.A.A., and Petrol Tins and other receptacles filled with water which were manhandled from there to respective positions. Circumstances preventing ration parties communicating by day, day's rations had been cooked beforehand and carried on the men.

Specialists carried 50 rounds S.A.A. remainder 120.

MAY 2 1917 - [EAST OF PEIZIERE]

12.30 am relief completed.

After relief work was carried out constructing latrines and lengthening trenches in order to complete connecting same when possible. D Coy. worked from 9.00 pm until 3.40 am connecting strong posts of PICQUET LINE.

Patrols reported an enemy sniper at X17 d80 and that the enemy held OSSUS WOOD at X29 b55 (strength not ascertained).

MAY 3 1917 - [EAST OF PEIZIERE]

2.55 am. C Coy. relieved A Coy. in outpost line.

Work continued in all trenches and Patrolling as usual. Canal Wood held by enemy and railway service to it suspected.

11.15 pm. Our artillery bombarded OSSUS WOOD and CANAL Wood during which enemy fired Red, Red and Green, and Golden Rain Rockets.

MAY 4 1917 - [EAST OF PEIZIERE]

During night work continued as usual, no work is possible by day. Quiet day little evening artillery activity. Casualties 4 Killed 2 Wounded - O.R. Work as usual during night.

MAY 5 1917 - [EAST OF PEIZIERE]

Enemy artillery active shelled Support line Chiefly. Casualties O.R. 1 Killed 4 Wounded.

During night trench connecting with Bn. on left constructed and wired.

MAY 6 1917 - [EAST OF PEIZIERE]

2.00 am. Relieved by 1/6 MANCH. R.

Bn. into Bde. Reserve in PEIZIERE.

During night 3 Coys. worked at BROWN LINE and one Coy. at NO. 13 COPSE.

MAY 7 1917 - PEIZIERE

8.00 am - 12.30 pm. PEIZIERE shelled, 21 shells between 8.00 am and 9.00 am and 14 at 12.30.

Two L.G. sections training, remainder nil owing to night work.

Night work as usual.

MAY 8 1917 - PEIZIERE

Training and work as yesterday.

MAY 9 1917 - PEIZIERE

8.30 pm. Bn. relieved by 1/5 LANCS. FUS.

A & D Coys. took over minimum permanent garrison of Bde. Sector of BROWN LINE and construction thereof.

B & C Coys. to VILLERS FAUCON.

MAY 10 1917 - VILLERS FAUCON

Nothing to report.

MAY 11 1917 - VILLERS FAUCON

VILLERS FAUCON shelled - 5.9 Shells. Casualties O.R. 1 Killed 4 Wounded.

Working parties under R.E.

MAY 12 1917 - VILLERS FAUCON

One Coy. work under R.E. One Coy. training.

MAY 13 1917 - VILLERS FAUCON

Work under R.E.

MAY 14 1917 - VILLERS FAUCON

LT. COL. H.T. DOBBIN D.S.O. (D.C.L.I) assumed Command vice MAJOR C.S. WORTHINGTON D.S.O. to 1/5 BN. MANCH. R. command.

Work as usual under R.E.

MAY 15 1917 - SAULCOURT

10.30 am. Bn. moved to SAULCOURT.

MAY 16 1917 - SAULCOURT

Training.

MAY 17 1917 - RUYAULCOURT

Marched to RUYAULCOURT. Bn. head of Bde. Column.

Billeted.

MAY 18 1917 - RUYAULCOURT

Preparations for move into Centre sector of Bde. Section.

MAY 19 1917 - RUYAULCOURT

Baths.

Relieved 1/7 SOMERSET LIGHT INF. Three Coys. in front line. C Coy. in Support. Bn. H.Q. at Q1 c52.

MAY 20 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy artillery active all day. 1 O.R. wounded.

Work on trenches which are only partially constructed and Patrolling by night.

MAY 21 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy artillery quieter. One O.R. wounded.

Work and patrolling as yesterday. Enemy activity normal.

MAY 22 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Quiet day. Work and patrolling as usual. One O.R. wounded.

MAY 23 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy shelled near Bn. H.Q. using 5.9 H.E. No damage.

Work and Patrolling as usual. One O.R. Killed.

MAY 24 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Normal day. Work and patrolling continued.

MAY 25 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

As yesterday.

MAY 26 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Patrols report Enemy working activity.

Enemy Artillery very quiet.

MAY 27 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy still busy with night work, were covered by patrols.

Enemy Artillery very quiet.

MAY 28 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Quiet day.

MAY 29 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy shelled our positions K25 a44. Casualties 1 Killed 2 wounded.

At night Lt. C.R. ELLER went out in charge of a patrol of 6 O.R. which was dispersed by enemy fire. Lt. C.R. ELLER and 4 O.R. failed to return.

MAY 30 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Quiet day.

At night two patrols went out but no sign of Lt. ELLER and 4 O.R. could be found.

MAY 31 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy artillery moderately active.

Patrols having indicated that the enemy was attempting to establish a line from about K33 centre to K34 d central and covering this work by active patrolling, a Bde. scheme was organized to re-establish control of this area and to ascertain definitely the extent of the enemies (sic) works.

Commencing 11.00 pm Artillery and M.G. Bombardment. After which this Unit to send out two patrols.

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties		
(from above listings)		
Killed		8
Wounded		15
Missing	1	4

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
JUNE 1917**

JUNE 1 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

12.30 am. In order to ascertain definitely extent of enemy's works two fighting patrols B and C were sent out as part of a Bde. Scheme.

B Patrol consisted of 2 Lt. S. FRANKENBURG and 28 O.R. and their objective was to report on the enemy's work at Copse K33 b65.00 and on light railway in vicinity. After dispersing 3 enemy parties, two by rifle fire and one by bayonet, the patrol was eventually held up by a party of superior numbers at K33 d35 and to the approach of dawn the party had to return without reaching its objective.

C Patrol consisted of 2 Lt. F.J. MATTHEWS and 25 O.R. Objective enemy's work at K33 central and on light railway in vicinity. After dispersing an enemy party killing one and capturing one, the patrol was held up about K33 c88 - K33 a64 but (sic) a larger party of Germans and were compelled to return without reaching objective. The Prisoner belonged to the 18 Division.

10.45 pm - 12.45 am. Enemy heavily shelled position causing very slight damage to trenches and wounding 4 O.R. A few lachrymatory shells were included and suspected poison gas shell.

During the night an Officer's patrol went again to reconnoitre light railway K33 a91 & K33 a75. Enemy patrols were encountered until position K33 c38 was reached when patrol observed large working parties to their front. The Patrol was unable to reach its objective.

JUNE 2 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Position again shelled by enemy but few hits obtained.

During the night two fighting patrols were sent out to cover a working party constructing a communications trench to a post at K33 a70. Our covering party came under heavy rifle and M.G. fire suffering 2 O.R. missing and 1 wounded.

JUNE 3 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy displayed less artillery activity today.

10.00 pm. Bn. relieved by 1/5 Bn. and came into Bde. Reserve two platoons providing minimum garrison of Intermediate line, Posts C1 and C2.

JUNE 4 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Bn. resting.

JUNE 5 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Working by night on trenches and communication trenches.

JUNE 6 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Ditto on Reserve Line - Q3 a23 to Q3 a34.

JUNE 7 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Rest.

JUNE 8 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

The Bn. employed by night to establish (as part of Bde. Scheme) a line from road K33 c43 inclusive to K32 d78 and wiring some with barbed wire previously made into coils as FRENCH WIRE System.

JUNE 9 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Work on new line continued as last night.

A patrol of 1 N.C.O. and 3 O.R. was sent out to endeavour to reconnoitre HAVRINCOURT. Much enemy movement was observed and enemy parties encountered and the patrol was unable to get into HAVRINCOURT.

JUNE 10 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Work on consolidating and improving new line and communications (?unknown?) was continued. An Officer's Patrol heard enemy working parties about K33 d central.

JUNE 11 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Work on new line and communication trench.

JUNE 12 1917 - BDE. RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

10.00 pm. Bn. took over right half of new Bde. Line relieving portions of each of the other Bde. Bns. Two Coys. garrisoned front line including posts in New Line. One Coy. in Support and one Coy. in Reserve Line.

JUNE 13 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Work continued on improving occupied positions.

11.00 pm. Enemy put barrage over this Unit's area causing no damage.

JUNE 14 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Patrolling as usual. Work on occupied positions and Communication Trench K32 b07 - K33 c06. Situation quiet, chief activity (enemy) were TRENCH MORTARS.

JUNE 15 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Situation generally quiet. Enemy T.M. (medium and heavy) again shelled front lines, one direct hit.

Patrols encountered covering parties to enemy works.

Work as usual.

JUNE 16 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Enemy T.M. again chief activity. No damage done.

Work and patrols as usual.

JUNE 17 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Very quiet day. Work and patrolling as usual.

JUNE 18 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

4.00 am - 7.30 am and 9.00 am - 10.00 am. Enemy shelled area between Q2 a54 and Q1 b86 with about 200 shells. Only one hit, no casualties.

Work on new front line. Patrolling as usual.

JUNE 19 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Very quiet day. Work and patrolling at night as usual.

JUNE 20 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Quiet day and wet.

Relieved by 1/6 Bn. and took over garrison on Intermediate Line - Posts C2, C3 & C4 and BROWN LINE. Work at night as usual. Casualties 4 Killed 4 Wounded.

JUNE 21 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Rest.

Work at night under R.E.

Capt. C.G. MOORE assumed the duties of Adjutant vice Capt. E. HORSFALL M.C. who relinquished the appointment at his own request.

JUNE 22 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

In Intermediate Line. Working parties continued under R.E. supervision. 1 company worked on HENLEY LANE. During afternoon enemy ranged on SUNKEN RD near Bn. HQs. E.A. flying low were evidently spotting the shooting. About 8 shells were fired H.E. 4.2 calibre. 1 O.R. wounded. 2nd Lt. KILNER 4th E.L. posted to the Bn.

JUNE 23 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

E.A. active in early morning. Two or three enemy balloons observed at a great height.

2.30 pm to 9.30 pm. Enemy started bombardment of J36 d91 and the vicinity which continued until 9.30 pm. About 500 shells were fired chiefly 4.2 calibre and 5.9.

Casualties 1 O.R. killed 6 wounded. Lt STEWART slight wounded, still at duty.

JUNE 24 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

In Intermediate line. Quiet day. Usual working parties for R.E. Remainder worked on HENLEY LANE.

JUNE 25 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

In Intermediate line. Desultory shelling. Usual working parties and two companies on HENLEY LANE.

JUNE 26 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

In Intermediate line. Quiet day. Work as usual.

JUNE 27 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

In Intermediate line. Quiet day. Work programme as usual.

JUNE 28 1917 - [INTERMEDIATE LINE HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

In Intermediate line, quiet day. At 11.30 pm relief by 6th Manchesters commenced. We moved up into right section of Brigade front, B in right subsection of firing line, C in left subsection, D coy. in support. A in reserve.

JUNE 29 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Relief complete at 1.30 am. Work was carried on as far as possible. Trenches in a very bad state owing to rain. Work on NEW firing line carried on at night.

JUNE 30 1917 - [HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

A very quiet day. Very little hostile shelling. Work was continued on front line at night.

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties (from above listings)		
Killed		5
Wounded	1 (at duty)	16
Missing		2

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT JULY 1917

JULY 1 1917 - HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Quiet day. A few 4.2 H.E. on PIONEER VALLEY during the morning.

Platoon of C Coy. under 2nd Lt. FRANKENBURG went to RUYAULCOURT to practice for raiding. Work at night on new front line wiring parties of D coy. about midnight were shelled by T.M.s for about 10 mins. No casualties.

JULY 2 1917 - HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Quiet morning. Desultory shelling in the afternoon along PIONEER VALLEY and on CHEETHAM HILL. Gas alarm given from right Bn. East Lancs. Brigade at 11 pm. Raiding party under 2nd Lt. FRANKENBURG went out (see Appendix 2) as part of 127th Bge. Scheme to DEAN COPSE. Casualties 1 Killed. 2nd Lt FRANKENBURG and 8 O.R. wounded. 1 wounded and missing believed killed.

We fired gas shells into HAVRINCOURT at 12 midnight.

JULY 3 1917 - HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Gas alarm off at 1.20 am. Hostile shelling on HUBERT ALLEY between old and new firing lines in the afternoon. Short bombardment of CHAPEL WOOD also at night.

Patrol out under 2nd Lt. EVANS met Bosche patrol. 3 O.R. wounded.

Warnings as to possible Bosche raids from 3rd Corps.

JULY 4 1917 - HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Gas alarm at 1.40 am hardly noticeable in our lines. Heavy rain about 2 am trenches in a very bad state. A few rounds sharpnel on our front line. Our heavy T.M. registered in DEAN Copse. Preliminary move orders arrived.

JULY 5 1917 - HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Enemy artillery active between 8.30 am & 10 am. Bombardment at night by T.M.s, Howitzers, etc. of DEAN COPSE. Congratulatory Order came from Divnl. Commander. Trenches in a very bad state, a considerable amount of rain during the day.

JULY 6 1917 - HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Fairly quiet day. Relief by 5th Manch. commenced at 10.30 pm. Enemy artillery very active from 9.30 pm onwards shelling HUBERT ALLEY and PIONEER VALLEY Chiefly. Relief complete at 2 am. Casualties 1 O.R. Killed.

JULY 7 1917 - RUYAULCOURT

Bn. moved into billets at RUYAULCOURT last company arriving at 2 am.

The whole day was devoted to cleaning up and fitting. A combined Lewis and Machine gun stunt organized up the line.

JULY 8 1917 - RUYAULCOURT

Bn. at rest. Day devoted to fitting boots, etc. for the march. Advance parties sent off. Baggage, etc. sent down to dump ready for moving by train. One parade smartening drill.

JULY 9 1917 - BARASTRE

Battn. moved as part of the 127th Bge. to O 16 (BARASTRE). Moved off at 2.30 pm arrived there about 5.30 pm. Bn. Strength 27 Officers 703 O.R. No men fell out in the lines of march. Went into tents and bivouacs for the night.

JULY 10 1917 - BARASTRE

Bn. as part of the 127th Bge. marched on ACHIET-le-PETIT. Moved off at 8.30 am marched via BAPAUME arriving at destination 12.30 pm. Went into Camp vacated by 2/11th London Rgt. Camp in a very dirty state, most of the latrines had been destroyed.

JULY 11 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battalion training commenced. Major LINGS assumed command of the Battn. vice Lt. Col. DOBBIN D.S.O. (to command 4th Army School FLEXICOURT).

JULY 12 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battn. training continued. Capt BARLOW left unit for interview with India Office, to transfer to Indian Army. This Officer has served continuously with the Brigade since mobilization Aug. 4th 1914 and (?)holds(?) an unbroken period of service.

JULY 13 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

The day was treated as a Sunday. Church parade in the morning.

JULY 14 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battalion training continued. Programme (see Appendix XIX).

JULY 15 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battalion training. Coys. started (?)work(?) (?)on(?) rifle range.

JULY 16 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

As previous day. Enemy aircraft flew over camp about 6.30 am.

JULY 17 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battalion training.

JULY 18 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battalion Scheme this morning. Training continued.

JULY 19 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Brigade Scheme in vicinity of BUCQUOY. Major E.G.K. CROSS posted to command this Battalion.

JULY 20 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

This day was treated as Sunday. Church parade in morning. In afternoon Brig. Gen. HENLEY lectured on the fighting of the Ancre on July 1st/16 on the actual battle field.

JULY 21 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued.

JULY 22 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. Battn. put through Gas Chamber to test masks. Half the Battn. inoculated. Demonstration of S.O.S. Signal.

JULY 23 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. C & D Coys. inoculated.

JULY 24 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. Brigade Tactical Scheme.

JULY 25 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. The Brigade Boxing Competition held at 5.30 pm in the "CRATER" - formed by the explosion of a German Ammunition Dump before their Retreat in March 1917. Five men entered: Result: 1 Winner, 3 Seconds, 1 Consolation Prize.

JULY 26 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. 2 LT.s S. THORP & W. BORRINO reported from 8th Res. Bn. Manch. R. 2 LT. THORP was in FRANCE before with the 2/8th (A) Bn. Manchester Rgt. Afternoon the first day of Sports (Bde.).

JULY 27 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Church Parade in Morning - in the Crater. Afternoon Continuation of Bde. Sports. A draft of 37 O.R. from 24th Manchester Rgt. arrived. Most of them have less than 6 mths. service. Very few have been on Active Service before. Physique poor.

JULY 28 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. Range allotted to A Coy. Practice in night patrolling very successful.

JULY 29 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training Continued. The scheme in the morning.

JULY 30 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

The Bn. as part of the 127th Inf. Bde. proceeded by march route to G3 b59 to attend the Divisional Sports which was rather damped by the showery weather. Draft of 31 O.R. arrived. Most of them have just turned 19 but have had a year's training. The physique is poor & height small.

JULY 31 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued. Range allotted to B & C Coys. 3 Officers on Bde. Machine Gun Tactical Exercise. N.C.O.s C & D under R.S.M. for Guards 6.30 - 7 am. New Drafts under R.S.M. for elementary instruction. Two men of Draft arriving on 27th Ordered to proceed to Base as Unfit. Semi finals for Divisional Boxing Competition. One man left in Finals (Pte. ROOKS).

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties (from above listings)		
Killed		2
Wounded	1	11
Wounded & missing (believed killed)		1

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
AUGUST 1917**

AUGUST 1 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Rain interrupted training. O.C. Coys. lectured N.C.O.s & men. MAJOR LINGS lectured the officers. Capt. HORSFALL returned from Company Commanders Course. Posted to D Company to Command.

AUGUST 2 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training again interrupted by rain. Lectures continued as yesterday.
Capt. WALLWORK rejoined the Unit from U.K. Posted to A Coy. as 2nd in Command.

AUGUST 3 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

On account of the rain the Church Service held in Divisional Theatre.

AUGUST 4 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued according to weekly programme. All men in the Battalion bathed at the Town Baths.

AUGUST 5 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training Continued. Battalion Tactical Scheme in the morning.
A draft of 24 O.R. arrived. Most of these men had already had 12 months Active Service in FRANCE before.

AUGUST 6 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training continued.

AUGUST 7 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Field Firing range allotted to this Unit - A Coy. in the morning, B afternoon. Orders issued for Brigade Scheme on 9th inst.

AUGUST 8 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training in morning, afternoon a half holiday.

AUGUST 9 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Brigade Scheme which was very successful.

AUGUST 10 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Church Service in Divisional Theatre. Heavy rain all day.

AUGUST 11 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battn. training as usual.

AUGUST 12 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Training as usual.

AUGUST 13 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Bn. training.

AUGUST 14 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battn. Training.

AUGUST 15 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battn. Training continued.

AUGUST 16 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battn. Training as usual in morning. Half holiday in afternoon. Heavy rain.

AUGUST 17 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Battn. Training in ceremonial in morning and Church Service in the Crater. Half holiday.

AUGUST 18 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Draft arrived of 19 O.R. All but two with previous active service experience and all with at least a year service. Corps Horse Show at BIHUCOURT.

Perliminary move orders arrived.

AUGUST 19 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Brigade Scheme at GOMMECOURT.

AUGUST 20 1917 - ACHIET-LE-PETIT

Advance parties left for HOPOUTRE and all baggage loaded at night.

AUGUST 21 1917 - AVELUY

The Bn. as part of 127th Bge. moved by road to huts at AVELUY arriving there about 2 pm. Afternoon Spent in rest and bathing.

AUGUST 22 1917 - AVELUY

Battn. remained at AVELUY. Short parade and bathing in the morning. Heavy baggage loaded at Station.

AUGUST 23 1917 - AVELUY

Battn. moved off from huts at 12.30 am and entrained at AVELUY less D Coy. who remained behind as loading party and rear party. They left AVELUY at 2 pm.

Bn. arrived at HOPOUTRE (siding for POPERINGHE) at 2.30 pm and moved into camp just outside town. Division now part of XIX Corps, Fifth Army. Strict orders re lights owing to hostile aircraft bombing district.

AUGUST 24 1917 - POPERINGHE

D coy. arrived in camp at 4 am. Short parade in morning.

AUGUST 25 1917 - POPERINGHE

Battalion training in attack on strong points, etc. Coys. reorganised in the three strong platoon formation. Lt. Col. CROSS and reconnoitring party (?)taken(?) up line for two days attachment to 15th Division.

AUGUST 26 1917 - POPERINGHE

Company training continued. Heavy rain most of the day.

AUGUST 27 1917 - POPERINGHE

Training continued particular stress being put on the training of platoons to deal with Strong posts, pillar boxes, etc. Rained most of the day. Party returned back from the line.

Capt. T. OWENS admitted to hospital from VI Corps, L.G. school.

AUGUST 28 1917 - POPERINGHE

Training continued. Lecture given in the afternoon to officers at WATTON on the recent fighting on the XIX Corps front by Brig. Gen. WHITE.

AUGUST 29 1917 - POPERINGHE

Training continued. Orders received for moving up Line. Rain most of the day.

AUGUST 30 1917 - POPERINGHE

Training continued. 2nd Lt. SMITH went on as Camp Commandant of ERIE and ST. LAWRENCE Camps. Various guards (?)taken(?) over from 15th Division in new area.

AUGUST 31 1917 - POPERINGHE

Bn. march off at 6.15 am as part of the 127th Bge. and marched via Switch road N. of POPERINGHE main YPRES road & G11 a & c to ERIE camp. Camp taken over from 6th

Camerons H. 2nd Lt. FRANKENBURG appointed Brigade bombing Officer.

Hostile Aircraft over camp about 9 pm.

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT SEPTEMBER 1917

SEPTEMBER 1 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

Training under company arrangements in the morning. 2nd Lt. HILL assumed command of C coy. vice 2nd Lt. (a/Capt.) OWENS sick to hospital. Rain in afternoon and strong westerly wind. Hostile shelling of back areas carried out during day. At night about 9.30 pm E.A. flew over camp and was reported to have been brought down outside YPRES. Strength. with unit 29 officers 778 O.R. Detached 10 officers 175 O.R.

SEPTEMBER 2 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

Church parade in morning. Heavy rain about 11 am, but weather cleared after noon. Pack transport was utilized in afternoon for drawing rations. A bright moonlight night. E.A. very active from 9 pm until 1 am. A few bombs were dropped in areas near camp. A few shells were also fired by hostile artillery into the back areas in the vicinity of TORONTO Camp.

SEPTEMBER 3 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

Training under company arrangements. Special attention being paid to attacking strong points. Considerable aerial activity all day and numerous bombs dropped in Back areas by hostile aircraft during the night.

SEPTEMBER 4 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

Training continued. C.O. and Coy. Commanders went to a demonstration of how to attack the strong posts at GUEMY 10 miles N.W. of ST. OMER. Aerial activity continued, also heavy shelling all along front. Various hostile air raids at night in back areas. Some Bombs dropped near camp.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded H.E.

SEPTEMBER 5 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

Bn. training in morning. In afternoon Brigade sent for C.O. and Adj. and a two bn. move was ordered about 3.30 pm. This was cancelled at 5 pm.

3 O.R. wounded with H.E.

SEPTEMBER 6 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

A demonstration was given by the 5th Manch. R. in an attack on a strong point. Later in the day orders were received for move on following day. Numerous bombs dropped in the vicinity of the camp by E.A. at night.

SEPTEMBER 7 1917 - ERIE CAMP - POPERINGHE

Morning was devoted to getting kits packed, cleaning guns, etc. The battalion entrained at 7.30 pm. Various details were left behind under the command of Major LINGS as battle surplus. Strength of Bn. going up line 18 officers 538 O.R. Officers going up Lt. Col. E.B.K. CROSS in command, Capts. MOORE, HORSFALL, PRESTON, 2nd Lts. HILL, OLIVER, SKINNER, SALOMON, ROBERTSON, WHITLEY, JEPSON, DEIGHTON, KILMER, HOBOROUGH, PETERS, NICHOLS, BORRINO & Capt. OLDERSHAW. Bn. relieved 1/6th Lancs. Fus., 2

coys. 1/6th Manch. R., 3 coys. 8th Lancs. Fus. in left section, left sector on the Divnl. Front. Relief completed at 2.45 am Sept. 8th. In route of relief. Train to ASYLUM, YPRES then marched via MENIN GATE, MILL COTT. G track to line. Bn. Hqs. at SQUARE FARM. Casualties NIL.

SEPTEMBER 8 1917 - LEFT SECTION, LEFT SECTOR, DIVISIONAL FRONT [near FREZENBERG]

Relief complete at 2.45 am. Our artillery shelled Hill 35 intermittently until dawn. Bn. dispositions are: D Coy. commanded by Capt. HORSFALL on left front, B coy. commanded by 2nd Lt. OLIVER right front coy. with Hqs. at LOW FARM. C coy. commanded by 2nd Lt. HILL in support in front of SQUARE FARM, and A coy. in reserve on CAMEROON DRIVE. Just after relief a number of Gas shells were fired near our reserve coy. A small party of enemy seen digging near BECK HOUSE at 7.45 am who were dispersed with L.G. fire. SQUARE FARM shelled with 150mm at 3.25 pm and at five minute intervals until 3.40 pm. Between 7.15 pm and 7.45 pm enemy put up red and green lights from the direction of BECK HOUSE. Heavy barrage resulted on POMMERN REDOUBT, SQUARE FARM, LOW FARM and trenches in D19 c and D25 a. This barrage came down again on same places at 9.50 pm and lasted until 11.15 pm. Earlier - in the afternoon about 5.10, 3 E.A. flew very low over POMMERN Redoubt & LOW FARM in spite of having Machine gun and Lewis gun fire. Area jumping off trench was commenced in front of LOW FARM and on in front of POMMERN REDOUBT. Casualties 4 O.R. Killed 27 wounded. 2nd Lt. SALOMON and 3 O.R. gassed. Fine day, visibility very good about 5 pm.

SEPTEMBER 9 1917 - LEFT SECTION, LEFT SECTOR, DIVISIONAL FRONT [near FREZENBERG]

Hostile shelling very slight before dawn. At irregular intervals during the day our artillery put a five minutes barrage on enemy strong posts. Most of these barrages were replied to by hostile batteries chiefly with 4.2 & 5.9s. SQUARE FARM and left front and support coys. chiefly shelled. Orders for relief came through. Various patrols reports were received in the morning from front cos. and support co., each co. having sent out two on the night of 8/9th. Casualties Killed 2nd Lt. E.D. SKINNER and 5 O.R., 21 O.R. wounded. 2nd Lt. OLIVER wounded. 2nd Lt. JEPSON and 12 O.R. gassed.

SEPTEMBER 10 1917 - LEFT SECTION, LEFT SECTOR, DIVISIONAL FRONT [near FREZENBERG]

Relief by 1/6th Manchesters commenced at 12.05 am and was completed by 2.20 am. The Bn. marched down to camp at H18 a54 the last company arriving there by 5.30 am. The day was spent in rest, orders came through that bn. would have a day to practice for taking of Beck FARM, KAY NORTH and IBERIAN FARM. Objectives allotted as follows: B coy. under Lt. FORBES will attack enemy positions at BECK. C is under 2nd Lt. HILL will attack KAY NORTH. D coy. under Capt. HORSFALL will attack IBERIAN and occupy the building or establish a line in the vicinity. A Coy. less 1 platoon will leap frog D coy. and establish a line on the final objective. Jumping off trenches marked green on attached map, final objective marked blue. R.S.M. KNOTT D.C.M. died of wounds. 3 O.R. wounded.

SEPTEMBER 11 1917 - CAMP at H18 a54 [near YPRES]

Training devoted to practice over the tapes on ground near GOLDFISH CHATEAU and the practice was carry (sic) out again in the afternoon. Maps, (?unknown?) etc. prepared. (see Appendices)

SEPTEMBER 12 1917 - CAMP at H18 a54 [near YPRES]

Practice attack carried out in the morning. News came through that owing to the fact that the 61st Divn. on our left had not taken Hill 35, the attack was to be cancelled. Ordinary reliefs to be carried out, are to relieve the 1/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. in the left front sector. Bn. embussed commencing 7 pm at GOLDFISH CHATEAU. Lorries only went to MENIN GATE owing to shelling. Relief carried out under bursts of enemy artillery fire. Relief complete at 12.45 am. D coy. left front section. B co. right front section. C is in support. A coy. in reserve. Bn. Hqs. at SQUARE FARM. Strength of Bn. going into the line, 15 officers 407 O.R.

Casualties 10 killed, 11 wounded, 6 gassed, also 2nd Lt. O. ROBERTSON injured by watercart.

SEPTEMBER 13 1917 - LEFT SECTION, LEFT SECTOR, DIVISIONAL FRONT [near FREZENBERG]

Fairly quiet night after completion of relief at 12.45 am. SQUARE FARM heavily shelled between 4.30 am and 5.05 am, one shell penetrating front wall. Our artillery put down a practice barrage on our front at 8.25 am, the enemy only fired a few mortars in return. We also put a practice barrage down at 5.35 pm for 9 mins. with very little reply.

At night 3 cos. of 1/5th Manchester Regt. and parties from M.G. co. and Trench Mortar Battery came up and assisted in making 'jumping off' trenches in front of LOW FARM positions and POMMERN.

Casualties 6 O.R. wounded 1 gassed.

SEPTEMBER 14 1917 - LEFT SECTION, LEFT SECTOR, DIVISIONAL FRONT [near FREZENBERG]

Quiet morning. Enemy aircraft busy over our lines just after dawn. Our heavy artillery shelled enemy back areas intermittently all day until 5 pm. Hostile shelling slight except for one period when SQUARE FARM was shelled for half an hour at 9 am.

Advance relief party of 1/8th Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers came up about 2 pm. At 5.30 pm enemy put a heavy barrage down on the division on our left which continued for about 2 hours. Relief commenced at 9.30 pm and was completed by 12.40.

Bn. marched down to ASYLUM, YPRES where it entrained and was taken to No. 3 crossing G11 a99 from where it marched to camp at TORONTO Camp. Last co. arrived at 4.30 am.

Casualties 2 wounded, 8 wounded (at duty).

SEPTEMBER 15 1917 - TORONTO CAMP [near POPERINGHE]

Bn. rested all day. Short parade in afternoon. L.G. (?)material(?) overhauled, etc. Carrying party of 3 Officers and 160 O.R. reported to C.R.E. 9th Divn. and acted as carrying party to GREY RUIN.

SEPTEMBER 16 1917 - TORONTO CAMP [near POPERINGHE]

Church service in the morning. Kit inspections, line inspections. A number of enemy aircraft flew over camp during the day but no bombs dropped. 3 Officers and 120 O.R. worked under C.R.E. 9th Divn. near MENIN GATE burying a cable.

SEPTEMBER 17 1917 - TORONTO CAMP [near POPERINGHE]

Bn. marched to BRANDHOEK No. 3 Area (G12 c77) via BUSSEBOOM and relieved 10th A&S Highlanders, arriving there about 4.30 pm. A working party of 2 Officers & 120 O.R. acted as carrying party for 9th Divn. at MILL COT. at night.

SEPTEMBER 18 1917 - BRANDHOEK

Bn. route march in morning under co. arrangements. L.G. classes started under 2nd Lt. NICHOLS. A working party for 9th Divn. at MENIN GATE of 1 Officer and 63 O.R. went up at 6.30 pm returning at 5 am.

SEPTEMBER 19 1917 - BRANDHOEK

Bn. as part of 127th Bge. marched off at 9.30 am to WATOU No. 1 area, and camped at TAY camp arriving there at 12.30 pm. The 13th KINGS (Liverpool) was in occupation of camp and did not vacated (sic) until 4.30 pm. Heavy rainfall at night.

SEPTEMBER 20 1917 - TAY CAMP - WATOU

Bn. as part of 127th Bge. continued its march moving off at 7.10 am, and marched to A camp J16 c17 via WATOU, DROGLANDT and WINNEZEELE arriving there about 12.15 pm. The Bn. under canvas. Hqs. in billets at WINNEZEELE. Nos. falling out on line of march, 1 O.R. who rejoined about an hour after bn. arrived.

Marching out strength 24 Officers 656 O.R.

SEPTEMBER 21 1917 - J16 c17 [Camp near WINNEZEELE]

Bn. training in morning. Platoon and company drill, P.T. & B.F. and smartening up drill. Orders for move received at 11.45 pm.

SEPTEMBER 22 1917 - J16 c17 [Camp near WINNEZEELE]

The Bn. as part of 127th Bge. proceeded to COXYDE in buses via WORMHOUDT, WYDLER, PUYTHOEK, KROMMELHOEK, GHYVELDE and LA PANNE arriving at COXYDE at 1.30 pm. Bn. put up bivouacs & huts in field. Warned that we were to relieve the 32nd Divn. 97th Brigade the 24/25 Sept. Bn. now in XV Corps 4th Army.

SEPTEMBER 23 1917 - COXYDE

Bn. carried out P.T. and B.F. exercise in the morning. Slight enemy shelling during the early morning. Orders received that the Bn. were to relieve the 2/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. in the Right Sub-sector NIEUPOORT BAINS Sector. Enemy aircraft flew over camp at 6 pm but were driven away by our A.A. guns. A few shells, 5.9 calibre, fired in the vicinity of the camp at 11 pm.

SEPTEMBER 24 1917 - COXYDE

Various parties went up line to see new position. Morning spent in cleaning up L.G.s, etc. Bn. marched off at 6.30 pm via OOST DUNKIRK and relieved the 2nd/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. in the right Sub-sector NIEUPORT BAINS Sector.

Relief completed at 9.45. A coy. took over right front co., D co. left front co., C co. less 1 platoon in close support. 1 platoon of C co. in reserve at M20 d75.30. B co attached to 2nd AUSTRALIAN Tunnelling co. 2nd Lt. TEARE and 25 O.R. attached to 429th Co. R.E. M.G. map attached.

The 16th N. Fusiliers on our right (32nd Divn.) and 5th Manchesters on our left. Hostile shelling slight.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded. 1 O.R. wounded (at duty).

SEPTEMBER 25 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

Quiet morning in our area. Enemy shelled NIEUPORT BAINS intermittently with heavies all morning. A number of our 'planes flew low over enemy positions and were engaged with M.G. fire. At 11.30 am four enemy 'planes crossed our lines but were driven off by A.A. and L.G. fire. At 5.35 an enemy 'plane came over our A co.'s line, very low, and was vigorously engaged with L.G. fire, it flew back to enemy lines and descended about M15 b apparently hit. From 8 pm to 9.30 pm very quiet. Between 11 pm and 3 am about 50 T.M. tear gas shells were directed on our front and support lines.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded. 1 O.R. Gassed.

SEPTEMBER 26 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

Patrols sent out to get in touch with 16th Bn. Northumberland Fusiliers at 1 am, 3 am and 5 am. From 5.30 am until 9.15 am hostile battery fired on our positions at M20 b. BEACON ALLEY damaged by shell fire at 9 am. Intermittent shelling of NIEUPORT BAINS all morning. Between 4 pm and 4.11 pm our artillery had a practice protection barrage on 32nd Divnl front. Bosche replied feebly. Quiet night. Improvement of trenches and work in BOSCHE support carried out.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded. 1 O.R. gassed.

SEPTEMBER 27 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

At 6 am Enemy put down a heavy barrage on 32nd divnl. front (M22 c&d). Our S.O.S. went up at 6.10 am and our artillery put down barrage. A raiding party, hostile, were driven off only three men entering the trenches. 2 killed. 1 O.R. prisoner, by 32nd Divn. Our front was only slightly shelled. Desultory shelling all day. Lt Col. CROSS and three O.R. swam the river at night and patrolled the opposite bank of the river. No enemy were observed. Much useful information was obtained as to river banks, tracks used by hostile patrols, etc. and a belt of Bosche wire was (?unknown?).

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded.

SEPTEMBER 28 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

Work was carried on in the trenches on improvement, etc. until 5 am. 5.15 am to 9.30 am enemy artillery active, particular attention being paid to M14 c, M20 c, M20 d, chiefly with 5.9. Desultory shelling along our Support line during the day. Calibre 77mm. Hostile aircraft over our lines between 3.45 pm and 4 pm, driven off by M.G. & L.G. fire. An enemy working party were

heard hammering in stakes at M15 a55 about 7 am. During day various individuals were seen on the beach near LOMBARTZYDE BAINS. Work carried on at night as usual. Quiet night, hostile shelling slight.

Casualties NIL.

SEPTEMBER 29 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

Usual patrols sent out to the bn. on our right. Our field Batteries were active during the day. Much enemy movement was observed in M15 b during the day. Enemy shelled Support line, vicinity of Bn. Hqs. and back areas intermittently all day. An enemy working party at M15 c84 at 10 pm were dispersed by L.G. fire.

Casualties 1 O.R. Killed. 1 O.R. wounded (died of wounds later).

SEPTEMBER 30 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

At 2 am gas shells were sent over mixed with H.E. just behind Support line. 3.10 am Short intense H.E. and gas shells bombardment on the island (M21 d). Hostile heavy trench mortar active all morning from 12 midnight until 9 am. Major General held a conference of C.O.s at Bge. Hqs. (MONTE CHRISTO). Quiet morning. Our aircraft active. Heavy shelling of the back areas all day. From 9 pm to 11 pm gas shells dropped behind our Support line chiefly lachrymatory. Heavy trench mortars (hostile) shelled M15 a intermittently between 8.20 and midnight, otherwise Quiet night.

Casualties 2nd Lt. W. BORRINO wounded. 2nd Lt. A. ASHTON rejoined from Hospital.

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties		
(from above listings)		
Killed	1	20
Died of wounds		2
Wounded	2	87 (including 9 at duty)
Gassed	2	24
Injured	1	
Sick to hospital	1	none listed

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT OCTOBER 1917

OCTOBER 1 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

At 2 am hostile gas shells were sent over mixed with H.E. just behind the Support line and at 3.10 am a short intense H.E. (chiefly 4.2 calibre) and gas shell bombardment was put in same place. At 6 am several T.M. shells were fired on front line, bearing fixed at (?unknown?) (?unknown?) from M21 a46. A golden rain rocket was fired by enemy at 5.15 am. Much enemy movement was noticed Between 6 am and 6.30 am at in about M15 b. Enemy aircraft flew low over our lines at 2.45 pm. Back areas were shelled by hostile batteries during afternoon. A few gas shells were fired on our lines about 11 pm.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded. 1 O.R. killed.

OCTOBER 2 1917 - RIGHT SUB-SECTOR NIEUPORT BAINS SECTOR

Very quiet morning. In the afternoon enemy shelled back areas and NIEUPORT BAINS. Complete orders for relief received.

Relief by 1/6th Bn. Manchester Regt. commenced at 7.30 pm and completed at 10.45 pm. Various parties were sent down during the day to take over new camp YORKSHIRE Camp. Enemy aircraft active after dark. Capt. L. OLDERSHAW, R.A.M.C., killed near Suicide Corner. Major LINGS wounded. Also 8 O.R. attached to Tunnelling Co. wounded.

OCTOBER 3 1917 - YORKSHIRE CAMP [near OOST-DUNKERKE]

Most of the day spent in cleaning up, fitting equipment and kit inspections. Afternoon the funeral of Capt L. O. OLDERSHAW, R.A.M.C. took place at COXYDE (VILLE) Military Cemetery with full Military Honours.

OCTOBER 4 1917 - YORKSHIRE CAMP [near OOST-DUNKERKE]

Morning spent in training (by Companies).

Captain H.C. GALSTER, U.S. M.O.R.C., reported for duty.

Preliminary Orders came through for the Division to be relieved by the 41st Div.

OCTOBER 5 1917 - YORKSHIRE CAMP [near OOST-DUNKERKE]

Training as yesterday. Afternoon enter platoon cross country race. Result A, D, C Coys. each had one platoon left in semi final.

Orders for the Relief arrived at 11.15 pm.

OCTOBER 6 1917 - YORKSHIRE CAMP [near OOST-DUNKERKE]

Battalion relieved by 11th Bn. Queen's Own Royal West Surrey Rgt. Battalion marched to camp at X3 a91 ST. IDESBALDE. [NOTE: ST. IDESBALDE was at W10 b47, YORKSHIRE CAMP, from where they departed, was at X3 a91] When we took over the camp it was in extremely filthy and unsanitary condition. Rain the whole day.

OCTOBER 7 1917 - ST. IDESBALDE

Battalion marched to AUSTRALIA Camp (W18 b63). 127th Infantry Brigade now the Brigade in Reserve to the Division (the Division having relieved the 39th Division) in the front immediately on the right of the old Div. Front.

Working party of 125 O.R. required in future for night work.

OCTOBER 8 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Training continued, particular attention being paid to the Training of Reserve Lewis Gunners and Signallers.

Afternoon semi-final of inter-platoon cross country race. Result 1 platoon each of C & D Coys. left for the Final.

OCTOBER 9 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Started working party of 150 O.R. for daytime. Total number now working in 24 hrs. 290 O.R. Only the Reserve Lewis Gunners & Signallers left to train.

2LT. J. LINDLEY reported for duty from the 42nd Div. Wing.

Capt C.G. MOORE assumed Command of the Bn. during the absence on leave of LT. COL. CROSS.

OCTOBER 10 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Working parties as yesterday - likewise training. 2LT. N. WOOD reported from Div. Wing. 2 LT S.J. DAVIE killed and 1 O.R. wounded when proceeding on a train up the line for the evening working party.

OCTOBER 11 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Working parties & training as yesterday. 2LT S.J. DAVIE buried with full military honours at COXYDE (VILLE) Military Cemetery.

OCTOBER 12 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Working parties & training as yesterday. 2LT J. WILKINSON reported for duty from Divisional Wing.

OCTOBER 13 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Working parties as yesterday. 5 limbered G.S. waggons also required. The approaches to the line reconnoitred.

OCTOBER 14 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Sunday C.E. Divine Service in Church Army Hut at 11.30 am.

OCTOBER 15 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Working parties as Usual. Very wet. Half a company of the 1/7th Bn. Manchester Rgt. started sandbagging the huts of this Camp.

OCTOBER 16 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Another party of 60 O.R. required daily. Total of men working daily 350 O.R.

OCTOBER 17 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

As yesterday. At night the camp was shelled slightly. Five shells (5.9") fell in the Camp area. Casualties 6 O.R. wounded. Several shells also dropped on COXYDE.

2LTS. W. BENNETT, G.V. HULL, H.S. PEPPER, W. SMART reported for duty from Div. Wing.

OCTOBER 18 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Slight amount of shelling in this Area during the day. Some of the men bathed at COXYDE.

OCTOBER 19 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

More bathing for men. Slight shelling of back area at night. Orders for Relief came through.

OCTOBER 20 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

All men's feet treated against "Trench Foot". Advance party of 1 runner per coy. & Bn. H.Q., Scout Sergt. & Sergt. Cook and LT. TEARE went up to 1/8th Lincs. Fusiliers.

OCTOBER 21 1917 - AUSTRALIA CAMP [near COXYDE]

Lt. Col. CROSS rejoined from leave. Bn. marched out at 4.15 pm to relieve 1/8th Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers in the LOMBARTZYDE Sector. Marched out (including advance party) 18 Officers 445 O.R. Relief complete at 11.25 pm. Remarkably quiet the whole night. No casualties.

The route taken by the battalion through NIEUPOORT was entirely through tunnels which were in very good condition - the greater part are lit electrically. The Bridge across the YSER to Bn. H.Q. (PUTNEY BRIDGE) is a track of duck boarding on floats and is very precarious. It is frequently damaged by hostile shell fire and rendered impassable. Bn. Headquarters (RUBBER HOUSE) is an old farm house heavily concreted. It is very commodious & contains the headquarters of the Bn. (left / Front) and the Support Bn. (1/7th Bn. Manchester Rgt.). The Dispositions are shown on the attached sketch.

OCTOBER 22 1917 - NIEUPOORT

No movement is allowed by day so communication with the forward company by telephone only. The lines are broken frequently by shell fire. There are duckboard tracks between Bn. H.Q. & the Companies but portions are destroyed and have never been repaired. The whole ground is waterlogged and movement is very difficult.

Rations came up tonight to Town Major's Office NIEUPOORT (near where the petrol tins are filled with water). All bridges across the River were broken so Rations & Water, etc., were very late. Bridges not repaired at midnight. Patrol sent from NOSE SLIP M22 b41 in N.W. Direction to enemy post about 70 yds. away found this post unoccupied.

Our artillery quiet the whole day. Enemy artillery rather active during the day near the bridges between 5 pm and 9 pm. Area between Nasal Trench & Nasal Support shelled by small trench mortar. One direct hit in Nasal Trench. Slight Damage.

Casualties at noon Nil. Coys. in Front line sent patrols to Coys. on right.

OCTOBER 23 1917 - NIEUPOORT

All rations & water sent up to the Coys. before daybreak.

Intermittent shelling most of the day. PUTNEY BRIDGE Rendered Useless by hostile shelling. Some shrapnel.

Casualties 6 O.R. wounded (2 at duty and 2 accidentally).

PUTNEY BRIDGE repaired about 2 pm & Rendered impassable again 6 pm.

Two patrols went out, one from M22 a45.10, the other from M22 b40.30. Neither of them came in contact with the enemy owing to the inundation of the ground.

OCTOBER 24 1917 - NIEUPOORT

PUTNEY BRIDGE was impassable when the ration limbers arrived & there was some congestion on BROWDER BRIDGE. The rations however were got over in good time, together with water & 100 clean shirts tonight up by the ration limbers - arrangements having been made for 100 shirts per day to be exchanged at the clothing store at the baths in COXYDE VILLE.

5.15 am An enemy working party of 7 men were seen apparently improving their position at M22 b44 which was damaged by our shell fire yesterday.

1 pm Between 1 & 2 pm communication by the bridges was interrupted by continuous hostile shelling (H.E. 4.2s) at a fairly steady rate of something more than one round per minute. Retaliation was called for & two-minute bursts were fired by our artillery on selected targets.

7.30 pm A patrol consisting of 1 Officer and 8 O.R. went out from M22 a24 in a N.W. direction to try and discover whether any enemy posts or patrols were in the vicinity. After proceeding for a short distance a L.G. was heard firing from M22 a43. The patrol returned to investigate and found that an enemy patrol approaching had been fired on. Search was made and the body of one German was found. The following identifications were obtained. One Shoulder strap. Identity disc, Fried Hemmerich, Neudorf. Bay. 14 J.R. 1X 3879. a metre measure & three pay books. This enabled Intelligence to identify the troops in front as the 14th BAVARIAN REGT. belonging to the 16th DIVISION, which was known to have suffered heavily at ZONNEBEKE in the battle for MENIN ROAD in September. This Division afterwards moved to ROULERS & then relieved the 3rd NAVAL DIVISION in the LOMBARTDYZE Sector.

11.00 pm. A patrol of 2 Officers & 12 other ranks went out from M22 b45.10 to an old enemy breastwork about 100 yds. N.W. of that point which was found to be unoccupied. Patrol did not come in contact with the enemy.

OCTOBER 25 1917 - NIEUPOORT

The day passed without incident & in the evening the battalion was relieved by the 1/6th Bn. Manchester Regt. & moved into the reserve line. Neither PUTNEY nor CROWDER Bridge was broken during the afternoon or evening of the relief, the first company of the 1/6th MANCHESTERS crossing the river at 5.30 pm, relief was reported complete at 8.25 pm.

Disposition of the Battalion in Reserve Bn. H.Q. at M27 b65.40; A Co. headquarters in the same series of dug outs with one platoon as garrison of the PRESQU'ILE (M21 d); B Company in the reserve line near Bn. H.Q.; C Company in NIEUPOORT at M28 c54.40; D Company in the SARDINIERE (M34 b80.80). During the relief rations were brought up to three separate ration points & the water cart was brought up & left at Bn. H.Q.

OCTOBER 26 1917 - NIEUPOORT

During the day the M.O. held a foot inspection of the whole battalion.

The day was quiet in the reserve line except for intermittent hostile shelling mainly in the neighbourhood of the PRESQU'ILE & occasionally along the bank in which the H.Q. & B Co. dug outs were situated. In the Evening Working parties totalling from 140 to 200 O.R. were detailed by the Brigade. Nearly all this work was done between 7.00 pm & 12 M.N. A party of 25 O.R. carried R.E. Stores over to the REDAN Dump: 30 O.R. carried mining timber for the 257 Tunnelling Co. R.E.s: and two officers & 70 O.R. worked under R.E. direction till midnight on the improvement of the trenches, NOSE LANE & NOSE ALLEY. Three hundred of the clean shirts which had come up from Bn. Dump were issued to companies with soiled shirts returned by transport.

OCTOBER 27 1917 - NIEUPOORT

Another quiet day with intermittent shelling. Working parties were again found in the same numbers at night & a party of 25 O.R. worked for two hours burying cable under R.E. direction.

OCTOBER 28 1917 - NIEUPOORT

A quiet day, the same working parties found with the addition of an extra party of one officer & 40 O.R. to carry water once to the reserve supply in the REDAN.

OCTOBER 29 1917 - NIEUPOORT

During the greater part of the day, the battalion made use of the Brigade anti-trench-foot Bathing room (situated in a cellar in NIEUPOORT). With the assistance of the R.A.M.C. personnel, every man who was going into the line had his feet washed with "trench-foot" soap, generally attended to & powdered.

6.30 pm. The Battalion relieved the 1/6th Manchesters in the line. A Coy. were the right front Coy., B the left front Coy., C Coy. in support in the Huiterie and D Coy. in reserve in Nieuport. There were no casualties during the relief. Patrol went out from M22 a34 towards the Geleide River. Enemy working party was seen and dispersed.

M.G. firing into the Redan during the night. A few trench Mortar shells fell near A Coy. H.Q. no damage done. Also the aerial shelling of the bridges.

OCTOBER 30 1917 - NIEUPOORT

Intermittent shelling of the bridges during the morning.

2.00 pm. Putney Bridge badly smashed, but repaired about 8.00 pm.

7.30 pm. Patrol went out from M22 a45.00 and proceeded along bank N.E. for about 300 yds. passing a large shell crater. The enemy turned Rifle and M.G. fire on patrol, no one however was hit. After waiting for the enemy to come out of his post to search ground without result, the patrol returned to our line. The body of a Pte. in the 1/5th K.O.Y.L.I. was found by this patrol and his effects taken off him.

11.30 pm. A patrol went out from M22 b45.10 in a N.W. direction for a short distance then went N.E. for about 50 yds. an enemy Working party with a covering party was discovered. The patrol immediately opened fire, on which the enemy replied, shortly after Sgt. Taylor i/c of the patrol ordered his men to withdraw to small bank just in (?)rear(?), whilst doing this one man No.301344 Pte. Edwards was killed. The moon being full made patrols very difficult.

Enemy M.G. firing into the Redan was responsible for several men being hit. The Battalion was congratulated on this patrol by G.O.'s C. Division & Bde.

Casualties 1 Killed. 2 wounded.

OCTOBER 31 1917 - NIEUPOORT

Enemy artillery quiet during the day except on the right of the Bn. front where they destroyed a dam. The ground for some distance around being inundated at High tide.

1.20 am. A patrol of 1 Officer & 7 O.R. went along bank to Geleide brook where they met an enemy patrol of from 14 to 20 O.R., bombs were thrown by the enemy. Our patrol engaged them with Bombs and rifle fire and made them retire. The patrol went out again twice during the night to see what casualties they had inflicted but were fired on by M.G. and rifles, bombs were also thrown, the patrol engaged them again and chased them back for some distance. After which the enemy fired Rifle Grenades which lit very near our post. The casualties in our patrol were two men slightly wounded, two men were also wounded in the post by Rifle Grenades.

A party went out from the Right Company and brought in the body of the man killed the previous night on patrol.

Casualties 4 O.R. wounded.

Total battle casualties for the month:

	Officers	O.R.
Killed	2	2
Wounded	1	39

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT NOVEMBER 1917

NOVEMBER 1 1917 - NIEUPOORT

6.30 am. The enemy shelled the vicinity of the Redan with 4.2 also the area to the right of Bn. front where the Dam was burst the previous day. Owing to the bursting of the Dam the part of Nose Alley near the Redan was under water. Nasal Support and Nose Alley as far as the Huiterie were also very wet.

11.40 am. About noon the enemy shelled the posts of the left front Company near the Geleide Brook, nearly 200 shells fell here.

5.10 pm. Heavy shelling of Bn. H.Q. and Putney Bridge with 4.2. This lasted until 8.30 pm consequently there was no traffic over the Bridge during that Period. The Bridge however was not broken.

3.00 pm. A large number of Medium T.M. fell near M22 d86 and M28 d66 Nasal Trench. One post in NASAL TRENCH was partly smashed in.

5.50 pm. A patrol of 1 Officer and 7 O.R. to reconnoitre NO MAN'S LAND area went out from the Right Companies left post in NASAL TRENCH. After proceeding some distance in a N.W. direction they found a stream running towards enemy trench, the width of which varied from 6 to 20 feet. The patrol went along side of stream in order to find a crossing but without result. The ground was full of shell holes and very difficult going. No signs of the enemy were seen.

NOVEMBER 2 1917 - NIEUPOORT

5.00 am. About thirty trench mortar shells medium and light fell in the vicinity of NASAL TRENCH and NOSE ALLEY.

During the day the enemy artillery was less active than usual. The Bn. was relieved by the 1/6th Man. Regt.

5.30 pm. A salvo of 4.2 shells was fired at PUTNEY BRIDGE just as the 1/6th MAN. REGT. were commencing to cross over the bridge. One man was wounded. After this the enemy were very quiet and enabled the relief to be carried out without casualties. The relief was reported complete at 10.30 pm. The Bn. going into Reserve in NIEUPOORT, the COMPANIES occupied the same positions as last time in reserve. A COMPANY has an additional Liaison Post to occupy in NEW PARADE.

NOVEMBER 3 1917 - NIEUPOORT

11 am. All COMPANIES made use of the new foot baths in NIEUPOORT during the day.

2.00 pm. The enemy shelled the vicinity of NEW WALK and PRESQU'ILE. A number of working parties were found for work under the R.E.s during the evening.

9.00 pm. Enemy planes flew over NIEUPOORT and dropped a number of bombs.

NOVEMBER 4 1917 - NIEUPOORT

Enemy Artillery much more active than usual. D Co. H.Q. in the Sardiniere had a direct hit with a 4.2 but no damage was done. Enemy planes over NIEUPOORT many times during the day flying very low.

Working parties were found for the R.E.s during the evening.

The Commanding Officer examined all Platoon Commanders in S3 d43.

NOVEMBER 5 1917 - NIEUPORT

The Battalion were relieved by the 1/8th LANCASHIRE FUSILIERS at 8.00 pm and proceed to FURRES ROAD HUTMENT, LA PANNE via WOLDEN & COXYDE. It was originally arranged that the Bn. should go into the billets vacated by the 1/8th L.F. on the sea front this was however changed at the last minute.

The night was very dark this making the relief much later than expected. Relief complete reported at 10.30 pm. The COMPANIES marched to their new billets independently. The last COMPANY arriving at 2.00 am on the 6th inst. Two L.G. were ordered to relieve the 1/5th L.F. for Anti Aircraft purposes at FURRES RAILHEAD.

The Bn. H.Q. was about 2 miles from the hutments and was situated near the Area Commandant's Office at W15 a01. The remainder of the OFFICERS were billeted at the GRAND HOTEL DES ARCADES at W20 b99 with the exception of one Officer per Company who lived at the HUTMENTS.

1 Officer and 50 O.R. remained in NIEUPORT and were attached to the Special Co. R.E. carrying Gas Projectors.

NOVEMBER 6 1917 - LA PANNE

The day was spent in generally cleaning and smartening up. New Clothing was also issued. The training area allotted to the Bn. was in square W20.

NOVEMBER 7 1917 - LA PANNE

The training programme arranged could not be carried out owing to heavy rain. A number of fatigue parties were found during the evening.

Lt. C.M. Ware joined the Bn. and was posted to B Coy.

NOVEMBER 8 1917 - LA PANNE

Training was carried on as far as possible during the morning with the men available. During the afternoon the C.O. held a kit inspection of all the men in the camp.

The party of 1 Officer and 50 O.R. left in Nieuport when the BN. moved down reported at the camp at 4.00 am.

NOVEMBER 9 1917 - LA PANNE

The training in the morning was chiefly in Musketry. D Company used the range situated in the rear of the Camp.

Two L.G. teams for A.A. work at St Idesbalde Railhead were relieved by the 1/6th Manchester Regt.

The whole of the Bn. made use of the Corps Baths at COXYDE during the afternoon.

The following Officers reported for duty with the Bn. this day, 2/Lt. F. Sloane, 2/Lt. G.K. Walton, 2/Lt. S. P. Dawson, 2/Lt. S. Brierley, also the Rev. Father J. McGinnell.

NOVEMBER 10 1917 - LA PANNE

Training was carried out in the morning as per programme attached. Afternoon very wet.

NOVEMBER 11 1917 - LA PANNE

Divine Services were held during the morning.

The C.O. interviewed all N.C.O.s and men desirous of obtaining Commissions. The 2nd (?)i/c(?) held an inspection of all Company lines.

NOVEMBER 12 1917 - LA PANNE

Training carried out according to programme. The weather was bright and the ground almost dry after yesterday's rain. Enemy aircraft over LA PANNE. Several bombs dropped & several civilians killed & wounded.

NOVEMBER 13 1917 - LA PANNE

Training continued. A demonstration of Lewis Gun Firing took place near the Camp. The Major General and the Brigadier General attended.

Enemy aircraft over the camp and the town twice. Five Gothas came the second time and dropped several bombs. Several soldiers & civilians were killed & wounded in bombing. 1 O.R. of this Unit killed.

NOVEMBER 14 1917 - LA PANNE

Training Continued. Weather still fine. No firing on beach on account of the quickly rising tide. Pte. FRASER (killed by Bomb on the 13th inst.) buried at COXYDE cemetery.

NOVEMBER 15 1917 - LA PANNE

Official warning of the move on the 16th inst. Two Railway Waggon Loads of rations sent by ST. IDESBALDE RAILHEAD for dispatch direct to final destination.

NOVEMBER 16 1917 - LA PANNE

Marched to COLUMBIER FARM (500 yds. E. of UXEM). French Troops pouring into LA PANNE until we left. Fine weather for march. No men fell out.

NOVEMBER 17 1917 - COLUMBIER FARM

Marched to WORMHOUDT. Good weather for marching. Two men fell out.

NOVEMBER 18 1917 - WORMHOUDT

Marched to village of RIETVELD a small village a mile Sth. of WORMHOUDT. No men fell out.

NOVEMBER 19 1917 - RIETVELD

Marched to HONDEGHEM Area - Coys. scattered in farms 1 - 3 miles Nth. of WALLON - CAPPEL main cross roads. No men fell out.

NOVEMBER 20 1917 - HONDEGHEM area

Marched to ISBERGUES. No men fell out.

NOVEMBER 21 1917 - ISBERGUES

Day spent on cleaning up, bathing & kit inspections, etc.
All the men in good billets now. One Coy. at Baths.

NOVEMBER 22 1917 - ISBERGUES

Training carried out at 09 a88 in the morning. Afternoon Football - Inter Coy. League Matches played.

NOVEMBER 23 1917 - ISBERGUES

Training carried out. One Coy. on Range. Warning Order from Bde. as to probable move on 24th inst. Warning Order Cancelled & warned for Move to BETHUNE on 26th inst.

NOVEMBER 24 1917 - ISBERGUES

Battalion Parade & Training Continued in the morning. Afternoon Football (Inter Company League).

NOVEMBER 25 1917 - ISBERGUES

Final Warning Order that Bn. moves into Line on 27th inst.

NOVEMBER 26 1917 - ISBERGUES

Marched to BETHUNE. The whole Battalion Billeted at the Tobacco Factory very comfortably. No men fell out on march. Men allowed out in the town where there are plenty of amusements for them.

NOVEMBER 27 1917 - BETHUNE

Bn. left Tobacco factory at 10 am and marched up via BEUVRY, LE QUESNOY & GORRE to relieve 4th South Staffs. in the GIVENCHY Sector (left Battalion). RELIEF complete at 3.20 pm.

Dispositions right to left in front line A, C, & D Coys. In support in the Old British Line where Bn. H.Q. is situated is B Coy.

On the left is the 4th Portuguese Infantry Battalion (part of 1st PORTUGUESE Division). On the right is the 1/5th Bn. Manchester Rgt.

The frontage is about 2000 yds. There is a continuous front line except for about 600 yds. which are held by 3 isolated posts (part of the original front line now flooded). The Fire trenches, Communication Trenches & the O.B.L. (Old British Line - Now the support line) are all dry as duck boards are being laid everywhere needed over the mud and water. On account of the swampy nature of the Ground it is impossible to dig any trenches so that breastworks are used instead.

Communication both forward and to the rear is very good indeed.

Rations are brought by limber to ESTAMINET Dump (F6 c48) and then pushed in trucks along the Railway Lines to the Coys. at BARNTON TEE (A3 a56), RICHMOND (S27 a20.85) and to O.B.L. Water is pumped up to Tanks until the Left & Centre Coys. Water Tanks for the remainder are put on trucks at the pump at the BREWERY (S20 d43). The cooking for all coys. is done in the O.B.L. The food is carried up to the Companies in the line in Hot Food Containers. The Support Company does this carrying as well as pushing up the other rations and R.E. material to the Companies. All refuse is brought down from Coys. and sent on the trucks to Estaminet Dump where it is removed to the incinerator by the limbers.

There are fairly plentiful dug out accommodation for all the men although these dug outs like the trenches are in need of repair as they are very old.

This is a wonderfully quiet sector.

Touch is kept with Bn. on right by hourly Patrols.

A working party of about four of the enemy were observed about 70 yds. in front of centre company. Shelling very slight.

NOVEMBER 28 1917 - LEFT FRONT BN. GIVENCHY SECTOR

Patrols sent out to inspect the wire in front of left & centre Coys. 2 places the wire is only in moderate repair.

About 10 rounds 4.2in fell near brewery about 9 am. During Morning another 15 rounds fell near the same place.

An enemy aeroplane circled over the front line at high altitude about 1 pm.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded at duty.

NOVEMBER 29 1917 - LEFT FRONT BN. GIVENCHY SECTOR

Very quiet all day. Two patrols sent out at night from left & right Coys. Left Coy. (D Coy.) sent out 1 Officer (2LT WILKINSON) and 11 O.R. from S28 a39 at 9 pm. They proceeded along the dike to S22 c48.03 and found that the dike was dammed by the parapet of our old trench. None of the enemy were encountered although flares were sent up later (10.10 pm) from S22 c85.03. Patrol returned at 9.50 pm.

Right (A) Coy. sent out 1 Officer (2LT LINDLEY) and 12 O.R. to examine the enemy wire. They went out from 2.30 am to 3.30 am (30th inst.). They left our line at A3 a91 and on reaching the enemy wire East of this point a machine gun opened fire from about A3 b33.10. A sergt. and private were wounded (both flesh wounds). As no further progress would be made the wounded were brought in and the patrol withdrew.

NOVEMBER 30 1917 - LEFT FRONT BN. GIVENCHY SECTOR

Enemy artillery very quiet. M.G. not located fired burst at night on QUINQUE RUE and Right Cover Trench.

3 of the enemy seen digging at S23 a98 about 8.40 am.

At 2 pm a hostile aeroplane was over our line. At 2.45 pm two hostile aeroplanes over our lines were driven off by our anti-aircraft gun fire.

	Officers	O.R.
Total of Bn (In France)	37 (excluding chaplain)	767
Trench Strength	22	457
Battle Casualties During Month		
Killed		2
Wounded	1 (Capt YATES at duty)	25 (including 9 at duty)

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT DECEMBER 1917

DECEMBER 1 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Our 18 pounders shelled RUE du MARAIS between 12.30 & 12.40 pm. Our T.M. also shelled the front line of the enemy system of trenches. Enemy artillery quiet. Enemy M.G.s fairly active during the night. The usual hourly Patrol to the Battalion on the right was sent during the night. Our left Coy. (D Coy.) continued the wiring of their front. An enemy aeroplane over our lines from 7.40 am to 7.55 am.

DECEMBER 2 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Artillery on both sides fairly quiet. Fourteen medium T.M. shells fell near our line in S28 a between 9.50 & 10.05 am. The wiring of CANADIAN ORCHARD improved and extended so that now there is a complete belt of wire round the post with one gap. An enemy aeroplane was over our lines from 9.05 to 9.10 am and again at 9.20 am when it was driven off by our A.A. guns.

A patrol of one Officer (Lt HARRIS) and 12 O.R. left our lines at A3 a94.30 at 6.30 pm with the object of reconnoitring No Man's Land and examining the Wire at Old Man's Corner. The night was very dark and the patrol had great difficulty in making its way across No Man's Land to the enemy wire which was reached at A3 b30.15. The wire from here to a point 150 yards south of it was examined. There were two belts of wire, the outer one being in a very poor condition and mostly broken. The inner belt was in very good repair and no gaps were found in it. Whilst the patrol was looking for gaps an enemy M.G. (not yet located) opened fire on them and the patrol withdrew, returning to our lines at 8.50 pm. No Man's Land was very difficult as the ground was cut up intersected by numerous streams and ditches.

Another patrol (from the centre Coy.) of one Officer (2LT DUNN) and three other ranks left our line at S27 b51 at 6.30 pm to reconnoitre No Man's Land East of the Point. About 80 yards out the patrol found an embankment running N.E. & S.W. It was found that this embankment had been sandbagged here to form a post and had also been tunnelled from the direction of the enemy. 2LT DUNN thought that this post if manned by the enemy would be of great use to them. Still further out the going was very bad. The patrol returned about 8.30 pm.

DECEMBER 3 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Very Quiet. Very little artillery or M.G. fire on either side. During the day about 20 light T.M. shells fell near the front line of the left and centre Coys. who retaliated with our L.T.M. The Battalion was relieved in the Line by 1/6th Manchester Rgt. Relief Complete 4 pm. Coys. moved down independently to GORRE CHATEAU, the Bn. now being in Reserve. Three Coys. are billeted in the Chateau, and the other Coy. in a farm very close by. The Officers (except H.Q. Officers in the Chateau) are billeted in the cottages close by. Everyone is very comfortable.

DECEMBER 4 1917 - GORRE

Two Companies bathed at the Baths LE QUESNOY in the morning and the other two in the afternoon. Training carried out according to programme. The weather very dry and frosty.

DECEMBER 5 1917 - GORRE

Training continued as per programme. There is a very fine training ground here complete with trenches & assault course & miniature range. There is also a football ground. A Class of 16 N.C.O.s for training in P.T. & B.F. meets daily under C.S.M. Spigett (Bde Instructor).

Afternoon inter-company league matches took place.

During the day Officers & N.C.O.s reconnoitred the routes to the front line of the Right Subsector. Enemy aircraft action during the night. A few bombs were dropped on BETHUNE & LE QUESNOY.

DECEMBER 6 1917 - GORRE

Training continued. The Bde Armourer Sergt inspected the Rifle and Lewis Guns of the Battalion during the day. The weather still continues very cold indeed.

DECEMBER 7 1917 - GORRE

Training continued. In the afternoon half holiday & games instead of on Saturday. Slight rise in temperature and a thaw commenced. BETHUNE shelled during the day.

DECEMBER 8 1917 - GORRE

Weather relatively warm. Training continued. Each coy. on range in LE QUESNOY for an hour.

DECEMBER 9 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

The Battalion left GORRE at 1 pm to relieve the 1/6th Manchester Rgt. in the Front Line. The weather very dull and wet. Relief complete at 3.20 pm. Dispositions of Coys. Right to Left: Front Line A, C & B Coys. In Support D Coy. Visibility during the day was very poor and very little could be seen from our O.P. at BREWERY (S20 d32). The night was intensely dark and no wiring was done on this account. A small enemy patrol was seen outside our wire at S27 d11. Very Lights were sent up and fire opened on them, nothing more being seen of them but they were heard splashing in the water and talking loudly. Both our own and the enemies (sic) artillery & M.G.s were quiet all day and night.

DECEMBER 10 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

The weather much brighter today. The enemy had two balloons up - visibility very good. Artillery of both sides very quiet. Enemy Trench Mortars were active all day - about 60 light T.M. shells fell near SHETLAND TRENCH and in S22 a from 8.45 am - 9.45 am. About 15 light T.M. shells fell near S27 b63 during the morning whilst during the afternoon about 8 medium T.M. shells fell in A3 a. No damage or casualties were caused by these T.M. shells. During the day and night enemy machine guns were fairly active, traversing along the Front Line Trench & O.B.L. and also a few bursts on the QUINQUE RUE. One man was wounded by bullet (later died). In the morning 2LT GLENDENING accidentally wounded whilst engaged on a rifle inspection in the Front Line.

Two patrols were sent out to examine the enemy wire.

A patrol of 8 O.R. under a sergt. left BARNTON CENTRAL at point A3 a60.86 at 4.45 am to ascertain the state of wire from OLD MAN'S CORNER to a distance of 200 yds North of this point. The patrol reported there was only one thick belt of wire with a good deal of loose wire thrown in. Wooden stakes were wired and a trip wire was found in front of the main belt of wire.

Only one small gap - sufficient for one man at a time to crawl through was found. No enemy was heard or seen.

A patrol of 1 Officer (2LT S.B. YATES) and 8 O.R. left the Centre Coy. at 3 am and reconnoitred the enemy wire from S27 d58.56 to S28 c12.97, leaving our line at S27 d20.75. The wire was in good condition without gaps and was of a regular low apron type about 12 feet thick. There was only one belt. No Man's Land in this area is very flooded and very difficult to pass. None of the enemy was seen or heard.

DECEMBER 11 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Artillery on both sides very quiet. Enemy machine guns active and fired several bursts on Right Cover Trench during the night. During the day an enemy M.G. fired several bursts on BARNTON NORTH TRENCH in retaliation to our snipers, who were active all day (each Front Line Coy. has four snipers in the front line). About 20 rounds light T.M. shells fell during the morning near Right Cover Trench in S27 b central.

A patrol of 1 Officer (Lieut.WARE) and 8 O.R. from the left Coy. went out from our line (at S28 a28) at 3 am. The enemy wire from S28 a43 to S28 a76 was examined. It was about 15 feet thick and a trip wire with tin cans attached. No gaps were found and there was no sign of the enemy. The ground south of CANADIAN ORCHARD is bad but North of the Post the going is better. Patrol returned about 4.30 am. Casualties 1 Officer (Lt Harris) sick to H.P.

DECEMBER 12 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Enemy artillery very quiet. Our 18 pounders fired on enemy wire in front of DOVER TRENCH for purposes of registration. Enemy M.G. not so active today. Occasional bursts on QUINQUE RUE and O.B.L. during night. Four T.M. shells fell near S22 c21. No direct hits on trench and no damage was done. Another heavy T.M. shell fell near S27 b. Our Stokes Mortars retaliated and no more T.M. were fired till 10 pm when 8 heavy T.M. shells were fired on RIGHT COVER TRENCH in S28 a. Direct hit on SHETLAND ROAD and CANADIAN ORCHARD TRENCH.

An N.C.O.'s patrol left our lines at S28 a45 at 1 am. The wire from S28 a43 to S28 a05 was examined and found to be in good condition without gaps.

An Officer's patrol (LT KILNER & 8 O.R.) left CANADIAN ORCHARD at 3 am. The wire between S28 a28 was examined and found to be in good condition without gaps. A trip wire 2 feet high on iron pickets runs in front of main belt. No Man's land is clear & dry for 50 yards West of wire, after which it is very cut up and swampy. No enemy were seen or heard. Patrol returned 5.15 am.

An N.C.O.'s patrol left our lines at A3 a68 at 2 am. The Wire in front of the enemy trenches was examined from A3 b49 to S27 d53. At that later point a M.G. opened fire on them. No gaps were found in the wire which was in very good condition. No Man's Land is fairly dry and the going good. Two of the enemy were seen inside their own wire. Patrol returned at 5.30 am. Casualties Nil.

DECEMBER 13 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Enemy artillery very quiet. Our 18 pounders fired 290 rounds to cut the wire in front of DOVER TRENCH near S28 a 41. Two of our observers were left in No. 16 post (usually occupied only by night) and in CANADIAN ORCHARD post to observe the effect of this fire. The two former were killed by a direct hit by a medium T.M. shell. Medium T.M. very active during the day. 4

rounds fell near S23 c portion of our trench. 6 rounds near BARNTON NORTH and 68 rounds near No 16 post and between there & COVER TRENCH. Our Stokes Mortars fired 49 shells in retaliation on enemy from line in S28 a.

An N.C.O. patrol left our lines at No. 15 post to investigate the affect of our artillery on the enemy wire about S28 c19. There was no gap and very little damage had been done.

A patrol of 1 N.C.O. left our lines at A3 a97 at 2.30 am to examine the enemy wire. Wire from A3 b36 to A3 b27 is very thin. There are a number of holes in the ground as though stakes had been pulled up and East of OLD MAN's CORNER the wire is very broken but no actual gaps. Wire is very strong from A3 b23 to A3 b24.18. There was a good deal of talking from A3 b35.60 but none of the enemy were seen. The patrol returned at 3.25 am.

Casualties 2 O.R. killed.

DECEMBER 14 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

Artillery on both sides fairly quiet. Enemy M.G. fairly active. Enemy T.M. active. During the morning 37 medium & 50 light T.M. shells fell between S27 b51 to S27 b45.

A patrol of 7 O.R. left our line at S27 d12 and went due East to the enemy wire. Two wide ditches were crossed. The patrol went along the wire for about 150 yds but nothing was heard so that no enemy post (the object of the patrol) was located. No gaps were discovered. Casualties 2 men wounded (1 man since died of wounds).

DECEMBER 15 1917 - LEFT SUBSECTOR GIVENCHY SECTOR

This Battalion was relieved by 1/6th Manchester Rgt. in the Line. The day was very bright and clear - visibility very good. the 1/6th sent up all their stores, etc. very early in the morning at dawn whilst we waited till dusk. After relief the Battalion went into Brigade support. C Coy. was left in O.B.L. SQ. of the QUINQUE RUE under the control (tactically) of the left Battalion (1/6th Manchester Rgt.). D Coy. was sent to garrison the Keeps - five small redoubts, East of Windy Corner. A & D Coys. are in protected homes near WINDY CORNER. These two Coys. are chiefly engaged on working parties for the R.E. and the Tunnelling Company (251st). Bn. H.Q. is A14 a88. There are cellars for everyone in case of hostile shelling which we were told had taken place fairly often recently as there is an 18 pounder battery just behind Bn Headquarters. During the night a few shells fell about 100 yds. East of the Road.

Casualties 1 O.R. killed in action (during the relief) 1 O.R. wounded.

DECEMBER 16 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

The Battalion used the Baths at LE PLANTIN. The weather was bright and clear with frost. There were the usual working parties from A & B Coys. There was nothing of interest during the day. Snow - about two inches fell during the night.

DECEMBER 17 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

Bathing continued. Regimental Christmas Cards arrived from England. The weather very cold indeed. Warning Order arrived that we are to be relieved on the 23rd inst. by the Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade - this Battalion is to go to OBLINGHEM.

DECEMBER 18 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

Bathing & Work continued. Passage through the wire (in front of the Valley line) running through A8 b, 8 d & 14 b were made and bridges on the Trenches opposite laid down.

DECEMBER 19 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

Bathing & Work continued. Weather intensely cold - a keen frost all night.

DECEMBER 20 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

Orders received for the relief. Representatives of 1/5th Lancs. Fusiliers came out to look round and collect information, etc.

DECEMBER 21 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

Weather very cold with a slight fall of snow (about two inches). Working parties and bathing continued.

DECEMBER 22 1917 - SUPPORT BATTALION GIVENCHY SECTOR

The Battalion was relieved by the 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers - in Support. Relief complete at 2.30 pm. Companies marched independently to their Billets at OBLINGHEM. As D Coy. were marching through the town of BETHUNE - as two platoons with 100 yards between them - enemy aeroplanes without any warning dropped about 50 bombs on the Town. About 4 - 6 bombs fell on or near D Coy. and heavy casualties were inflicted.

Casualties: Killed 1 Officer (2LT S.B. YATES) and 21 O.R.

Wounded and died of Wounds 1 Officer (2LT S.Y. [J.Y.] WILKINSON) and 7 O.R.

Wounded 2LT BRIERLEY and 35 O.R. (including 2 O.R. at duty).

DECEMBER 23 1917 - OBLINGHEM

Battalion spent the day in cleaning up. etc. Church Services in the morning for all denominations. Assistant Chaplain General to 1st Army addressed the men at the C.E. service.

Weather very cold and frosty.

DECEMBER 24 1917 - OBLINGHEM

Very cold - two inches of snow. Very keen frost.

In the afternoon the Funeral of the men killed by bombs on 22/12/17 took place at the BETHUNE Cemetery. Fifty men and all available officers (two per Coy. stayed behind) attended.

DECEMBER 25 1917 - OBLINGHEM

Christmas Day. Each denomination held services, etc. Each Coy. had a Christmas Dinner in the evening followed by a concert. The P.R.I. provided pork, beer, apples, nuts, raisins, cigars, and vegetables. There was also Christmas Pudding and extra vegetables. All the men's dinners were very successful and the men greatly enjoyed themselves.

The Sergeants dined in the Company Sergeants Mess. The Officers also dined by companies.

The day was very cold and sharp.

DECEMBER 26 1917 - OBLINGHEM

Training carried out at W26 a. Battalion Parade at 8 am. One Coy. on the range. Remainder Physical Drill & Bayonet Fighting, Musketry, Wiring and drill.

Afternoon Kit Inspection. Evening a Battalion Concert in a Barn at Battalion Headquarters. Major MOORE left the Battalion for 6 months duty in U.K. Capt E. HORSFALL M.C. assumed duties of 2nd in Command.

DECEMBER 27 1917 - OBLINGHEM

The Battalion was engaged on working parties for the R.E. Motor Lorries came at 8 am (actually came 8.45 am) for the Bn. Very cold.

DECEMBER 28 1917 - OBLINGHEM

The Battalion again engaged on working parties.

DECEMBER 29 1917 - OBLINGHEM

Battalion Training in the morning. Rehearsed for G.O.C. Inspection on the 30th.

DECEMBER 30 1917 - OBLINGHEM

The Battalion marched to AVELETTE (W17 c central) where 1/5th Bn Manchester Rgt. & 127th M.G. Coy. were paraded for the Divisional Commander (Major General SOLLY-FLOOD) Inspection. The General presented ribbons to the winners of decorations (including three Military Medal winners of this Unit (Sgt WHITE, Pte POKE and Pte McCORMACK)). After the General's inspection, speech, and presentation, the troops marched past him.

DECEMBER 31 1917 - OBLINGHEM

A Coy. on Working Party. The other three Companies marched to LOCON in the morning and bathed. B & C Coys. in the afternoon had their box respirators tested. Weather very cold.

At night D Coy. had a concert for New Year's Eve.

	Officers	O.R.
Total Strength	33	687
Casualties		
Killed	1	24
Died of wounds	1	9
Wounded	1	37 (including 2 at duty)
(accidentally wounded)	1	
Died of natural causes		1
Sick to hospital	3	58

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
JANUARY 1918**

JANUARY 1 1918 - OBLINGHEM

C & D Coys. worked up the line for 428th Field Coy. R.E. Buses reported for this party at 2.30 am. A Coy. and details of the Battalion bathed at LOCON. The weather very cold. At night B Coy. held a Company Concert.

JANUARY 2 1918 - OBLINGHEM

No working parties, so training was carried out. A Coy. & the remainder of the Battalion had box respirators tested at the Divisional Gas School ESSARS.

JANUARY 3 1918 - OBLINGHEM

The Battalion left OBLINGHEM to relieve 1/9th Bn. Manchester Rgt. in Reserve to the Right Brigade at LE PREOL. The day was bright and the visibility very good. The relief was postponed from the morning until dusk. Head of Battalion passed starting point at 3 pm and reached LE PREOL 5.30 pm. Relief complete at 6.30 pm.

JANUARY 4 1918 - LE PREOL

Working parties started - 20 O.R. at KANTARA R.E. DUMP (F3 b53), 20 men to R.E. Dump PONTFIXE (A14 b25.15) + 20 O.R. (relieved 3 times during the day) to assist Artillery to wire in their gun positions. O.s C. Coys. and other Officers reconnoitred the Village LINE.

JANUARY 5 1918 - LE PREOL

Working parties continued. Remainder of Bn. engaged in training. The VILLAGE LINE and approaches were reconnoitred by another party of Officers & N.C.O.s. Afternoon Games. A draft of 57 O.R. arrived. Most of the men have been in France before and are of good physique and are a good stamp of men.

JANUARY 6 1918 - LE PREOL

Working parties continued. In the afternoon Brigade Headquarters informed us that there was considerable enemy T.M. activity on the Brigade Front and that although no infantry action was expected the Battalion was to be ready to turn out at short notice. Companies were therefore ordered to be ready for immediate action but were not to stand to. In the evening orders were received for a working party of one Company to report to 1/6th Manchester Rgt. to help clear the communication trenches and to assist in repairing the damage caused by the T.M. bombardment during the afternoon. This party worked all night and returned about 7 am. Considerable damage to the trenches had been caused but only one man was wounded in 1/6th Manchester Rgt.

JANUARY 7 1918 - LE PREOL

Party of Officers reconnoitred the Right Battalion Lines which this Unit is to take over on the 9th inst. During the day the usual working parties continued. The remainder of the Battalion was engaged in training & bathing at the Baths in LE PREOL. At night another party was sent up to assist the 1/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. to repair their trenches.

JANUARY 8 1918 - LE PREOL

Bathing continued during the day. All men of the Battalion now bathed since arrival in LE PREOL. Ordinary Working parties continued. In the evening a concert was given in one of the rooms of an Estaminet by the newly raised Regimental Troupe - "The New Agains". The performance was very successful and was greatly appreciated by everybody.

JANUARY 9 1918 - LE PREOL

This Battalion relieved 1/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. in the Line in the Right Subsector of the Right Brigade Sector. At first the battalion was first ordered to leave LE PREOL but on account of the good visibility, the move was postponed one hour. During the afternoon the sky clouded over and about three inches of snow fell. Relief complete at 7.55 pm. During the relief everything was very quiet.

Dispositions. The four companies are in the Front Line in the Order from Right to Left B, D, A, C. Each Company has one platoon in the line and one platoon in close support. The Headquarters of each Coy. is in a Trench running from the Reserve Line (Support) to the Front Line.

There is an organised and somewhat complicated system of trenches which are deep but in poor repair particularly those which were damaged by the bombardment by the enemy trench mortars. On account of the thaw & the snow, the trenches are very muddy.

The Front Line is held by 21 small posts, there now being a scheme for organising them into Defended Localities, self defendant and mutually supporting & offering an all-round resistance. From the Front Line a number of saps run out and overlook the line of craters which runs from 50 - 100 yds. in front of the line. The saps were previously occupied as listening posts but are now merely patrolled at night by the patrols from post to post.

About 30 medium T.M. shells fell between A21 d50 & A21 d56 from 8.50 - 9.10 pm. These caused two casualties - 2 O.R. killed.

Enemy 4.2s fixed at 3 minute intervals for 1/2 hr. on BACK St in A27 b. Our 18 pounders fired registering shots on the BRICKSTACKS & LES BRIQUES.

JANUARY 10 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Our 18 pounders fired 12 rounds on A29 c93 and 6 on A28 b45 during the morning. Enemy artillery quiet. Enemy M.G.s fired occasional bursts during the night on LA BASSEE ROAD. 12 Light T.M. shells fell in No Man's Land at about A21 d72 at 7 pm. 6 Medium shells fell near A21 b95 about 3.45 pm.

A patrol of 1 Officer (2LT BENNETT) & 2 O.R. left TWIN SAP (A27 b64) at 11.30 pm. From here they proceeded for about 50 yards South and then 150 yds. East. When about 30 yards from SAXON CRATER (A27 b73) movement was heard and Very Lights were fired. It was concluded that there was a post on the East side of the Crater.

At night 3 Officers & 6 wiring parties of 10 O.R. each from 1/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. came up from LE PREOL to wire in the Defended Localities in the Reserve Line - R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 & R6.

All available men working on clearing the Trenches damaged by T.M. fire. During the day visibility fair.

JANUARY 11 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Very little artillery activity on either side. Occasional enemy M.G. burst on CAMBRIN - LA BASSEE RD. Between 3.15 pm & 4 pm 4 heavy T.M. shells fell near A21 b95. At 7 pm 12 Light T.M. shells fell in No Man's Land near A21 d72. Visibility good. At night wiring of R1, etc. continued - little progress made. Clearing trenches continued.

JANUARY 12 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Enemy artillery and M.G.s quiet during the day. Our 4.5 Howitzers fired about 60 rounds on various targets during the day and our 18 pounders about 50 rounds. About 20 heavy T.M. shells fell near A21 b95 but little damage was caused.

An enemy aeroplane over our line during the morning was driven off by our Anti-Aircraft Fire. Most of our trenches beginning to fall in on account of the thaw and all available men engaged on repairing them.

A patrol of 1 N.C.O. (Sgt KELLY) & 2 O.R. left TWIN SAP (A27 b66) at 2 am and proceeded along S.E. edge of POLLUX CRATER until they were within 10 yards of the enemy wire when an (sic) M.G. at approximately A27 b76 opened fire on them. They then moved East for 50 yds. and heard the sound of talking from the M.G. position. The patrol then returned along the wire for about 30 yds. when Very Lights were fired from a post at A27 b75. The strength of this post could not be ascertained. The whole of the enemy wire reconnoitred was in very good condition.

JANUARY 13 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Little Artillery activity on either side. Enemy M.G.s used overhead fire as usual for a few bursts on the back area. Enemy T.M. action 6 Heavy T.M. shells on A21 d50 at 10 am, 6 mediums at 1.30 pm on the same place, 12 lights on A27 b35 at 2.25 pm, & 16 lights on A27 b45 at 3.31 pm. Our medium T.M.s replied effectively silenced the enemy.

A patrol of 1 Officer (2LT NYE) & 3 O.R. left D Coy. at 10 pm and proceeded East until the West side of ETNA Crater was reached. Working round to the North side they came to a strong belt of wire within which there was a post. Laughing was heard there and about ten minutes later, he opened fire with rifle and also discharged a rifle grenade. The going was very bad and the side of the Crater very steep.

2LT DUNN & 5 O.R. left STIRLING POST - the left Post of the Battalion and worked East along the side of Brickstack F. There was no sign or sound of the enemy. Further out an old disused trench was noticed, leading to our lines. Later one of the patrols developed a bad cough and so the patrol returned. The ground was very heavy and the going bad.

JANUARY 14 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Little activity of artillery on either side. Visibility poor and later there was a slight fall of snow - a patrol should have gone out but was cancelled on this account.

About 30 H. T.M. shells fell near A21 b83 between 9 & 10 pm. No damage to the front line was caused. Our medium & heavy T.M. retaliation was both prompt & effective.

JANUARY 15 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

During the night a thaw set in and made the trenches quite bad.

The Battalion was relieved by 1/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. Relief complete 11.55 am. Visibility during the day very poor. Little activity of any sort today. After relief the Battalion went in Brigade Support.

Dispositions Bn. H.Q. GLASCOW RD at A20 b74.35, C Coy. in two redoubts North of the Canal ORCHARD KEEP (A15 a83) & SPOIL BANK KEEP (the latter by H.Q. A15 c79) B Coy. in two redoubts in A21 a & A20 d - MOUNTAIN KEEP & BRADDELL KEEP respectively. D Coy. is in MARYLEBONE Rd as support to and under tactical control of the Right Bn. A Coy. with 1 platoon in GUNNER SIDING (A15 a) and 1 platoon in ESPERANTO TERRACE (A15 d) in support to and under tactical control of left Bn. of the Brigade. The Role of A & D Coys. is primarily for counter attack in case of enemy capture of front line.

The condition of all the trenches & keeps taken over is very bad, nearly all the sides of the trenches are falling in owing to the pickets securing the revetment not being driven sufficiently firmly into the ground. The trenches are about six inches deep in mud or water - in places much more. Every available man on the work of repairing them. A (?)daily(?) working parties amounting to 183 men in all are found for the 428th Field Coy. R.E.

JANUARY 16 1918 - SUPPORT BATTALION CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY-GIVENCHY area]

Working parties for 428th Field Coy. R.E. continued. All available men working on trench repairs. During the day 80 O.R. were sent to the Baths at LE PREOL. The Anti-trench foot centre near CUINCHY Station was also used. Visibility fair - general activity was very light. LT N.A. HOLDAWAY reported for duty & posted to C Coy.

JANUARY 17 1918 - SUPPORT BATTALION CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY-GIVENCHY area]

Working parties and bathing continued throughout the day. Our artillery fairly active during the day - a few enemy T.M.s on the Front Line.

JANUARY 18 1918 - SUPPORT BATTALION CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY-GIVENCHY area]

Working parties and bathing continued. 2LTs S. MERRY, S. HIND & H. TUSON reported for duty and were posted to D Coy., A. Coy. & D Coy. respectively. Visibility poor during the day. Slight Drizzle.

JANUARY 19 1918 - SUPPORT BATTALION CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY-GIVENCHY area]

Working parties & bathing as yesterday. Visibility good. Enemy Trench Mortars active on front line.

JANUARY 20 1918 - SUPPORT BATTALION CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY-GIVENCHY area]

Visibility very good. Considerable hostile artillery activity. Our guns replied. Bathing & working parties continued during the day.

JANUARY 21 1918 - SUPPORT BATTALION CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY-GIVENCHY area]

Bathing & working parties as yesterday. The trenches are still in very bad condition.

JANUARY 22 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

The Battalion relieved 1/6th Bn. Manchester Rgt. in the Line. Visibility during the first part of the morning was poor but afterwards slightly better. Relief complete by 9.59 am. Dispositions as before.

Our artillery fired about 130 rounds of 4.5 & 6 howitzer shells, & about 30 18 pounder shells. Everything quiet during the day. Two enemy aeroplanes were over our lines at 11 am. They were very high but were driven off by our A.A. fire.

The two right Coys fronts have not been greatly affected by the weather but the two left Companies are in very bad condition. The LANE and A Coy.'s Front Line are particularly bad - in places the water is about two feet deep.

Work was carried out during the night in the Front Line, the LANE & BURBURE ALLEY which is also in a bad condition.

A prisoner captured by the Division on the Right (11th Division) showed that the Division opposite us is the 4th (ERSATZ) DIVISION. The prisoner gave a considerable amount of useful information. The Division was in France from shortly after the outbreak of war till May 1917 when it was moved to Russia for a rest, the morale being poor. The Division returned to France in December 1917.

Major H. S. BOWEN, ESSEX RGT, reported as 2nd in Command.

JANUARY 23 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Very quiet the whole day. Visibility fair. During the night a Very Light was fired from A21 b95 & a signalling lamp was seen at about A22 b98 flashing towards our lines, as though signalling to one of their forward stations.

A patrol of 1 Officer (2LT R. NYE) & 5 O.R. left our lines at 4.15 am from LEICH SAP and reaching the Crater in front, turned south & after crossing a good deal of broken ground - barbed wire, disused trenches, shell holes, arrived at ETNA SAP. They then proceeded towards the enemy lines but had to return shortly on account of the approaching dawn. A considerable amount of wire was seen in front but there was no other sign of the enemy. The patrol returned at 6 am.

JANUARY 24 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Very Quiet. About 8 light T.M.s at 7.30 pm & 15 at 11.15 pm fell near A21 d57. A green light was seen flashing from the same spot as yesterday - A22 b98.

A patrol of 1 Officer (LT JACKSON) left our lines at 2 am from A27 [b]49 at 2 am and returned to the same point at 4 am. The patrol passed over a ridge & a crater and when some distance out discovered a track leading to the enemy lines. They stopped here and listened but nothing was heard save the sound of a running motor behind the enemy lines. There was no sign of the enemy.

JANUARY 25 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Very quiet all day. A light T.M. fired 8 rounds at 7.30 pm and 15 at 11.15 pm. This gun was located by us as being at A28 a35.

The same green light as yesterday was seen flashing about 5.30 pm.

Two of the enemy were seen working close [to] their trench in A21 d85 at 6 pm. Fire with rifle was opened on them at once by D Coy. and the men were seen to throw up their tools and fall. A patrol of 2LT TUSON and 6 O.R. was sent to bring in the bodies which however had been taken by the enemy.

2LT S. MERRY & 6 O.R. left our lines at 3.30 am and went out via ETNA and the CRATER. The patrol returned at 4.45 am and during all the time the patrol was out, nothing was seen of the enemy.

Visibility very good. Bright Moonlight at night.

JANUARY 26 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Very quiet all day - little activity of any sort. Visibility very good - the weather is warm and dry.

The companies working on the wire of the "R" Localities -almost complete now. The front line is also much better.

A patrol of 1 Officer (2LT BENNETT) and 6 O.R. left our line at A27 b74 and made its way via the Southern Lip of POILU CRATER to the enemy wire which was in good condition and without gaps. There was no sign of the enemy the whole time the patrol was out. The going in No Man's Land is good. The patrol returned to our lines at 3.40 am. The night was frosty.

JANUARY 27 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Early in the morning a heavy low lying mist made visibility very poor. Later the sun was bright and the mist dispersed. Very quiet all day - little shelling & M.G. activity. Three of the enemy were seen crawling near our line at A22 a16 at 7.30 pm. Fire was opened on them and although a patrol was sent to reconnoitre nothing more was seen of them but two bombs thrown by us were answered by two of theirs in the distance.

Work on clearing trenches and in wiring the "R" localities carried out during the night which was bright moonlight - too bright for patrols.

JANUARY 28 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

Visibility very good throughout the day. Increased artillery action on both sides - 10.25 am 10 rounds of 4.2s on A27 c54, 1.50 pm 25 rounds 4.2s on A21 c76, 3.15 pm 12 rounds 4.2 on A27 b96. Our artillery replied with great effect on LES BRIQUES.

Two enemy aeroplanes over our lines during the morning driven off by our A.A. gun fire. Work on clearing trenches continued - the difference in the condition of the front line trench very noticeable. The wiring of R1, R2, R3, R4 & R5 now finished.

The night was again very bright but a patrol was sent out under 2 LT HARRISON. Nothing was seen or heard of the enemy. A sharp Frost at night.

JANUARY 29 1918 - RIGHT SUBSECTOR OF CANAL SECTOR [CUINCHY area]

The Battalion was relieved in the Line by 1/7th B. Lancashire Fusiliers. The sun was very bright but as there was a heavy ground mist the relief was not interfered with. The relief was very slow - the head of the column reached CAMBRIN Cross Roads at 10.30 am whilst Relief was complete

at 2.35 pm. After relief the Battalion marched by Companies to Billets in BEUVRY where everything is compact and comfortable. Three of the Companies are billeted in a School whilst the other Company is in huts. Each Company has a dining hut and good cookhouses. There is also a Sergeants Mess and an Officers Mess both of which are very good.

JANUARY 30 1918 - BEUVRY

All four companies on working parties. The C.O. inspected all the billets. During the morning the Line FOSSE 9 (BETHUNE) - CAMBRIN Church was reconnoitred so as to form a defensive flank facing South East in case of the Division on the right being attacked.

JANUARY 31 1918 - BEUVRY

One Company on working parties and the other three Companies spent the day in cleaning equipment & bathing. LT. TEARE left the Battalion for 6 months duty in England.

Month Ending January 31st 1918

	Officers	O.R.
Total Strength In France	38	726
Trench Strength	22	476
Casualties		
Killed		2
Wounded		5
Missing		Nil
Sick to hospital	1	65

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
FEBRUARY 1918**

FEBRUARY 1 1918 - BEUVRY

B Coy. on working party for R.E. A Company bathing & cleaning equipment. C Coy. on Range at LE QUESNOY in morning & D Coy. in afternoon. D Coy. in morning and C Coy. in afternoon, section & platoon drill, bayonet fighting, respirator drill, etc.

FEBRUARY 2 1918 - BEUVRY

Weather much warmer and brighter. All Companies on working party for R.E.

FEBRUARY 3 1918 - BEUVRY

Weather quite mild. Church Parades for all denominations. 2 Officers & 150 O.R. on working party. Afternoon the Regimental Football Team played the Cumberland heavy Artillery. Result a draw 3-3.

FEBRUARY 4 1918 - BEUVRY

A & D Companies on working parties. B & C Coys. training, smartening up drill, elementary musketry, P.T. & B.F., Respirator Drill.

FEBRUARY 5 1918 - BEUVRY

Weather cold & sharp. B & C Coys. on working parties. A & D Coys. engaged in training. The Divisional Gas Officer gave a lecture & demonstration to these Companies. Evening at 5:30 pm the Brigadier gave a lecture to all Officers & N.C.O.s on "An Offensive Defence".

FEBRUARY 6 1918 - BEUVRY

A & D Coys. on working Parties. B & C Coys. training - Platoon & Company Drill, Arm Saluting Drill, Musketry, Respirator Drill. Afternoon Football & Games.

FEBRUARY 7 1918 - BEUVRY

B & C Coys. on working Parties. A & D Companies on training - Platoon & Company Drill, Musketry, P.T. & B.F., Respirator Drill. Afternoon Section Training in own weapons. During the day the Lewis Gun & Signalling Classes continue. Revolver practice for all available officers. 6 Officers were taken in a Bus to visit 2nd Squadron R.F.C. They were shown round the Aerodrome & the machines explained to them.

FEBRUARY 8 1918 - BEUVRY

Weather cold. A & D Coys. on working parties. B & C Coys. on training as yesterday. Lewis Gun & Signalling Classes, Revolver Firing continued. Evening a Concert was given in the Cinema Hall by the Regimental Troupe under 2 LT. SMART.

FEBRUARY 9 1918 - BEUVRY

B & C Coys. working party cancelled so the whole Battalion available for Training during the morning. Afternoon Football & games. Received warning that the Battalion is to be transferred to the 126th Inf. Bde.

FEBRUARY 10 1918 - BEUVRY

Half of each Company working on Ammunition Dump at LE QUESNOY.
Church Parades for Remainder during the Morning.

FEBRUARY 11 1918 - BEUVRY

The whole of the Battalion on working party - wiring under 468th Field Company R.E.

FEBRUARY 12 1918 - BEUVRY

The Battalion proceeded by march route to the new training area at ECQUE. It is expected that the Battalion will be out of the line for training for at least a month. The Battalion arrived in ECQUE about 12.30 pm. ECQUE is a long straggling industrial village inhabited by rather a poor and dirty population. The men are very crowded and not very comfortable. There is very little latrine & washing accomodation. There are no halls, etc. for Concerts & Lectures and there is little in the form of recreation for the men.

FEBRUARY 13 1918 - ECQUE

The weather was wet & cold. During the morning men spent their time cleaning up billets & washing equipment. Afternoon although set apart for football & games was too wet so cleaning up, etc. was continued.
The C.O. inspected billets.

FEBRUARY 14 1918 - ECQUE

The Battalion began training at No. 5 Training Ground (D10). The training ground is a very good one and includes a 100 yds. range, an assault course & trenches and three drill grounds. Today the ground is very wet & sodden but will probably be alright after a day's fine weather. Section & Platoon Drill, Saluting & Smartening up drill. Short Lectures on discipline & smartness. Respirator Drill, Elementary Musketry, P.T. & B.F., Assault Course. D Coy. on range. Afternoon Section Training in own weapons. B Coy. on range. Lewis Gun & Signalling Classes Continue. Refresher Lectures in the evening.

FEBRUARY 15 1918 - ECQUE

Weather cold & sharp. Training continued. The Battalion bathed at CHOQUES. In the evening a cinematograph show was arranged in CHOQUES for the men of the Battalion. In the afternoon 6 Officers & 168 O.R. arrived from 2/10th Bn. Manchester Rgt. (Total number posted to us 10 Officers & 200 O.R.)

FEBRUARY 16 1918 - ECQUE

Training Continued in the morning. Battalion Parade and march past. Section, Platoon & Arms Drill. Musketry - Bolt Manipulation, Arming, Fire Discipline & Respirator Drill. B Coy. on Range.

Afternoon Football & Games - the ground very hard on account of the Frost.

FEBRUARY 17 1918 - ECQUE

Very cold. Divine Service for all denominations - the C. of E. parade was in the open owing to lack of any suitable building. Afternoon Football - Battalion v. Reinforcements. Result 4-0 for Battalion.

FEBRUARY 18 1918 - ECQUE

Training continued. 9 am - 12.30 pm Battalion Parade & March Past. Platoon & Company Drill, Saluting & Arms Drill, Musketry - Trigger Pressing, Bolt Manipulation & Muscle Exercises, Fire Direction & Control, P.T. & B.F. A Coy. on Range. Afternoon C.O. inspected the Companies in turn in Full Marching Order. During the day orders were sent and cancelled for the move to the 126th Inf. Bd. on the 19th inst. Final orders for the move were received.

FEBRUARY 19 1918 - ECQUE

The Battalion left ECQUE & 127th Infantry Brigade to march to L'ECCLEME to join the 126th Infantry Brigade. The Regimental Band headed the column and the Bands of the 1/5th, 1/6th & 1/7th Battalions Manchester Regiment (the remaining Battalions of the 127th Infantry Brigade) each played out a Company of the Battalion. A Company of the 1/5th Battalion Manchester Regiment and most of the Officers of that Battalion paraded for us as we left the Brigade Area. Representatives of each Unit in the Brigade met us to say Good Bye at the Cross Roads (V28 a83). Here the Divisional Band played the Battalion past the 127th Infantry Brigade Commander and the Divisional Commander, both of whom expressed themselves pleased with the turn out and march discipline of the men.

The Band of 1/10th Bn Manchester Regiment played the battalion from here into L'ECCLEME where we marched past the Brigade Commander of the 126th Inf. Brigade (Brigadier General W. W. SEYMOUR) who also expressed himself pleased with the appearance of the men.

LT. COL. E. G. K. CROSS returned from short leave to U.K. & assumed command of the Battalion.

FEBRUARY 20 1918 - L'ECCLEME

The Battalion paraded in mass in a small field at V10 a66 for inspection by the Brigadier. After the inspection the General addressed the parade expressing himself pleased with the Battalion appearance and welcomed the Battalion into the 126th Infantry Brigade.

The remainder of the day was spent in smartening up drill (on the roads) & cleaning up billets.

The billets are fairly good for the men - good barns (much better than they were at ECQUE). The village is a long straggling one stretching about two miles long.

There are no training grounds near and most of the training will have to be carried on the roads in the village.

FEBRUARY 21 1918 - L'ECCLEME

The 400 yds. Range near LA BUISSIERE was allotted to the Battalion as A & B Companies used it starting their route march to the range at 8 am and 12 noon respectively.

C & D Coys. used No. 16 Training Ground in D6 d (the S.E. of CHOQUES) as this ground was also allotted to this Battalion this day.

FEBRUARY 22 1918 - L'ECCLEME

Training carried out in the neighbourhood of the village - along the roads. Smartening up drill, complements on line of march, guards, box respirator drill, P.T. & B.F. Afternoon Section Training in own weapons.

FEBRUARY 23 1918 - L'ECCLEME

All available officers proceeded by Motor Lorry to LOCON to reconnoitre a line of posts of the Corps Second Line, behind the Section of the Front occupied by the PORTUGUESE Corps. After the Reconnaissance the Brigadier held a Conference at LA COUTURE for Commanding Officers.

FEBRUARY 24 1918 - L'ECCLEME

A platoon of the H.A.C. gave a demonstration on range discipline and assault course practice at the Corps Reinforcement Camp Range ALLOUAGNE. The C.O., Adj., & O.s C. Coys. attended.

FEBRUARY 25 1918 - L'ECCLEME

All available officers carried out a reconnaissance of the GORRE Area to select a site for a reserve trench from which to counter attack and to reconnoitre all suitable routes and tracks leading to the Line of Defense - Village & Line. Remainder of the Battalion training in accordance with programme.

FEBRUARY 26 1918 - L'ECCLEME

The Battalion carried out training in the vicinity of the village according to the training programme.

Evening a Regimental Concert held at BUSNES was a great success and much appreciated by all ranks.

FEBRUARY 27 1918 - L'ECCLEME

Training continued according to programme. Whilst at the Training Ground Lieut. Colonel CLIVE lectured to the Battalion on War Savings Scheme. C. O. Conference at Brigade Headquarters (VENDIN-les-BETHUNE). LIEUT. A. JACQUES reported his arrival.

FEBRUARY 28 1918 - L'ECCLEME

Training continued according to programme. LT. COL. CLIVE again addressed the men on the Benefits of War Savings Certificates. Great keenness was aroused and although this was the only day that steps were taken to ensure that every man understood the Scheme, a sum of £2,505.7..0 was raised by the Battalion for Savings Certificates.

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT MARCH 1918

MARCH 1 1918 - L'ECCLEME

Training carried out in the vicinity of the Companies' Billets. Weather cold and sharp. Evening sharp Frost.

During the night and particularly during the early morning heavy gun fire was heard. It was thought that the enemy had attacked.

MARCH 2 1918 - L'ECCLEME

Orders were received for the Battalion to proceed at once to the MESPLAY Area (behind the PORTUGUESE FRONT) to occupy the positions previously reconnoitred. Orders were received at 7.29 am. The Battalion marched off at 9.10 am. Motor Lorries were met at V28 a82. Embussing complete and the buses moved off at 10.12 am. The Right Half Battalion de-bussed at LOCON at 11.15 am and the companies marched off independently to their positions. The Left Half Battalion - in Brigade Reserve - de-bussed at ZELOBES (the Site of Brigade Headquarters) at 11.20 am. The Battalion was reported in position at 12.20 pm. Work was immediately started on improving the trenches and making or improving latrines, etc.

At 4.15 pm. Orders were received to return to billets occupied before the move. 4.45 pm. Three Companies marched off to AVELETTE to embus there for L'ECCLEME. Battalion Headquarters & One Company marched off at 5.50 pm. Two Companies embussed at 5.55 pm and the remainder of the Battalion at 7.30 pm.

On arrival at the old billets it was found that a Battalion of the 46th Division had moved into them thinking that this Battalion would not return. The party left behind had arranged billets for the Battalion in the ROBECQ Area. All the Battalion, with the exception of a portion of one company which was lost for a time with its motor lorries, was settled in the new billets by 9.20 pm.

MARCH 3 1918 - ROBECQ

The day was spent in resting, cleaning up, etc. No services were held.

MARCH 4 1918 - ROBECQ

Battalion proceeded by march route to new billets in BURBURE. Strong wind and some rain during the day. The Billets here much more comfortable & convenient than any the Battalion has been in since the Division came out of the Line for Rest. There are also good facilities for training in the district.

MARCH 5 1918 - BURBURE

Training carried out according to programme, on Area A (C9 b). The weather was bright, sharp - good for training.

MARCH 6 1918 - BURBURE

Training carried out according to Programme, on Football Field (U28 c), the Ground at U27 d and the Range at U29 c. Football Competition (Inter-Platoon) carried out during the afternoon and evening.

MARCH 7 1918 - BURBURE

Training carried out according to Programme, on Area A. Inter Platoon Competition carried out during afternoon & evening.

MARCH 8 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued according to programme. Weather warm & dry.

MARCH 9 1918 - BURBURE

Training carried out according to programme. 17 Officers of the Battalion reconnoitred the VERMELLES Area.

In the afternoon the Battalion played 1/5th Bn East Lancs R. at Football. Result 1-0 for the 1/5th Bn East Lancs R.

Evening: Summer Time came into Force at 11 pm.

MARCH 10 1918 - BURBURE

Sunday Service for all denominations were held during the morning. Afternoon: Inter-Platoon Football competition continued. Weather warm & bright. Battalion received orders to be ready to move at once but this was cancelled later and we were informed that we were allowed 12 hours notice.

MARCH 11 1918 - BURBURE

Training carried out according to programme. The last two platoons of the Battalion inspected for the Platoon Efficiency Competition. Result: The Four Platoons at the head of the list are B6, B7, C10 & D15, each with 350 marks out of a maximum of 500 marks.

Evening: a Concert was given by the Regimental Troupe for A & B Companies. A motor lorry was provided for 25 O.R. to visit the Divisional Wing (ALLOUAGNE) to see the Divisional Pantomime.

MARCH 12 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued according to programme at Area A. C Company gave a demonstration of an open warfare attack which was quite successful. Evening: The Regimental Troupe gave a performance to C & D Companies and 25 O.R. went by Motor Lorry to the Divisional Pantomime ALLOUAGNE.

MARCH 13 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued according to programme. Weather warm & bright. Evening: concert for Battalion Headquarters & Transport.

MARCH 14 1918 - BURBURE

Orders received at 6.10 am for the Battalion to prepare to move at once. The Battalion was reported ready to move off at 7.29 am. The Battalion was then ordered to be ready to move at ten minutes notice. The Brigadier came and inspected the Transport and one Company and then ordered the Battalion to continue the ordinary route as the Alarm was merely a Brigade Test. Remainder of the morning spent on kit inspections, musketry, in Billets, etc. Afternoon: Games - Boxing & Football.

MARCH 15 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued as per programme. Afternoon: Bath at LILLERS allotted to the Battalion. No clean clothing available.

Brigade Inter Platoon Competition (This Bn represented by 2LT TEASDALE and 10 Platoon).

MARCH 16 1918 - BURBURE

Training as per programme. Afternoon: recreational training - Inter Company Football Matches.

MARCH 17 1918 - BURBURE

Sunday, The Range at ALLOUAGNE allotted to the Battalion. Each Company made use of it for two hours. No men available for Church Parade. Inter Platoon Efficiency Competition continued.

MARCH 18 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued as per programme. Weather fine & dry.

MARCH 19 1918 - BURBURE

Heavy rain fell during the morning so training was carried out in billets - lectures, Preliminary Musketry, Anti Gas Training. Afternoon: the weather drier so training carried out on company training grounds. Evening: an officer of the Tank Corps gave a lecture to all Officers on the use of tanks.

Brigade interplatoon competition for Football, lost 2-1 to 1/5th East Lancs R.

MARCH 20 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued. Afternoon: Brigade Finals of Boxing & Football. Weather fine and dry.

MARCH 21 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued - weather fine & dry. Evening concert in Schoolroom by the Regimental Troupe - the Brigadier attended.

MARCH 22 1918 - BURBURE

Training continued - concert in the Schoolroom for A & B Cos. in the evening. About 7.30 pm, a verbal message from Brigade Headquarters was received to stack all surplus stores at Brigade Quartermasters Stores as the Brigade was moving almost immediately and only three motor lorries for Battalion would be available. All surplus stores were stacked by midnight. Throughout the night there was a constant stream of Brigade Messages but definite orders that the Battalion would move was received early in the morning.

MARCH 23 1918 - BURBURE

Battalion ordered to proceed to BASSEUX (S.W. of ARRAS) by bus. The Battalion was to embus at 10 am, but the buses were late and the convoy of the brigade buses moved off shortly after 12 noon. The buses (actually the Battalion was chiefly in motor lorries) proceeded via PERNES, ST. POL, FREVENT, DOULLENS, RIVIERE GROSVILLE, RANSART TO ADINFER. Here the Brigade debussed and the 125th & 126th Brigade bivouacked the night in ADINFER WOOD. As the men had their blankets and the weather had been fine and dry, they were fairly comfortable. The three motor lorries arrived at 10 pm.

Gun sentries posted and the Battalion to be ready to move without further notice.

MARCH 24 1918 - ADINFER WOOD

Fires were allowed to be lighted at dawn. The C.O. and Company Commanders reconnoitred a position forming a defensive flush facing S.E. running N.E. from ABLAINZEVILLE to COURCELLES - AYETTE Road, both inclusive.

At 11.30 am information was received that the Brigade would move forward in the early afternoon. At Brigade Headquarters a conference first of Adjutants and then of C.O.s was held. The Battalion was ready as ordered to move at 2 pm. The Brigade actually moved at 4 pm to LOGEAST WOOD by march route. No transport was available so the Lewis Guns, Magazines, etc. had to [be] carried by the men. The day was very hot and close and the men were rather exhausted at the end of the march. The Route taken was via DOUCHY - les - AYETTE, BUCQUOY and thence by a track. The Battalion arrived about 6 pm. Orders were received that the Division would go into the line that night and that this brigade would be in Divisional Reserve. The Battalion marched out at 8.20 pm guided by an officer of the 20th Bn. Middlesex Regiment. Strength of Battalion: 20 Officers 512 O.R. The Battalion took up a position in the railway cutting from about A22 d27 to A22 b37 and dug in at the top of Eastern Side to form fire steps & fire positions. The 126th L.T.M.B. was south of the Battalion, next to the 1/10th Manch R., also in the cutting. The 1/5 East Lancs Regiment was about A30 central. Everything was quiet until 11.30 pm when all the batteries near the cutting of which there was a large number opening fire at what seemed S.O.S. rates.

MARCH 25 1918 - [RAILWAY CUTTING near GOMIECOURT]

Orders were received for the 1/5 E. Lancs. & 1/10th Manch. R. to advance at once and occupy a line of trenches from B25 b24 - B13 c03. Another order was received for the Battalion to take up a position outside the ACHIET-le-GRAND - ERVILLERS Road from A30 d central to A30 a57. The Battalion at once left the cutting and marched to GOMIECOURT. The roads forward were blocked with traffic of all descriptions - ambulances, ammunition limbers, etc. and progress very slow. On passing through GOMIECOURT orders were received to return to the cutting as the situation had quietened. This was done, the cutting being reached about 5 am. Fires were allowed to be made at dawn and everyone had a hot breakfast as rations and water had arrived about 11 pm the previous day.

About mid-day the enemy began to shell the batteries near the cutting and all save one changed position. Shells now began to burst in the cutting rather frequently and a number of casualties were caused. It was difficult to decide whether the enemy were shelling the batteries or the cutting itself. The men were spread along the cutting as much as possible and kept in close to the Eastern Side. The shelling and the casualties however continued until orders were received from Brigade Headquarters to advance and take up a position in the sunken road running through G4 b, G5 a & A29 d. The Battalion at once advanced in artillery formation to the sunken road in A28 b & A29 a. This advance was made with few casualties. The Battalion then advanced to its destination and arrived with about only 30 casualties. Touch was kept with the Battalion on the right and left, respectively, 1/7th Manchester Rgt. & 1/5th East Lancs. There was continuous shelling here but the casualties were successfully evacuated. About 7 pm one heavy howitzer began to shell GOMIECOURT and our own positions very thoroughly and with great effect - 30 casualties were caused in two companies and the battalion on the left had heavy casualties.

Written messages were sent to brigade H.Q. and also attempts were made to secure communication by lamp. The shelling did not stop until about 9.30 pm. In the mean time, the two companies affected were pushed forward into a trench about 100 yds away from the road. Shelling on both sides quietened down about 10 pm. An officer was sent to Brigade Headquarters in the Railway Cutting in A22 b and orders were received for the Battalion to withdraw to positions East of COURCELLES. The withdrawal was ordered at 2 am. Everything was quiet now except for an occasional shell and rifle shot.

Casualties: Killed: 1 Officer (2Lt W. TUSON) & 7 O.R., Wounded: 1 Officer Lt GIBSON, 95 O.R., Missing: 11 O.R.

MARCH 26 1918 - [SUNKEN ROAD near GOMIECOURT]

At 1 am the 127th Inf Bde on the right withdrew. At about 2 pm [am] as the battalion was beginning to withdraw loud shouts and cries were heard on the left flank as though the enemy were charging, apparently this was merely a ruse as he did not attack and the withdrawal was concluded quietly and without incident, to the trenches running from about A27 b86 to A22 a60 (these had been dug during the day by a previous battalion). Work was carried out during the remainder of the night on improving the trench. There was a considerable amount of shelling on COURCELLES. At 7 am orders were received to withdraw still further to West of ABLAINZEVILLE. This was carried out without incident.

At first orders were received for one company to hold the village and the other three companies to garrison the old trench running west of ABLAINZEVILLE. As however the Battalion on the right was not pushing forward into the village, this Company was absorbed into the trench line. Battalion Frontage from BUCQUOY-ABLAINZEVILLE Road to F22 b82. Dispositions right to left A, C, B, & D Cos.

A dump of tools was found in the village and efforts at once made to consolidate as the trench was wide and shallow. There was an old water point in the village but the tank was dry and useless.

Dispositions of the Brigade were Right: 1/8th Manchester R., Left: 1/10th Manch R. / up to F16 d74. Reserve: 1/5th East Lancs R. in roads & trenches - F21 & 22. On the right was the 1/6th Manch R. (127th Inf Bde). At F22 d75.75 an old German dug out was found so Battalion Headquarters & the Regimental Aid Post were established here. Throughout the day there was only slight shelling of the village and near the trench. Patrols were sent out but there was no sign of the enemy. At dusk a standing patrol was sent out. This consisted of 2 sections and an officer and returned about 9 pm and reported an encounter with a strong patrol of the enemy. Several of the enemy were killed or wounded and a specimen equipment brought in. The enemy were now also reported to be in the village and to be occupying some of the houses. A platoon of A Company was at once pushed forward to occupy a position close to the village so as to give warning of any attack from there.

A patrol was sent out to reconnoitre the ground to the left (North) of the Village. Enemy were encountered here also and casualties were inflicted on both sides. The enemy were reported to be occupying the two sunken roads in F23 a&b in strength unknown.

Casualties: Killed: 8 O.R., Wounded: 39 O.R.

MARCH 27 1918 - West of ABLAINZEVELLE

During the early hours of the morning the enemy established a machine gun and several rifle posts in the village as there was a certain amount of fire from there. 2LT LINDLEY was seriously wounded whilst in command of the picquet but remained in charge until relieved. At dawn the picquet was withdrawn as there was now much less danger of being rushed. During the morning the enemy shelling on and near our trenches was considerably increased.

About 10 am the enemy made an attack on the brigade on our right but it was purely local and as it was made without artillery support it was beaten off successfully.

About 2 pm the enemy made a local attack from ABLAINZEVELLE and the South on our right flank and the 1/6th Manchester R. This was beaten off by our Lewis Gun & Rifle Fire. A small counter attack by the 1/6th Manchester R. resulted in the capture of two machine guns. Several other local and hap-hazard rushes were similarly dealt with.

About 3 pm. A large body of German infantry were seen crossing over front and moving in a North Westerly Direction. They were fired at (at long range) by our Lewis Guns. At about 9 pm the 1/10th Manch R. reported the enemy to be massing in F12 b&d. This was at once reported to the artillery who reached this ground thoroughly. No attack came from this quarter.

Throughout the afternoon and until about 7.30 pm the enemy heavily shelled the two right Companies causing considerable casualties particularly with A Co.

A platoon of 1/5th East Lancs R. reported as reinforcements and was attached as a reserve to B Co. and placed between B & C Cos.

During the night the enemy's artillery was quiet and patrols entered the village and reported that the enemy were still there but it was difficult to say in what strength or to locate their exact position.

Early in the afternoon LT HOLDAWAY, who had assumed control of a small advanced post manned by two sections of 1/10th Manch R. and 1/8th Manch when an officer of the 1/10th Manch R. previously in charge had been wounded, advanced with his force covered by his Lewis Gun into the wood but met a large force of the enemy so withdrew covered by his Lewis Gun Fire.

Casualties: Killed: 3 O.R., Wounded: 2LTS LINDLEY, HARRISON, TEASDALE, & WALKER, & 10 O.R., Missing: 7 O.R.

MARCH 28 1918 - West of ABLAINZEVELLE

At 6.20 am the enemy were reported to be massing in F11 d - about one battalion strong. Our 18 pounders opened fire on them effectively and they were dispersed.

From 8 am - 9 am our 18 pounders thoroughly reached and swept the Village of ABLAINZEVELLE - chiefly shrapnel which burst very accurately and with few short. One of our men who had been captured the day before informed us that this shelling was so effective that the enemy had withdrawn and he was so able to escape.

The enemy made a bombing raid on the 1/6th Manch R. It was unsuccessful and an Officer and men were left as prisoners.

During the day a considerable amount of movement was observed in the two sunken roads in F23 a&b particularly about F23 a64.

In the afternoon these two roads were shelled and the enemy was soon to rush out from them in small parties.

A machine gun was located in the village at about F23 c43 and another about F23 b26. A fighting patrol of one officer and 20 O.R. was ordered to deal with these two guns but just as the patrol was setting out orders were received from Brigade Headquarters that no patrols were to be sent out as an enemy attack was expected and it was impossible to change the S.O.S. Line.

Orders were received that the 127th Inf. Bde. was being relieved and that the 126th Inf. Bde. would take over a portion of their front. This Battalion extended and sidestepped so as to take over the front held by one company of 1/6th Bn. Manch. R. which had a good number of casualties and was very weak.

The night was very quiet and the relief was successfully carried out without incident.

The rain which fell almost continually the whole day rendered the trenches very muddy and almost impassable. It was exceedingly difficult to keep the Lewis Guns & Rifles clean and almost impossible for the men to keep dry or rest.

Casualties: 1 O.R. wounded.

MARCH 29 1918 - West of ABLAINZEVELLE

At dawn a patrol reconnoitred the trench position at F29 a25.80. A strong bombing post was discovered at F29 a38 and after shooting one of the enemy, the patrol withdrew.

Lieut Colonel E. G. K. CROSS was wounded in the right arm. He remained at duty until the Brigadier gave him verbal permission to go to hospital. Capt. E. HORSFALL assumed command of the Battalion.

About 2 pm a warning order was received that the Division was being relieved that night by the 41st Division.

During the day there was little artillery activity but snipers were active from ABLAINZEVILLE. Our snipers and Lewis Gunners kept up harrassing fire on the village during the day.

At night the battalion was relieved by a composite battalion of 11th Queens and 10th West Kents.

Relief complete without incident at 11.55 pm.

After relief the Battalion proceeded to ESSARTS to be Corps Reserve with the remainder of the Division.

Casualties: Killed: 1 O.R., Wounded: LT Col E. G. K. CROSS & 3 O.R.

MARCH 30 1918 - ESSARTS

The Battalion arrived in ESSARTS and was accomodated in trenches. As the cookers and ration limbers had arrived, the men were able to have a hot meal and change of socks before settling down to sleep. The day was spent in sleeping and cleaning up (slightly) as the men were very fatigued.

The Divisional Commander paid a personal visit to the Battalion to express his appreciation and thanks for what had been done during the past few days.

In the afternoon the rain began to fall and this greatly added to the discomfort of the men who, however, fully conscious that they had done everything asked or expected of them, were wonderfully cheerful.

Major H. S. BOWEN who was waiting for the Battalion, assumed command on arrival of the Battalion in ESSARTS.

MARCH 31 1918 - ESSARTS

The morning was warm today but in the afternoon rain began to fall again. Rest and cleaning up was continued throughout the day. We were informed that the Division would relieve the 41st Division the next night.

Great efforts were made throughout the day to help the condition of the mens' feet - on account of the wet weather. All feet were thoroughly rubbed with whale oil and clean socks issued.

During the afternoon the enemy shelled the area of the village but did not cause any casualties or as far as could be seen cause any other damage.

There was however a good deal of movement in the village during the day despite the fact that enemy balloons were up.

	Officers	O.R.
Total Strength Mar 1st	47	949
Total Strength Mar 31st	46	741
Killed	1	19
Wounded	6	148
Missing		18
Sick to hospital	2	100

Total casualties	9	285

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT APRIL 1918

APRIL 1 1918 - ESSARTS

During the morning the weather was bright and warm but in the afternoon there were some showers.

Orders that the Brigade was going into the line were received. This Battalion was to be in the Brigade Reserve. The 428th Field Co R.E. was attached to the Battalion.

During the day the enemy made an area shoot on the Village and although there were a number of direct hits on the trenches occupied by our men, there were no casualties.

In the evening the battalion left ESSARTS for the line (according to orders at 8.30 pm) but actually at 9.30 pm as the battalion in front were very late. There was considerable block and congestion of traffic by the cross roads at F19 c82 - usually heavily shelled but tonight there was only one shell near it. Route via cross roads F14 d00, MONCHY - BUCQUOY Road to intersection of road & trench F21 c93.

The Battalion relieved the 19th Bn. Middlesex (Pioneers) 41st Division who had held the line for two days and were very exhausted.

Relief complete without incident at 11.55 pm. Very little shelling.

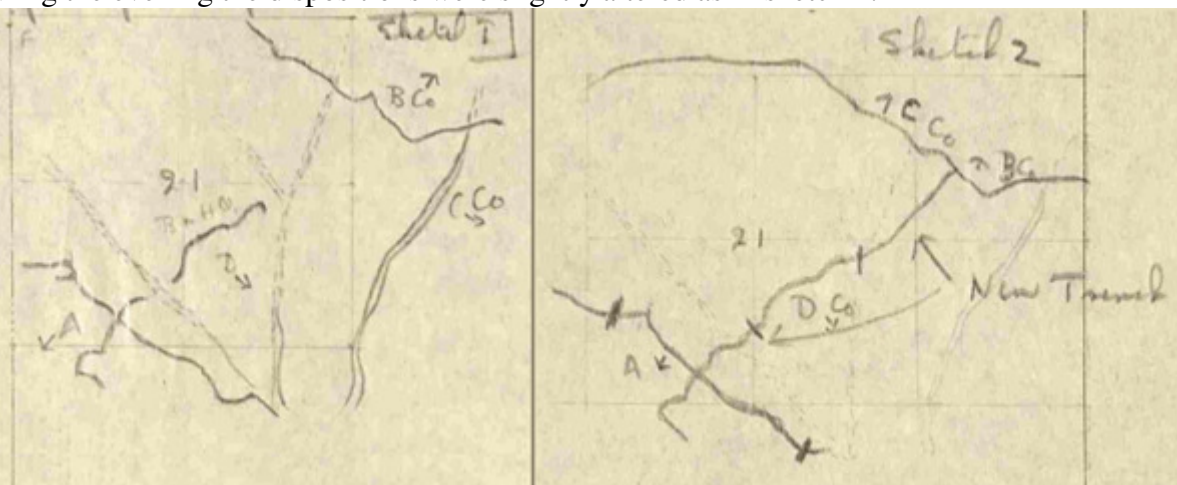
APRIL 2 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [West of ABLAINZEVILLE]

Disposition of Battalion were Bn H.Q. in Dugout approximately F21 d05, A Company occupying trench in F21 c, D Company trench F21 d, B Company in communication trench in F21 b, and C Co. in Sunken Road F22 a (as sketched below).

The trenches were in fairly good condition and the day bright and warm as the men were fairly comfortable. At night a trench was dug in completion of the one occupied by D Co. to join it up with the communication trench of B Co. A Co. also linked up on the right. The night was very dark and work was rather difficult as the trench was not completed that night.

Slight shelling during the day and slightly increased at night. Otherwise remarkably quiet.

During the evening the dispositions were slightly altered as in sketch 2.



APRIL 3 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [West of ABLAINZEVILLE]

Rain fell during morning and afternoon. Trenches very wet and muddy. The mens' condition very bad as there was little shelter - the most was an undercut covered with a ground sheet. Shelling

very slight all day. Evening the work on the trench continued and was finished sufficiently to be manned.

The 428th Field Company R.E. left the Battalion, but remained attached to the Brigade. Orders were received that the Brigade would be relieved 4/5th inst.

APRIL 4 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [West of ABLAINZEVILLE]

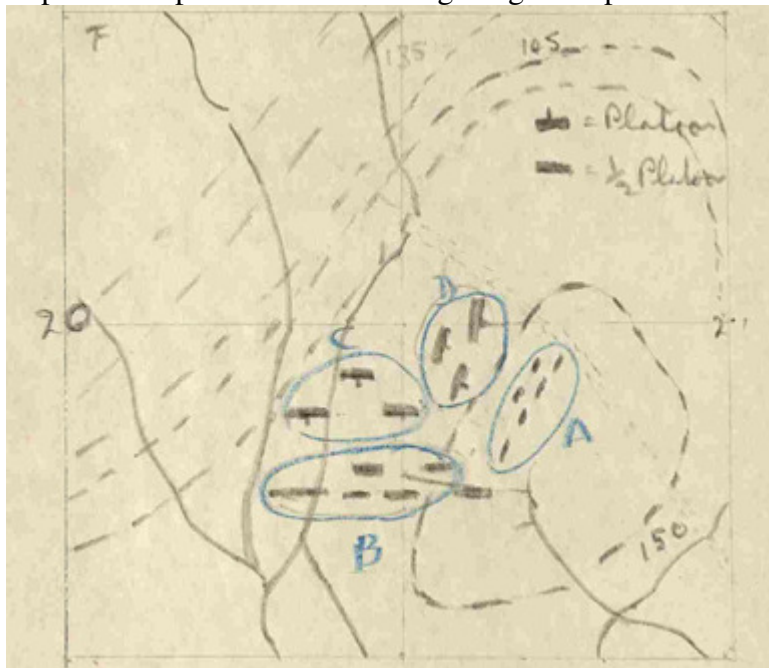
The day was very wet but there was little shelling. At night (very dark) the Battalion was relieved by the 1/7th Manchester R. The remainder of the Brigade went back but this Battalion was put under the orders of 127th Infantry Brigade and accommodated in the trench in F20 b&d. The tactical idea of the Battalion was to deny the high ground in F21 c to the enemy. This was to be done by pushing out the Battalion (as on sketch next page), distributed in depth so that resistance could be offered to the front and to the flanks.

APRIL 5 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE TRENCHES [East of ESSARTS]

The dispositions of the Battalion in case of attack are as per sketch below. The day was very wet and from 5 am - 6 pm there was a heavy enemy bombardment. All the battery positions behind were shelled with gas shells and a number fell near our trenches - a number of men had serious effects from it next day.

Later we heard the enemy had attacked BUCQUOY (held by the 125th L. Fusiliers Brigade) and had driven back the right Battalion.

The condition of the trenches was very bad and the men were excessively uncomfortable - the mud and water was up to the depth of the fence along the greater part of the Trench.



APRIL 6 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [East of ESSARTS]

The weather was much warmer and brighter and the condition of the trenches greatly improved. The whole of the day was spent in cleaning out the trench and make a clear reconnaissance of the ground over which any counter-attack might be delivered.

In the afternoon a message was received from the 1/7th Lancashire Fusiliers stating that they had been informed that this Unit was to relieve them in the Line that night. Orders to this effect were received at about 6.30 pm.

The Battalion was relieved by the 42nd Division Composite Battalion (composed of the Battln Surplus of each Battalion in the Division).

About 9 pm the Battalion marched off to relieve the 1/7th Lancashire Fusiliers in the line in the BUCQUOY Sector.

There was some rain during the night. The night was very dark and communications difficult, and great difficulty was found in finding the way which of course had not been reconnoitred.

There was little shelling during the night and the front was quite quiet.

Disposition of Companies in the Line, Right to Left, A, D, C, & B Cos.

APRIL 7 1918 - FRONT LINE BUCQUOY

The relief was complete without tactical incident at about 3 am. The condition of the posts was extraordinarily bad - very wet and muddy.

The day was quiet - little artillery or machine gun activity on either side. At about midday an old French Woman was found in the village. She was brought to the headquarters and she stated that she had lived there all her life and had stayed whilst the remainder of the civilian population had fled. She was sent to Brigade Headquarters under escort for investigation.

Orders were received that the Battalion would be relieved that night by two battalions of different brigades - 2/5th West Yorks R. & 5th Duke of Wellingtons.

The relieving troops were guided into position but it was then found that there had been a misunderstanding between the Brigades concerned and that C Company, the second company from the left could not be relieved. This was made clear to the battalions concerned, who, however, would not relieve the company.

APRIL 8 1918 - FRONT LINE BUCQUOY

Our C Co. was still not relieved at 6 am, a report was forwarded to Brigade Headquarters and permission for Battalion Headquarters to withdraw. A definite promise was made that C Company would be relieved that night.

Route of Relief was via MONCHY-le-BOIS, BIENVILLERS, SOUASTRE, TO HENU, where billets were provided for the Battalion.

The Billets were crowded but were moderately good.

The men were thoroughly exhausted and were allowed to sleep the whole day and night.

APRIL 9 1918 - HENU

C Company was relieved and motor lorries were provided for them from BIENVILLERS to HENU.

The remainder of the Battalion bathed at PAS.

APRIL 10 1918 - HENU

The day spent in cleaning up and in reorganizing the companies on account of the large draft which had arrived.

The Red Line Reconnoitred by O.C. Cos.

APRIL 11 1918 - HENU

The Divisional Commander inspected the 126th Inf Bde and in his address afterwards expressed himself satisfied with what the Brigade had done during the recent action.

APRIL 12 1918 - HENU

Cleaning up, short periods of drill and physical training were carried out during the day.

APRIL 13 1918 - HENU

Recuperative training, short periods of smartening up drill, & recreational training continued.

APRIL 14 1918 - HENU

As yesterday.

APRIL 15 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near GOMMECOURT]

The Battalion ordered to go into the line that night into Brigade Reserve. Route SOUASTRE & FONQUEVILLERS. The Battalion relieved the 8th Lincolns. Relief complete about 11.30 pm without incident. There was some shelling as the battalion passed through FONQUEVILLERS but only two slight casualties were incurred.

APRIL 16 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near GOMMECOURT]

The Battalion was accomodated in the Three Purple Lines - the Old German Front and Support Lines. There was plenty of good dugout accomodation and the men were very comfortable.

As the whole of the trenches were under direct observation, movement and fires were necessarily limited as far as possible.

In case of attack the Battalion were to occupy the 1st Purple Line and be ready to deliver counter attacks on the Front & Support lines if captured by the enemy.

Slight shelling of our trenches during the day.

APRIL 17 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near GOMMECOURT]

Fairly Quiet - spasmodic shelling of PIGEON WOOD & GOMMECOURT WOOD. The weather was bright and clear.

Besides a number of working parties, a great deal of work was done in cleaning the trenches and digging Lewis Gun Positions & Emplacements particularly in the 1st Purple Line.

Lieut Colonel W. H. MICHOLLS reported to the Battalion and assumed command, Major BOWEN returning the next day to the Transport Lines.

APRIL 18 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near GOMMECOURT]

Enemy artillery continued to be fairly quiet - there was intermittent shelling of GOMMECOURT, PIGEON WOOD, & BIEZ WOOD.

The Defense Scheme & Battle Dispositions of the Battalion were reorganised with the permission of Brigade Headquarters.

APRIL 19 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near GOMMECOURT]

In the early morning a Practice Manning Scheme for the New Arrangement of Battle Positions was carried out.

Artillery on both sides very quiet.

Orders received that the Battalion would go into Support the next night. Support Battalion Position reconnoitred in the afternoon.

APRIL 20 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near GOMMECOURT]

Enemy artillery slightly more active during the day.

At night the Battalion relieved the 1/5th East Lancs. Regiment in Brigade Support. There was some shelling during relief.

LT Col W. H. MICHOLLS was wounded in the calf during the relief.

Relief completed just before midnight. Capt. A. FORBES temporarily in command of Bn.

APRIL 21 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near GOMMECOURT]

Major H. S. BOWEN rejoined the Battalion in the Line and assumed Command of the Battalion.

The weather was very wet during the day and the condition of the trenches very bad.

The Battalion was disposed as follows: Bn HQ & B Co. in the Strong Point called SALMON POINT, A Co. in CHUB TRENCH, D Company in SALMON TRENCH, C Co. WAACS TRENCH.

During the day there was spasmodic shelling near Battalion Headquarters, otherwise fairly quiet.

Working parties for R.E.s & for the Front Line Battalion continued.

APRIL 22 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near GOMMECOURT]

Area near Battalion Headquarters & the derelict Tank shelled intermittently during the day - chiefly Whizz-Bangs (77mm) but also a few 10.5cm. The weather much brighter & warmer. A considerable amount of work carried out on the trenches which was improved a great deal.

APRIL 23 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near GOMMECOURT]

Weather warm and dry. Trenches further improved. Order received for the Battalion to relieve 1/10th Manchester Regiment in the Line. Reconnoitring parties were sent out in the afternoon to the Front Line Battalion Area.

In order to complete an adjustment of the Brigade Boundary, "D" Company was placed at the Disposal of 1/19th Manchester R. to be in close support.

Little artillery activity on either side. Working parties continued.

APRIL 24 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near GOMMECOURT]

Some rain during the afternoon made all the trenches very muddy and wet. There was some shelling during the day but the night was very quiet. The Battalion relieved 1/10th Manchester R. in the Line. There was no difficulty about the relief which proceeded without incident.

APRIL 25 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Relief complete at 12.55 am.

The Battalion Front extends to about 2300 yards long. The front line consists of a line of posts - the right half in a continuous trench, the left half in the open and quite isolated. Each post is on an average of a strength of 1 N.C.O. & 6 men.

A newly dug support trench - about 200 yards in the rear of the front line of the right half battalion and about 600 yds (average) in the rear of the left half of the battaion line accomodated

the support platoons of the Companies. On the left were three posts in the open, about 250 yds behind the front line acting as close support to the left isolated front posts.

At night in accordance with Brigade Instructions, the Battalion Reorganised its method of holding the line (vide Map & Orders attached). The supporting posts on the left were withdrawn leaving the isolated front line posts in grave danger of being cut off before anything was known in rear of what had happened.

The day was fairly quiet, there being little retaliation to our frequent "hurricane" artillery shoots. Enemy Machine Guns (particularly at night) and snipers were markedly active.

There was little enemy movement noted during the day.

APRIL 26 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

There was little artillery activity on either side during the day but enemy snipers & machine guns remained active.

A little movement seen in ROSSIGNOL WOOD was immediately fired upon but very little of the enemy was seen the whole day.

A patrol from A Company found an unoccupied post (apparently for a machine gun) in the East Corner of the WOOD. Some loose S.A.A. and four stick bombs were also found in the post and brought away.

Other patrols were sent out but no enemy were encountered nor were any enemy posts located.

APRIL 27 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Slight shelling on HIGH STREET and near the Support Bn H.Q. took place during the day. Enemy snipers and machine gunners active - all exposed ground was swept at night by the enemy's machine gun fire. Our artillery remained active during the day & night.

The Left Company adjusted its disposition at night. Two men posts in close support to the Front Line were established at L7 b77 & L7 b68. These posts were of high morale value to the front line posts.

A small reconnoitring patrol from A Company discovered a working party of the enemy in front so word was immediately brought back and Lewis Fire opened on the Spot with great effect it was thought. Other patrols failed to establish contact with the enemy.

APRIL 28 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Enemy artillery more active today - snipers and machine gunners also remained active. Our artillery continued their active probing of hurricane shoots at irregular intervals.

At night a fighting patrol of 1 Officer (2LT McADOREY) & 9 O.R. attempted a silent raid on the enemy post located at L7 c28. The surprise failed and the enemy opened fire with machine gun, rifle, & bombs wounding the officer severely (he later died) and a man. Our patrol returned the fire with bombs but withdrew as it was now impossible to achieve its purpose. The wounded man, who was thought to be dead, was left behind and was taken in by the enemy.

At 9.30 pm the enemy fired a volley of rifle grenades on our left post killing one man and wounding two others. Following this up immediately, a party of about eight of the enemy attempted to rush the post. The rush was stopped without difficulty with rifle fire and bombs and the enemy quickly withdrew. A non commissioned officer's cap (badly damaged by a bomb) and a dead man were afterwards found outside the post. The man's papers identified him as belonging

to the 7th ERSATZ BAVARIAN Regiment. The man was only young - born 1899. There was little else of interest to report during the day as it was quiet and little enemy movement observed.

APRIL 29 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Enemy artillery quiet - our artillery continued its activity throughout the day and night. Enemy snipers and machine gunners continued their activity.

During the night the enemy sent up a number of flares showing that he was somewhat apprehensive.

During the night several patrols and listening posts were sent out. One patrol encountered a working party. Rifle Fire was opened on them and bombs were thrown but after an hour seeing it was impossible to rush the party on account on their strength, the patrol withdrew.

APRIL 30 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Enemy artillery more active - about 100 4.2s were fired at HIGH STREET during the day. Our artillery also remained active.

Some enemy movement at L7 d32 was fired on and several parties of about 6 men were dispersed.

At night the dispositions of the Battalion were again changed to give more strength and support to the left flank.

We carried out active patrolling during the night but although a working party was seen and fire opened on them - resulting in casualties being inflicted upon them, no prisoners were captured.

	Officers	O.R.
Killed		4
Wounded	3	43 (including 7 at duty)
Gassed		24
Missing		3
Sick to hospital		139

Total casualties	3	213

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT MAY 1918

MAY 1 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Very fine day. Artillery on both sides very quiet. Small parties of enemy seen moving towards enemy support trench systems at early dawn fired on by our L.G.s with good effect. Dispositions of Bn. changed on left and left centre. 6 Supporting (centre) posts were established between L7 b22 and L2 c51. These posts were dug during the night and manned by a section in each post. Dispositions of Cos. in BASS Trench were accordingly changed.

2 Patrols went out but owing to extreme darkness no good information was obtained.

MAY 2 1918 - FRONT LINE [near GOMMECOURT]

Sunny day with result trenches quickly became dry. Visibility only fair. Little artillery activity on both sides. Advance parties of 1/7th Bn. LANCS. FUSILIERS reconnoitred Bn. front previous to their relief. Whilst accompanying relieving Officer round the Co. front Lieut. HARRIS O.C. A Co. was wounded by M.G. fire. This was in broad daylight.

Orders for relief received. Relief of our companies by 1/7th L.F.R. commenced about 10.00 pm. B, C & D Cos. reliefs were complete by 12.45 am. The relieving company of our A Co. owing to loss of direction and did not relieve our Co., who therefore remained in position till following day.

MAY 3 1918 - COIGNEUX

Whole day was spent by 3 Cos. in cleaning up and bathing at baths in COIGNEUX. Men quite comfortable. 3 Cos. in farms and hutments around BN. H.Q. J9 a63. A Co. were relieved by 10:30 pm arriving at COIGNEUX without casualties.

MAY 4 1918 - BDE. RESERVE - COIGNEUX

Cleaning of equipment and painting of helmets continued. 2 Companies fired on range. Working parties supplied. Remaining portion of Bn. bathed.

Morning wet, remainder of day unsettled. RED LINE reconnoitred by officers and N.C.O.s.

The following decorations were awarded to the following N.C.O.s and appeared in Bn. orders.

Distinguished Conduct Medal: 300279 Sgt. G. Evans, 300164 Cpl. J. Waterhouse, 34181 L/Cpl J. Costello, 16248 L/Cpl J. Quine.

Military Medal: 300448 Cpl. H. Harrison, 301447 L/Cpl. T. Derrig, 301307 L/Cpl A. Walker, 300131 Pte. E. Slowe, 300550 Cpl. G. Bradshaw, 301118 Pte. Quin [Quinn], 35182 [351822] Pte. H. S. Bogey [Bogie].

MAY 5 1918 - BDE. RESERVE - COIGNEUX

Warm day till afternoon when there was heavy rain. 2 Companies fired on range J3 b77, 1 Company supplied working parties. 1 Company - drill on parade ground - general smartening up. Warning Orders for relief received.

MAY 6 1918 - ARMY RESERVE - PAS

Bn, proceeded to PAS where it relieved the 2/8th Bn. King's Liverpool Regt. of the 57th Division. Camp consisted of 65 tents, in C17 b not pleasant situation. Owing to nature of soil

ground is absolute quagmire after smallest amount of rain. Tent accommodation small, 15 men to a tent.

Bn. as part of Bde. forms part of Army Reserve. Certain defence schemes were taken over from outgoing Bn.

MAY 7 1918 - ARMY RESERVE - PAS

Rain fell during the night and during the course of the day. On this account no training was carried out. RED LINE again reconnoitred by officers.

MAY 8 1918 - ARMY RESERVE - PAS

Fine day. Section, platoon and company drill on parade ground in C11 d.

Preliminary Musketry instruction near 50 yds. range. 12 men per Co. were selected to undergo L.G. training under the L.G. Officer.

Administrative orders received from Bde. with reference to the manning of RED LINE.

MAY 9 1918 - ARMY RESERVE - PAS

At 7.40 am message received "Mann RED LINE". Bn. moved off at 8.45 am and proceeded by COUIN to position as RESERVE in J8 a and J8 b. Companies were dispersed in artillery formation by 10.10 am. Officers, N.C.O.s and runners from each Co. were sent to reconnoitre the positions of Headquarters and sectors of the 2 Bns. holding the line.

Visual communications were well established with the Bde. forward command Post. After making all necessary tactical arrangements and occupying positions till 3.40 pm orders were received to return to camp.

MAY 10 1918 - PAS

Training day. 3 Companies used ground in C11 a. Sectional training, saluting drill, P.T. & B.F. and Musketry exercises. 1 Company fired on 50 yds. range. Signallers under Signalling Officer carried out very successful Contact Patrol scheme with Aeroplanes specially detailed. Communications was maintained by means of the "POPHAM PANEL". 32 men were detached for training with Bde. School for Lewis Gun. 1 officer detached as instructor.

MAY 11 1918 - PAS

Fine day. Training on ground in C17 b. Great attention paid to Musketry training - bolt manipulation, rapid aiming and rapid loading with Lewis cartridges, Bayonet fighting prior and preparative to use of Bullet and Bayonet course.

MAY 12 1918 - PAS

Church parades services were held. R.C. services in church in PAS. C. of E. services close to camp directed by Deputy Asst. Chaplain General. Football matches were played - Inter Bn. and inter Company.

MAY 13 1918 - PAS

During morning 2 Cos. fired rapid practices and Lewis Guns on 300 yds. range instructed under Bde. arrangements. Position in C9 b. Live bombing with No. 36 grenade using cup discharger carried out.

Heavy rain fell in afternoon. No further training on account of rain.

MAY 14 1918 - PAS

Special gas training carried out by 3 Cos. Respirators were worn for 50 minutes during which time musketry and other exercises were carried out. Instruction also given to Lewis gun N.C.O.s in use of BARR & Stroud range finder.

The Commanding Officer conducted a tactical scheme with platoon commanders and Company Commanders during the afternoon in the trench systems N. of the camp.

Lecture on "Tank Tactics" at Bde. H.Q. was given by an officer from Tanks. All officers & senior N.C.O.s attended.

MAY 15 1918 - PAS

This Bn. provided working parties 3 Cos. were employed. One company trained in C17 b and used 50 yds. range. Concert was given in evening by Bn. inter-party. Bn. made arrangements for a practical welcome of American contingent.

MAY 16 1918 - PAS

All Companies fired application and rapid practice on 300 yds. range.

At 5 pm Colonel, Major and all Co. Commanders met officers from 3rd Bn. 307th Regt. U.S.A. at tea at Bde. H.Q.s. Discussions on training took place. One company of the 3rd Bn., M Co., was to be attached for training only to this unit.

The M.O. Capt. H.C. Galster, U.S.A. M.O.R.C. received decoration Military Cross for services rendered during recent offensive.

MAY 17 1918 - PAS

All the box respirators in Bn. were tested at the DIVNL gas hut in PAS. Training carried out on Bullet and Bayonet course.

One platoon of the Americans Company was attached to one of our Companies and platoon of Americans carried out exactly similar training to our own Company. One officer per Company paid all his attention to the Americans offering suggestions and giving criticism. Bn. orderly room arranged to submit daily Bn. orders & daily training programme. Every effort was executed to Secure complete liaison with these our Allies. Invitations were sent to attend Boxing tournaments and concerts.

MAY 18 1918 - PAS

All water bottles sanitised under Bn. arrangements. 3 Companies again on working parties. Remaining Co. trained. Armourer Sgt. inspector commenced inspection of all rifles and Lewis guns.

MAY 19 1918 - PAS

Church parade. Collection on behalf of Church Army.

Boxing and rifle competition. Concert in evening.

MAY 20 1918 - PAS

Without exception, all employed men on Bn. H.Q., Transport, etc. and all men in Companies fired on 300 yds. range. All Lewis guns fired.

MAY 21 1918 - PAS

Bn. bathed. Training on Bullet & Bayonet Course and 30 yds. range.

All blankets fumigated at PAS.

The C.O., 2nd-in-command, Intelligence Officers and O.C. Cos. proceeded to make a reconnaissance for counter attacks on BEER trench running E. of FONQUEVILLERS.

Adjutants conference at Bn. H.Q.s and discussion on "Courts - Martial".

MAY 22 1918 - PAS

Training on Bullet & Bayonet course and tactical exercises by platoon practices. During the afternoon recreational training. Rifle competition consisting on 1 - 2 Rifle Sections 1 N.C.O. & 6 men each to fire 5 rounds application, 5 rounds Snap targets, rapid fire for 1 minute, fire control of Section commanders being taken into consideration. Great keenness amongst the men. Boxing training carried out in 1 Company.

At 5 pm lecture was given by D.G.O. on "Mustard Gas" to all Subaltern officers of Bde. Lecture in PAS.

During the afternoon the C.O. and Co. Commanders attended at tactical Scheme conducted at ROSSIGNOL FARM in J3 c.

Concert given in evening by concert party of 10th Manchester Rgt.

MAY 23 1918 - PAS

Lt.-Col. Cross proceeded to England and ceased to command the Bn. Major W.F. PANTON (LEICESTER REGT.) came from the 1/5 Bn. Manchester Regt. to take over the command of the Bn. All Cos. fired on the 300 yds. in C9 b. One platoon of C Co. under 2/LT. HART carried out a platoon scheme. DIVNL commander and Bde. Staff being present. The former expressed great satisfaction in the sound working of the scheme.

MAY 24 1918 - PAS

Heavy rain fell all day. No training was therefore possible. Lectures in each tent were conducted by Platoon Officers and Sgts.

All officers in charge of working parties detailed for 25 inst. reconnoitred the routes to work and the work done and work still required. This was done to ensure continuity of work.

MAY 25 1918 - PAS

Duty Bn. i.e. Bn. provided 3 Cos. for various working parties, chiefly engaged in work on dug-outs in RED LINE and thereabouts.

1 Company trained in C29 b - special attention being paid to platoon tactical schemes. One hour's parade about midnight in gas masks.

MAY 26 1918 - PAS

Major W. F. Panton relieved on his Command of Bn. by MAJOR TETLEY (Lincolnshire Regt.) who came from Second-in Command of 1/5th Manchester Regt.

1 Company and details attended presentation of decorations by DIVNL commander to those recipients of awards since Xmas 1917. Bde. assembled in C28 a. Decorations made by DIVNL Commander of this unit were 1 M.C.; 3 D.C.M.; 7 M.M.; 1 Croix de Guerre.

Remaining 3 Cos. worked as yesterday.

MAY 27 1918 - PAS

C, D & A Cos. continued work on RED LINE. B Co. training at C29 a carrying out tactical exercise. Battalion paraded at 8.15 pm to practice night movements in Box Respirators. 2Lts. parade under Major Bowen at 5.0 pm for instruction. W. Holdaway receives Military Cross. Weather fine.

MAY 28 1918 - PAS

A, B, C, D Cos. Training on Bullet & Bayonet Course - 30 yds range and C28 d Musketry tactical exercises - The assault - Box respirator Drill included in Training. 2Lts. parade at 5.0 pm under Maj. Bowen.

Warning order received with reference to relief of 57th division.

Conference of Co. Commanders and C.O. at 5.0 pm.

Night gas training from 9.0 to 12 pm.

MAY 29 1918 - PAS

Training continued. 300 yards Rifle Range in C9 b allotted to the battalion and used by each Company in turn during the day. A portion of the Battalion was also bathed at Brigade Baths.

Evening Companies carried out half an hour's gas drill.

MAY 30 1918 - PAS

Training continued in the morning on the assault course, the range (30 yds.) and the Training Ground in C11 d.

Afternoon organised sports & games.

MAY 31 1918 - PAS

A & D Companies carried out a tactical scheme on C11 d ground, particular attention being paid to the formation of a defensive flank both in the attack and defence. The 30 yds. range and the Assault Course also used. C Co. carried out live bombing (36 Grenades).

Casualties

Killed

Nil

Wounded

Nil [Lieut. Harris listed as wounded May 2nd]

Died of wounds

2Lt J. McAdorey 5/5/18

Missing

One other rank 1/5/18

Sick to hospital

120 other ranks

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT JUNE 1918

JUNE 1 1918 - PAS

A & D Companies carried out Field Practices on the 300 yds. range at C9 b. B & C Companies practiced tactical exercises on the Training Ground in C11 d.

Afternoon the men played games - football, boxing, etc. The weather remained fine.

In the evening a telegram was received cancelling the Warning Order that the Division was to Relieve the 57th Division on 4/5th & 5/6th inst.

It was expected that the Division was to be sent South to take part in the Fighting near SOISSONS. There were no developments.

JUNE 2 1918 - PAS

Sunday. Services for all denominations were held.

Warning Order received that the Division was to relieve the New Zealand Division on the 7th/8th inst.

Afternoon Sports & Games. Weather fine & warm.

JUNE 3 1918 - PAS

A, B & C Companies occupied on Working Parties. D Company carried out training at C11 d - practice with Discharger Cup & Tactics against Cavalry. The digging out of tents - protection against aeroplane bombs was continued. Weather continued fine.

JUNE 4 1918 - PAS

No training carried out - A, B & C Cos. on Working Parties. D Co, on digging out the floors of tents to a depth of two feet.

The C.O. and Company Commanders reconnoitred the Support Line the Battalion is to take over.

JUNE 5 1918 - PAS

Advanced Parties went up to live in the line until the arrival of the Battalion on the 7th inst.

Working parties continued.

Evening the Battalion Officers' Mess held a Guest night - the Brigadier, O.C. 1/5 East Lancs., 1/10th Manch. R. & O.C. Bn. 307 Regt. U.S.A. attached to the Brigade were present.

JUNE 6 1918 - PAS

During the morning training continued. A & B Companies on C11 d Training ground. Platoon Tactical Schemes, Defensive Tactics against Cavalry and Bombing (Practice with Discharger Cup). C & D Companies Miniature Range & Assault Course in C17 b.

Afternoon sports & organised games. The American Regt. attached to the Brigade (307th) left PAS for an unknown destination.

JUNE 7 1918 - PAS

The Battalion embussed outside the Camp on the PAS-GAUDIEMPRES Rd. at 1:30 pm. The embussing proceeded with great expedition and on arrival at BUS-les-ARTOIS the Battalion marched into the Wood about J20 c83. After dinner the Battalion proceeded at 5.15 pm to march

to relieve the 2nd Canterbury Rgt. (N.Z. Division) in Brigade Support. Route via BERTRANCOURT and tracks skirting north of COURCELLES au BOIS and COLINCAMPS. (The Battle Surplus (4 Off. & 60 O.R.) marched from PAS to HALLOY and the Administrative Portion of the Battalion (4 Off. & 101 O.R.) proceeded to camp at LOUVENCOURT.)

Relief was complete without incident at 9.10 pm.

The country is very open and undulating and the numerous tracks are used almost as far forward as the Front Line Trenches. The Front Line is on the Crest or on the Reverse Slope and whilst there is a very extensive field of view of the enemy country, all our ground behind the Front Line is dead to the enemy.

The Battalion is disposed in two lines of posts a platoon strong, distributed along a front of about 2600 yds. B & A Companies are in the Front Line and C & D Companies in the Second Line as on Sketch (APP II).

The day was remarkably quiet - very little shelling.

JUNE 8 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

About 3.30 am the enemy laid down a heavy barrage of light & medium Trench Mortars on the left Company's (of the Brigade) Front Line. A number of casualties were caused.

In the afternoon a number of 5.9s fell near Brigade H.Q. (J24 d60.75).

Supply Arrangements - Ration Limbers leave LOUVENCOURT about 2.30 pm and deliver rations at Bn. & Co. H.Q. (at each of which there is an efficient and simple cookhouse) at about 5 pm.

A water cart which is stabled about J24 a42 fills from a pump & well in SAILLY au BOIS and delivers loads to Company Headquarters at each of which there are barrels or tanks.

At night the Division on the Right made a raid with two Battalions. There was considerable bombardment from our guns which was replied to by the enemy who also sent up a large variety of coloured lights.

The day was warm and bright throughout and very quiet.

JUNE 9 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

The morning, the weather was fine but in the afternoon some rain fell - with a corresponding fall in temperature.

About 8 4.2 shells fell near A Company H.Q. during the morning and at 5 pm 14 77mm shells fell close to Bn. H.Q. Otherwise very quiet.

In the evening verbal instructions were received to reorganize the Battalion dispositions - Instead of Support and Reserve Battalions each having their Companies scattered along the whole length of the Brigade Front, the Support Battalion was to take over the Left Positions & the Reserve Battalion the Right Position. Thus each Battalion would be more compact and more capable of delivering or organizing a counter-attack. (Previously the Role of the Support Battalion was to "hang on" to the last - passive resistance.)

JUNE 10 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine and warm. Visibility good - 8 enemy observation balloons were up during the day.

The enemy artillery were fairly active - our batteries were very active.

At 6.30 pm companies marched by overland routes to their new areas. The Move was complete without incident at 8.15 pm.

Working parties - 150 O.R. from the Battalion worked on RAILWAY AVENUE. 70 men bathed in the afternoon at the BERTRANCOURT Baths.

Casualties 2 O.R. Wounded H.E. (1 at duty).

JUNE 11 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather warm and bright - visibility good.

Bathing Parties at BERTRANCOURT and usual working parties continued.

In the Evening the Battalion relieved 1/10th Manchester R. in the Left Battalion Sector. The relief was complete without incident at 11.50 pm. Dispositions from right to left: Front Line D & C Cos. Support A & B Cos. The Battalion Front is about 1100 yds and the Battalion is distributed in a depth of 1400 yds. (for dispositions see attached map).

Rations are brought up nightly to the Battalion Headquarters and carried to companies from there. Water is drawn from SAILLY-au-BOIS (5 Water carts daily) and put into Tanks (capacity 200 gallons) near Bn. H.Q.

There was little shelling or other sign of enemy activity during the day or night.

JUNE 12 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather warm & dry - visibility good.

Little artillery or M.G. activity on either side. Our 6" Trench Mortars (Newton) fired 80 rds. during the afternoon, on BASIN WOOD.

The enemy seemed very nervous, as about 10 pm the enemy threw a number of bombs into and round his post at K27 d66.88 apparently making certain before he occupied it, that we were not holding it already.

During the night a few 77mm shells fell on the Front Line but the night was otherwise quiet.

Patrols reported the Concrete Emplacement at K27 b58 to be unoccupied. There was no sign of the enemy near it. Small working parties were observed at about K27 b88.50 & K27 b60.19. Machine Guns fired from approximately K27 d60.98 & K28 a55.98.

JUNE 13 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather continues warm and dry. Visibility good. Very quiet all day. Our Field & Heavy Artillery were very active and our 6" Newton T.M. fired 20 rounds during the day in BASIN WOOD, RED COTTAGE & LA SIGNY FARM, At night our Machine Guns were also active.

During the day the enemy fired spasmodically in the Vicinity of the Sugar Factory & near EUSTON DUMP (K33 a).

At night about 10.30 pm the enemy again bombed himself into his forward post at K27 d66.88.

During the night some shells fell on the front & support lines.

Patrols went out from K27 c35.25 & K27 d35.55. Machine Guns observed at K27 d69 & K28 d01.

JUNE 14 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

At 5.30 am & 6.10 am in conjunction with the Division on our Left, our 6" Newton T.M. bombarded the Eastern Edge of LA SIGNY FARM. During the day, apparently in retaliation, the Front & Support LINE was shelled vigourously with 77mm - about 250 shells in the forenoon and occasionally in the afternoon.

At about 9 pm two red lights were sent up by the enemy, followed by 40 minutes bombardment of our front line - 4.2s chiefly. At 10.30 pm two further red lights were sent up by the enemy whereupon the enemy again bombed himself into his post and heavy artillery fire was opened on the front line system - our left company in particular received a good deal of attention. This continued most of the night.

Our artillery & M.G.s continued their activity during the day & night.

Active patrolling of No Man's Land was carried out during the night.

Casualties Wounded 1 O.R.

JUNE 15 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Slight Showers during the day - visibility fair.

About 3 am the enemy shelled our front and support lines, chiefly in the left Company Area - 77mm. He showed an increased artillery activity during the day, particularly with his artillery.

The Front Line Trench of the left Company is on the forward slope of a hill and the trench being shallow, all movement along it is observed and promptly shelled. During the day there were a number of direct hits on the trench.

Our artillery & M.G.s remained active the chief artillery targets being OBSERVATION WOOD, MATTHEW COPSE & BASIN WOOD.

Our 6" T.M.s fired 60 rounds on K27 b&d & K34 a.

During the night there was again a considerable amount of shelling on our Front System - about 200 shells fell in the left Company's Area.

A raid was carried out on the left on FUSILIER TRENCH (K16 b). In conjunction with this a Chinese Barrage was put on VALLADE TRENCH in K34 a&d.

Casualties Killed 1 O.R. Wounded 5 O.R. (1 at duty) all H.E.

JUNE 16 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather warm & bright. Visibility good.

During the morning there was some shelling of our front system but in the afternoon this died down, and there was little activity on either side after this for the remainder of the day.

In the evening the two support Companies (A & B Cos.) relieved the two front line companies (C & D Cos.). The relief was complete without incident and the remainder of the night was very quiet.

Our artillery continued its normal activity.

Casualties Killed 3 O.R., W. 8 O.R. (all H.E.)

JUNE 17 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fair. Good visibility.

During the morning RAILWAY AVENUE & trenches in K27 c&d were shelled - 77mm, 4.2s & 5.9s.

In the afternoon a shoot was carried out on LA SIGNY FARM. All the troops in the area affected were withdrawn. Between 5 & 8 am over 200 shells (6" Hows.) were fired on the target.

Between 9 & 10.30 pm in retaliation the enemy heavily shelled all salient points in the whole Brigade Area, the front & support lines receiving particular attention.

At 10.15 pm our artillery - field & heavy guns opened a heavy retaliation fire. This was effective only for a short time when the enemy artillery again opened fire. Our batteries then opened a

heavy neutralizing fire - making use of gas shells. This proved effective for the remainder of the night, which was quiet.

A patrol left our lines at K27 d22 and proceeded along RAILWAY AVENUE. All the dugouts in this trench were inspected but no sign of recent occupation was noticed. A sentry (and probably a post) was noticed at K27 d83.70. Two machine guns opened fire on the patrol from K27 d82.50 & K27 d33.65. Casualties 1 O.R. wounded at Duty (H.E.)

JUNE 18 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

About 3 am a few rounds were fired on our front & support lines. The remainder of the day was quiet. Efforts were made to repair the damage caused by the enemy's shelling the previous day.

Our artillery fired shrapnel over LA SIGNY FARM and was active on the enemy's back areas.

At midnight a heavy barrage of guns and T.M. supported the raid on the right of the 1/5th East Lancs. In retaliation the enemy put down a barrage on our front line system and also on his own front line trench. The enemy sent up numerous coloured lights and the following was thought to be the meaning of his signals: 2 green lights - enemy shelling front lines. 2 reds - all clear (i.e. he has occupied posts at night which are empty in the day time). Golden Rain - S.O.S.

Patrols went out during the night but no contact was made with the enemy and no new information learned. Casualties Nil.

JUNE 19 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

The whole day was very quiet, there being very little artillery activity on either side.

Advance Parties of 1/5 East Lancs. Rgt. visited the line to take over. Orders were received that one company of the 1/5th E.L.R. would not be available for relief on account of having been engaged in the raid the previous day.

In the evening the Relief of the Battalion (less D Co.) by the 1/5th East Lancs. R. proceeded without incident and was completed at 11.55 pm.

After relief the Battalion proceeded into Brigade Right Support.

Dispositions Right to left, C [&] B in Front, A & D in rear.

Casualties Killed 1 O.R. Wounded 2 O.R. all H.E.

JUNE 20 1918 - BRIGADE RIGHT SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather inclined to be showery - unsettled.

Working parties commenced - 100 O.R. and a party of 25 O.R. detached in Tunnelling Work.

During the day bathing parties marched to COURCELLES where some good baths had been arranged.

The men are quite comfortable - there are plenty of shelters. As there are good cookhouses & supplies of water and rations good, the men's food arrangements are very satisfactory.

In the evening D Company was relieved and joined the Remainder of the Battalion in Brigade Support.

At night there was a considerable amount of shelling throughout the Battalion Area - chiefly 4.2s and 5.9s. A number of shells fell behind Battalion Headquarters & over a hundred shells fell near C Co. H.Q.

The day was otherwise quiet.

JUNE 21 1918 - BRIGADE RIGHT SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Slight Showers during the day.

Working parties & bathing continued.

Commencing today arrangements made to send five officers daily to Rear H.Q. for Baths, etc.

In the evening there was a little shelling but no casualties were caused.

JUNE 22 1918 - BRIGADE RIGHT SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Some rain. Very dull and sky overcast.

Working parties continued. Men not employed on these, carried out work on trenches & wiring.

Very Quiet.

JUNE 23 1918 - BRIGADE RIGHT SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

The Brigade was relieved by 127th Inf. Bde in the evening but this Battalion remained in its position and was attached to 127th Bde.

Weather fine - visibility good - strong wind blowing.

Very quiet during the day & the night.

Working parties and bathing continued.

Casualties Wounded at Duty 1 O.R.

JUNE 24 1918 - BRIGADE RIGHT SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Some showers during the day but visibility remained good.

Working parties were reduced by 60 O.R.

During the day D Company practiced the raid arranged for the 28th inst. In accordance with Divisional & Brigade Suggestions, the plan was considerably altered in the evening.

About 9.30 pm a heavy mist gathered and remained the whole night. About 9.45 pm a few gas shells fell in the vicinity of Battalion Headquarters.

During the night there was considerable shelling in the neighbourhood of COLINCAMPS.

JUNE 25 1918 - BRIGADE RIGHT SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Heavy mist in the morning but cleared about 9 am and visibility then good. Weather warm.

Working parties continued including the 60 O.R. who were cancelled for the 24th inst.

A practice ground for the Raiding Party was laid out with tape.

Very quiet all day.

JUNE 26 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather warm and fair - visibility good.

During the morning the enemy artillery fired a number of rounds on our batteries South of SAILLY au BOIS. The day was otherwise [un]eventful as there was little shelling.

Working parties continued.

Capt. J.H. PRESTON after 3 years continuous service with the Battalion, proceeded to U.K. for an Ordnance Course.

2LT. SEED proceeded to U.K. for transfer to R.A.F.

The trenches to be raided were taped out on a suitable piece of ground for carrying out a practice.

The raid was considerably altered in plan.

The projector gas attack was postponed for the night.

JUNE 27 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather continued fine and warm with good visibility.

At 11 am a practice of the raid was carried out - the Major General, Brigadier & C.R.A. were present.

The Baths at COURCELLES was used by the Battalion between 8 am & 2 pm. There were few clean clothes available however, although the baths themselves were excellent.

At night the Projector Gas attack arranged for 10.30 pm was postponed on account of the wind being unfavourable.

JUNE 28 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather continued fine - good visibility.

The raid was again rehearsed before the Major General, Brigadier & C.R.A. The Major General gave a short speech to the men to be engaged on the raid.

In the afternoon efforts were made to obtain as good a resemblance to the actual ground as possible. Large branches to represent trees of (sic) hedges were used and a shelter farm house in ruins constructed to represent LA SIGNY FARM.

The day was very quiet and little of interest occurred.

At night orders were received to move Bn. HQ. to Q1 b05.

At 10 pm a gas projector attack was successfully carried out.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded H.E.

JUNE 29 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Preparation for the Raid continued.

At 11 pm a final rehearsal was arranged but this was cancelled on account of the enemy's heavy bombardment of the Battalion Area, with gas and H.E. shells. LT. PETERS the Battalion Intelligence Officer was wounded.

The day was warm and bright. Visibility good.

During the day the enemy's artillery showed an increased activity - a good deal of high bombing shrapnel - chiefly 4.2 was used.

The new Battalion Headquarters at Q1 b05 was established at 9.30 pm.

In accordance with the plan raid was [to] take place two days after the projector attack i.e. on 30th inst.

JUNE 30 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather warm and bright - visibility good.

Very quiet during the whole day - little activity of any sort.

In the afternoon, an order from D.A. (sent to us for information) told us that the Raid was cancelled for tonight. All arrangements for the raid including Medical had been made and had all to be cancelled. The raiding party were greatly disappointed that the raid was once more postponed.

Another practice was held at 10.30 pm and was quite satisfactory. The Brigadier was present.

During the night there was the ordinary night firing on both sides.

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties (from above listings)		
Killed		5
Wounded	1	21 (including 4 at duty)

NOTE: Except for two of the wounded, all of the above casualties were listed as from H.E. (high explosive) shelling.

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT JULY 1918

JULY 1 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather warm and dry. Visibility very good.

In the morning Company Commanders reconnoitred the new line which the Battalion is to take over tomorrow. Advance parties (to remain in the line until the arrival of the Battalion) also went to the new sector in the afternoon. The day was very quiet - there was very little activity of any sort.

In the afternoon the Major General addressed the men who were to take part in the raid which was arranged for that night.

The Raid took place at 11 pm. On the right (LA SIGNY FARM) the objective was reached but the area found to be quite empty of the enemy. On the left considerable resistance was met with, in the nature of the wire & the enemy bombing so that little progress was made before the signal to withdraw was given from the rear. No prisoners were taken. Our casualties were Wounded 1 Officer (2LT SHARROCKS) & 6 O.R.

Casualties 13 O.R. Sick.

JULY 2 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT

Very quiet. Weather bright & warm - good visibility.

In the afternoon the previous day's raid was reconstructed for the Major General who questioned and afterwards addressed the men who took part in it.

In the evening the Battalion relieved the 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers in the Front Line. At the same time the northern boundary was altered and the Division's dispositions reorganized. The Battalion then became the left Battalion of the Division with the New Zealand Division on the left occupying HEBUTERNE.

The Battalion is disposed as shown on the sketch map.

Front line Right to left A & B Cos. Support C Co. (in strong point FORT HOD) Reserve D Co. manning FORT STEWART Strong Point. Bn H.Q. K12 d76.

Relief complete without incident 10.50 pm.

About 15 4.2 shells fell in and near FORT STEWART about 10.30 pm but otherwise the night was quiet.

The Front Line is on the main ridge overlooking all the enemy's defences - a very wide view is obtained. Everything behind the ridge is dead to the enemy - except balloons and probably accounts for the (?)paucacity (sic - paucity?) of communication trenches.

The enemy is supposed to have a few advanced posts on the sunken road (now CETORIX TRENCH) running through K22 a & c with his main line further back. Owing to the numerous old trenches still in existence it is very difficult to trace his exact line.

Rations are brought by limber as far as the Company cookhouse & carried forward from there. The two support companies carry for the Front Line Companies. Water arrangements were re-organised as soon as possible as they were unsatisfactory. Barrels were put into position for storage at K20 b28 where the water cart comes up from BERTRANCOURT.

Casualties wounded 1 Officer (2LT SHARROCKS) & 6 O.R. [repeat entry of July 1st listing]

Sick 1 Officer (2LT BENNETT) & 6 O.R.

JULY 3 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Weather dry & warm - visibility good.

During the day our artillery was active on enemy positions in K22, 23 & 24.

Enemy artillery was also active - 60 shells - 5.9s & 4.2s fell in pairs during the morning near PAPAN TRENCH in K15 d & K21 b and 20 more between 4.30 & 6.15 pm. About 77mm shells also fell near the front line of the right company during the morning.

During the night two patrols went out but there was no sign of the enemy. The night was very quiet.

Casualties Killed 1 O.R. Wounded Nil. Sick 1 O.R.

JULY 4 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Weather continued fine and warm. Visibility good.

Throughout the day and night our artillery was very active - chiefly with harassing fire - roads, tracks, etc.

Enemy artillery was also active - about 45 shells - 5.9 & 4.2 fell during the day on and near FORT HOD (K21 a). A few shells were also fired on the HEBUTERNE - SAILLY Road and into FORT STEWART & K21 b.

Enemy Machine Guns were very active against all our aeroplanes flying over his territory.

Two daylight patrols went out during the afternoon. None of the enemy were seen although GUESCLIN TRENCH was reached.

In the evening the dispositions were slightly changed.

Casualties 1 O.R. wounded. sick 1 Officer (Capt H.C. GALSTER) & 1 O.R.

JULY 5 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Weather fine - visibility good. Very warm.

During the morning about 50, 77mm shells fell near the Front Line in K21 b&d. The day was otherwise quiet.

Patrols were sent out during the afternoon and night but no sign of occupation was found in the sunken road (CETORIX TRENCH) in K22 a&c.

Casualties Wounded 2 O.R. Sick 9 O.R.

JULY 6 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Weather fine - hot. Visibility very good.

Our artillery continued its activity - enemy artillery slightly more active during the day on FORT HOD, FORT STEWART.

During the afternoon and night our patrols were active. An unoccupied sniper post was found at about K22 c16.

Evening the two front line companies were relieved by the two support companies. Dispositions Right to Left D & C Cos. Support B Co. Reserve A Co.

Casualties Wounded 1 O.R. Sick 8 O.R.

JULY 7 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Weather very hot - good visibility. Day quiet - little artillery activity on either side.

Patrols sent out but their work greatly interfered with by our artillery firing on CETORIX TRENCH.

Night very quiet.

Wounded 1 O.R. Sick 7 O.R.

JULY 8 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Particularly hot during the day. Visibility good in morning but misty in afternoon.

Slight adjustment of front line dispositions and the front line arranged in localities which are to be strongly wired in.

Enemy artillery fairly active during the day - chiefly on K21 a&c.

Our artillery and T.M.s were also active.

During the day and night our patrols were active. One of our men on daylight patrol was killed by a sniper.

Casualties Killed 1 O.R. Sick 3 O.R.

JULY 9 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Dull with some rain in the afternoon.

Very quiet during the day - little artillery activity on either side. One of our observation balloons was brought down behind SAILLY by a low flying enemy aeroplane which succeeded in regaining its own lines.

Reconnaissance patrols were active during the day and night. A fighting patrol was also sent out at night to surprise an enemy post in CETORIX TRENCH & capture a prisoner. Surprise failed however & as the patrol was subjected to a heavy fire of Machine Guns and Bombs, it withdrew.

Casualties Wounded 1 O.R. sick 7 O.R.

JULY 10 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HEBUTERNE]

Very warm and inclined to be showery. Good visibility.

Quiet during the day - little activity on either side.

During the morning the two front line Companies were relieved by 1/5th Bn East Lancs. Regiment. The two support Companies were relieved in the afternoon. Relief complete without incident at [no time listed] pm.

After relief the Battalion went into Brigade Reserve immediately in front of SAILLY-au-BOIS. The Battalion is disposed along a front of (sic) in platoon localities. Order of Companies Right to left B, C, A & D Cos. - see Sketch Map. Battalion Headquarters in SAILLY.

Rations and water are taken direct to each Company Cookhouse.

The greater part of the Battalion is occupied on daily working parties under R.E. supervision. There are few men available for independent work.

The night was very quiet.

JULY 11 1918 to JULY 14 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near SAILLY-au-BOIS]

Weather continued warm and close with showers at intervals.

Working parties continued. Very little shelling in the Battalion Area & the Brigade front remained quiet.

Sickness normal - the slight Influenza Epidemic now ceased.

JULY 15 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near SAILLY-au-BOIS]

Battalion Headquarters moved to the dugout vacated by 125th Inf. Bde, H.Q.

JULY 16 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near SAILLY-au-BOIS]

Weather warm and showery. Very Quiet. Working parties continued.

JULY 17 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near SAILLY-au-BOIS]

Parties from 1/5th Bn. Manchester Rgt. reconnoitred the Battalion Area.

JULY 18 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near SAILLY-au-BOIS]

Battalion relieved in Left Brigade Reserve by 1/5th Bn. Manchester R. T.F. Relief complete without incident at 7 pm.

After relief the Battalion came into Divisional Reserve - B & D Cos. & Bn. H.Q. in Bivouacs in J22 c and A & C Cos. in shelters behind the Purple Reserve Line ready to man it in case of enemy attack. See Sketch Map.

JULY 19 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [near COURCELLES-au-BOIS]

Day spent in cleaning up, kit inspections & bathing - 70 O.R. on working parties. Weather dry & warm.

JULY 20 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [near COURCELLES-au-BOIS]

Weather fine & warm. 127th Bde. evacuated CORNISH TRENCH, an alteration in dispositions of Coys. was accordingly effected (see sketch map). This was carried out without incident & completed by 4 pm. 130 men on working parties remainder bathing & recreational training.

JULY 21 1918 to JULY 23 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [near COURCELLES-au-BOIS]

Weather fine & warm. Working Parties (R.E.) of 130 O.R. supplied daily. Remainder of men improving accomodation of area & cutting crops during the morning & bathing & recreation during afternoon.

[July 23rd] 2 O.R. Wounded on working Party.

JULY 24 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [near COURCELLES-au-BOIS]

Weather unsettled & showery. Working parties (R.E.) 130 O.R.

Fair amount of enemy shelling in vicinity of Forward Coys. Signals within the Battn. carried on by visual only, good results being obtained. Small parties to Baths.

JULY 25 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [near COURCELLES-au-BOIS]

Weather still unsettled. Relief Order (No. 100) received. Relief of 125th Bde. in Front Right Sub-sector to take place on night of 26/27th. C.O., Adjt, I.O., Sigs. Off. & O.C. Coys. reconnoitred the line to be taken over. Bn. Operation Order No. 28 issued 6 pm for relief of 1/5th L.F. Working Parties (R.E.) 130 O.R.

JULY 26 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE [near COURCELLES-au-BOIS]

Weather during morning very unsettled - visibility poor.

Between 2.30 pm & 4.30 pm the Bn. relieved the 1/5th Lancs. Fusiliers with the exception of 3 newly established forward posts at K28 c23, K28 c14 & K28 c36. These posts were relieved late

in the evening the completion of relief being 12.15 am 28th [? 27th ?]. The relief went off without incident excepting that it was carried through in wretched weather.

Patrols were out in the right Coy. front during the night & obtained useful information. Very little artillery activity. The Bn. is now disposed as shown on sketch. D & C Coys. in front Line A & B in support.

JULY 27 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather very squally, fair intervals. Visibility fair. Our Aircraft was active during the day. Enemy aeroplanes dropped a few bombs in the Vicinity of COLINCAMPS in the early morning. Our artillery slight, enemy's quiet. Patrol out from Left Front Coy. found Bosch at K34 a33 but were unable to close on him owing to intensity of M.G. fire. [no number entered] Sick to Hospital.

JULY 28 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fair, visibility moderate. Very quiet day. Considerable amount of work done establishing communications to & between Forward post of left Coy.

Reconnaissance patrols were out during the day & night,

During the later portion of the evening the Bn. on our left (1/7th Manchesters) endeavoured to establish posts along CETORIX to the junction of RAILWAY. Owing to condition of trench & enemy bombing these could not be consolidated. We assisted this operation with L.G. fire.

Our aircraft was active throughout the day. One enemy aeroplane crossed our lines but was driven off by A.A. fire.

Casualties 2 O.R. Sick to Hospital.

JULY 29 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & warm. Visibility good at intervals. Our Artillery fairly active throughout the day & harassing fire at night. Enemy artillery quiet. Aerial activity on both sides slight.

Reconnaissance & fighting patrols were out by day & at night. Good information obtained & enemy encountered at K26 c44. Several Bosches wounded & 1 Killed. We had 1 O.R. wounded in this encounter. Casualties 2 sick to Hospital.

Battn. Operation Order (No. 29) issued for inter coy. relief 30th inst.

JULY 30 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & hot. Visibility good. During early hours of the morning enemy sent a considerable amount of gas shells on to battery positions to our right rear.

At 9 am V Corps on our right carried out a feint attack. 10 mins. smoke barrage, 25 minutes bombardment. Enemy retaliated rather weakly on our front & support lines.

Between 2 pm & 4 pm A & B Coys. (in support) relieved D & C Coys, in the front line, with the exception of the three forward posts in front of LA SIGNY FARM, these being relieved at 11.30 pm. D & C Coys. on being relieved, occupied the positions vacated by A & B respectively.

Artillery on both sides fairly active. Enemy appear to be ranging on their own positions.

Five enemy aeroplanes crossed our line at 10.45 am. One of them was seen to fall in flames.

Harassing fire & crashes were fired by our artillery throughout the night. Reconnaissance patrols were out during the later part of the evening & into the following morning.

JULY 31 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Fine warm day. Visibility good at intervals. Artillery fairly quiet during the day, fairly active during the evening.

Work on defensive localities progressing & condition of trenches generally improving.

During the evening enemy aircraft dropped several Light Bombs in the vicinity of COLINCAMPS.

Reconnaissance patrols out during the latter part of the evening.

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties		
(from above listings)		
Killed		2
Wounded	1	15
Sick to hospital	2	59

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
AUGUST 1918**

AUGUST 1 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather dull & showery. Our Artillery very active on enemy front systems & back areas. Our aircraft was active, also that of the enemy (6 of their planes crossing our line during the day) all of which were driven off with A.A. & L.G. fire. Our patrols were out during the night.

AUGUST 2 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather unsettled. Our artillery active during the day, & during the evening was "wire cutting" in front of Watling St. Enemy artillery below normal.

At 6.30 pm a bosche deserter was brought in by A Coy. He was a private in the 183 R.I.R. & a poor specimen. Harassing fire on various targets on Bn. front during the night.

AUGUST 3 1918 - FRONT LINE [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine. Visibility fairly good. At 3.25 am enemy put down a barrage of 4.2 & T.M. on LA SIGNY POSTS. At 3.55 am parties of men (enemy) were seen approaching our posts & the Bn. on our left. They were immediately engaged with L.G. & rifle fire. At one point did they succeed in entering our Line, but threw a considerable number of bombs & withdrew hurriedly.

They were followed by a party of our men who brought heavy fire to bear upon them. The ground afterwards gave evidence of many wounded & bosche being captured by Battn. on our right.

During the afternoon the enemy shelled LA SIGNY FARM causing 4 casualties.

In accordance with Bde. order No. 191 the Bn. was relieved by the 1/10th Manchester Rgt. without incident, relief being complete 6.30 pm. The Bn. then moved into Bde. Support S. of COLINCAMPS with the Bn. H.Q. at J36 b79 taking over the positions vacated by 1/10th Manchesters as per sketch. The move was completed by 8.30 pm.

AUGUST 4 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine, visibility fair. Artillery fairly active on front line positions. Battn. mostly on working parties under R.E. and their Coy. Localities. In the evening a gas projection was made on enemy positions opposite Bde. front as per sketch. All necessary precautions taken to meet enemy retaliation on Bn. area.

Casualties: 1 Killed 4 Wounded 2 O.R. sick to Hospital.

AUGUST 5 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather bad very wet. Quiet day on both sides. Working parties & bathing. C Coy. practiced small raid to be carried out on the night of 6/7th.

Casualties 3 sick to Hospital.

AUGUST 6 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather changable. Artillery again active on both sides mostly counter battery work. An uneventful day.

Casualties 2 O.R. sick to Hospital.

Capt. C.J. Thody & 2/Lt F. Shaw joined the Battn.

AUGUST 7 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & warm. At 12:30 am a party of C Coy. consisting of 1 Offr. & 17 O.R. [entered] enemy trench at K34 a36 but found same unoccupied. The Offr. in charge took his party along to hedge at K34 a35.30 but owing to thickness of wire could not get to grips with the Bosche. After throwing some bombs & being subjected to heavy M.G. fire & bombs the party returned to our lines at 3 am. 2/LT B. HIBBERT had a slight bomb wound in right arm. Information was received from Bde. of "movement above normal in enemy back areas, and accordingly the necessary steps were taken to meet same. Our Artillery put down "annihilating fire" during the early hours 3 am to 4 am. Four 10 minute bursts. Between 6.30 & 7 pm enemy fired a few gas shells into COLINCAMPS.

Casualties 1 Offr. Wounded.

AUGUST 8 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & warm. Artillery fairly active on both sides. Orders received to relieve 1 Coy. 1/5 East Lancs. Rgt. (Rt. Bn., Rt. Bde.) & 2 Coys. 1/10th Manchester Rgt. (Lt. Bn., Rt. Bde.). Arrangements were made with the C.O.s concerned & the relief took place in accordance with Bn. Order No. 36 during the early part of the evening, the same being complete by 8.40 pm. After the relief A & C Coys. came under the orders of O.C. 1/10th Manchester Rgt. & B Coy. under the orders of O.C. 1/5th E.L. Rgt. The two Coys. 1/10th Manchesters & 1 Coy. 1/5th East Lancs. then occupied the positions vacated by A, C & B coys. respectively.

AUGUST 9 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & warm. Visibility fair. Our artillery active during early morning. Combined gas & smoke bombardment put on WATLING ST. at 7 am. Bombardment of Basin Wood & WATLING ST. during afternoon. Wire received that "enemy have commenced demolitions in ALBERT report any sign on your front" from Bde.

Casualties 1 O.R. sick to hospital.

AUGUST 10 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & hot. Visibility good. Aircraft active. Enemy planes several times attempted to cross our lines but were driven off. Our Artillery active throughout the day. Enemy artillery carried out a short (?)hate(?) along the Rly. below cork point at noon. Gas Bombardment arranged for 10.30 pm postponed on account of unfavourable wind.

Casualties 2 Wounded 5 O.R. sick to Hospital.

AUGUST 11 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather very fine & hot, visibility good. Aircraft busy on both sides. Our artillery fairly active, enemy artillery quiet. During the evening a few 4.2s fell around COLINCAMPS - COURCELLES ROAD junction.

Casualties 2 O.R. Killed 1 O.R. Wounded.

AUGUST 12 1918 - BRIGADE SUPPORT [near COLINCAMPS]

Weather fine & Hot. Artillery active on both sides. During the afternoon the Bn. was relieved by the 1/7th Manchester Rgt. taking up dispositions as shown in sketch (App II). The coys. detached A & C were relieved by 2 coys. 1/6th Manchesters. B coy. by 1/5 Manchesters. The relief was

carried out without incident & was complete by 6.55 pm. After relief Battn. took over billets vacated by 1/7 Manchester Rgt. in LOUVENCOURT. Casualties 2 O.R. Sick to Hosp.

AUGUST 13 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

Weather fine. Hot. Day spent in cleaning up, bathing & inspections, etc.

AUGUST 14 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

As for the 13th with the addition of Medical Inspection.

AUGUST 15 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

Weather as above. Parades for all companies & Bn. H.Q. 9 am to 12 noon on training grounds in vicinity. (Bathing). A company carried out practice attack using discs as means of communication between Infantry and Aircraft.

Battalion sports commenced 2 pm on field near transport lines.

AUGUST 16 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

Weather still fine & hot. Training as yesterday. A company carried out demonstration practiced yesterday. B company carried out range practices at I23 c. Special arrangements were made for all accommodations required by battalion at Divisional Theatre, BUS.

AUGUST 17 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

Dull & cooler. Training as yesterday. A company on range. Football competition & other games in the afternoon. Warning order reference relief of 125 Bde. night of 20/21st received 7.15 pm.

AUGUST 18 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

Fine. Parade services in the morning. Football afternoon. C.O. & O.C C Coy. reconnoitred route to & positions of 1/8 Lancs. Fus.

AUGUST 19 1918 - DIVISIONAL RESERVE, LOUVENCOURT

Rain in evening. Battle Surplus marched to HALLOY at 2 pm. O.C. A & B, & 2nd I/C D reconnoitred as yesterday. Battalion (less transport & rear H.Q., but with workshops) moved to billets in BERTRANCOURT.

AUGUST 20 1918 - BERTRANCOURT

Fine. Orders received during afternoon by fullerphone to move to positions forward of BERTRANCOURT. First company moved 8.30 pm.

AUGUST 21 1918 - BERTRANCOURT

Very heavy mist all during previous night & during morning. Towards noon battalion warned to be prepared to move at short notice: detailed warning order giving dispositions issued to companies. Order to move received 6 pm. Bn. H.Q. left windwill at J34 b26 at 7.00 pm & moved to dug out K26 a 52. Dispositions shown in App. X.

AUGUST 22 1918 - East of COLINCAMPS

Order received 5.55 am to stand to as front positions being gas shelled. Stand down received 6.45 am. Warning order B.M. 44 received. C.O. & mounted officer from each company reconnoitred routes to positions likely to be taken over. Move cancelled about 7.50 pm.

AUGUST 23 1918 - East of COLINCAMPS

Still fine. Warned about 7 am to be ready at 1/2 hrs. notice. Warning order issued to companies. S.O.S. rockets, ground flares & grenades issued to companies.

Moved to positions near PUISIEUX (L20 c central), commencing 7.15 pm. On arrival orders to relieve N.Z. Bn. received and carried out, commencing midnight.

AUGUST 24 1918 - PUISIEUX

Relief complete about 4 am. One company lent to C.O.D. temporarily.

About 7.40 pm instructions received by telephone to proceed through MIRAUMONT & PYS (M3 d46) to positions in support 1/5 East Lancs. who had been forced to 'side-step' to the Left, resulting in our contact with the enemy. Several casualties with M.G. fire.

Capt. B.C. Hall O.C. A Company killed.

AUGUST 25 1918 - East of PYS

During afternoon Bn. H.Q. moved slightly west to M3 a43.

Warning order for concentration of division received about 8 pm.

AUGUST 26 1918 - East of PYS

Bn. H.Q. moved back to M3 d46 & company dispositions slightly altered in conjunction with Divnl. Concentration scheme. 1st Line transport moved up to about M2 a79. Warning order for relieving 189 Bde. received.

AUGUST 27 1918 - East of PYS

C.O. & O.s C. Coys. reconnoitred routes to & positions of 189 Bde.

At 7.00 pm one officer from Bn. H.Q. and one from each Coy. reconnoitred fresh positions - situation obscure. Finally arranged to relieve 4th Bedfords & orders issued.

AUGUST 28 1918 - BAPAUME ROAD near LE BARQUE

First company marched off at 1 am & Bn. H.Q. at 2.20 am. Relief complete by 4.20 am. Several daylight patrols sent out. A good deal of sniping on battalion area & considerable shelling near Bn. H.Q. & on BAPAUME road (M6 c60).

AUGUST 29 1918 - East of THILLOY & LIGNY-THILLOY

Enemy reported clear of THILLOY & LIGNY-THILLOY, advance ordered. Positions taken up along road running N.N.E. & S.S.W. through N9 b & N10 a (57C S.W. 1/20,000). Advance ordered on RIENCOURT companies moved forward at 7.30 pm.

AUGUST 30 1918 - RIENCOURT

Information as to position of companies very vague. C.O. reconnoitred & discovered A, B, & D companies about BAPAUME - PERONNE ROAD. C Company supposed on N.W. outskirts of RIENCOURT but out of touch.

Previously - 4.15 am - operation orders received from brigade for further advance providing RIENCOURT had been established. Operation orders prepared but not issued as this condition was not fulfilled.

Information received from wounded of deaths of officers including O.s C. B & C Companies, Captains Thody & Forbes. Whole battalion position under heavy machine gun fire, also gas shelled. Orders received (by telephone) to withdraw battalion to high ground to N4 a & b as RIENCOURT & area was to be bombarded at 7 pm, prior to an advance by 1/10 Manchester Regt. The whole of A company & the greater portion of B withdrawn in time. D company withdrew with little less & met guides. C company same out in small detachments having suffered heavy casualties. B.M. 106 (relief order received). Stretcher bearers sent out during the night to bring in wounded.

AUGUST 31 1918 - SOUTH OF LOUPART WOOD

Before marching out arrangements made for stragglers. Positions taken over in LOUPART ROAD and in trenches S. of LOUPART WOOD by 5 am. Order BM 108 received.

Relieved by 1/5th Bn. Lancs. Fusiliers by 4.50 pm. Marched by companies to new area in G33 c & M2 b. Bn. H.Q. at G32 d75.15.

Casualties

The above listings unfortunately do not detail the casualties the Battalion suffered, especially in the fighting experienced in the August 24th-30th period, where it is only noted that the Officers Commanding A, B, and C Companies all were killed. Listings only detail 3 O.R. killed, 1 Officer wounded, 7 O.R. wounded, and 13 Sick to Hospital (plus an undetailed mention of 4 casualties on August 3rd).

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT SEPTEMBER 1918

SEPTEMBER 1 1918 - PYS

The Battalion (in Divisional Reserve) was in bivouacs in and near the Gully in G33 c. Bn. H.Q. G32 d75.15.

In case of enemy counter attack the Battalion was to be prepared to occupy or deliver attacks against the trench system South West of LOUPART WOOD.

The day was spent in Resting, Cleaning up and Reorganization of Companies.

Lieut. Col. T.E. TETLEY D.S.O. left the Battalion for the Base.

Major A. HODGE D.S.O. M.C. assumed command of the Battalion.

The weather remained cool and fresh.

SEPTEMBER 2 1918 - PYS

During the day the Battalion was engaged in cleaning up and bathing, kit inspections & reorganization. A Company Commanders Conference was held at 2 pm.

At 11.45 pm Orders were received to be ready to move at half an hour's notice to occupy the trenches in N3 c & 9a.

SEPTEMBER 3 1918 - PYS

At 7.30 am information was received from Bde. H.Q. by telephone that the Battalion was to be ready to move forward at once - as a first bound to N9 b - as the Division was making rapid progress forward. All preparations were made but the Battalion actually marched off at 12.15 pm. Route WARLENCOURT-EAUCOURT, Le BARQUE & LIGNY TILLOY. The Battalion Bivouaced at N10 b4.2 and ate the midday meal.

In accordance with verbal orders - written orders were received on the line of march - the Battalion marched off at 6 pm through RIENCOURT and VILLERS-au-FLOS and bivouaced in O14 a - Bn. H.Q. O14 a16.

As there were trenches and a number of shelters and a fair amount of material in the area the night was spent comfortably.

SEPTEMBER 4 1918 - VILLERS-AU-FLOS

Orders were received at 2 am that the Battalion would probably move forward during the morning East of BARRASTRE as the Division was continuing the attack at 7 am. Preparations were made for an early start which did not materialize. Defensive Positions were reconnoitred in case of enemy attack. The weather was fine and the rest helped the men to recover from their previous heavy fatigue.

SEPTEMBER 5 1918 - VILLERS-AU-FLOS

As considerable resistance was being met with the advance of the Division was rather slower than it had been and the Battalion did not move from the place of bivouac.

In the afternoon there was a heavy shower of rain which flooded all the shelters of the Battalion.

An advance party was sent to LE BARQUE to reconnoitre the village for billets as the Division was expected to be relieved that night.

SEPTEMBER 6 1918 - VILLERS-AU-FLOS

The Battalion marched to billets & bivouacs in LE BARQUE where as part of 42nd Division it was to be in IV Corps Reserve. Route via BEAULENCOURT and LIGNY-THILLOY. The Divisional Commander watched the Battalion march past at N9 a00 (approx.) and expressed himself well satisfied with the appearance of the Battalion.

SEPTEMBER 7 1918 - LE BARQUE

The Battalion was very comfortable in the billets as accommodation was good and plentiful. The day was spent in cleaning up, kit inspections and reorganization.

SEPTEMBER 8 1918 - LE BARQUE

Sunday. Parade Services were held for the Church of England, Roman Catholic & Nonconformist Denominations.

At 12 noon the Divisional Commander made an informal inspection of the Battalion and addressed the men. Although considerably interfered with by heavy rain the Battalion marched past in Columns of Route.

SEPTEMBER 9 1918 - LE BARQUE

Training Continued but was somewhat interfered with by rain. Two ranges - one of 250 yds. and the other 100 yds. were available. As there are plenty of wide open spaces in the vicinity (over which a considerable amount of fighting has actually taken place) there is plenty of scope for tactical training.

SEPTEMBER 10 1918 - LE BARQUE

Training continued. The rifles of one company inspected by the armourer sergeant. Range Practices, Tactical Schemes were the chief points of the training besides the ordinary smartening up drill and recreation.

SEPTEMBER 11 1918 - SEPTEMBER 13 1918 - LE BARQUE

Training continued but considerably impeded by the weather remaining unsettled. The Regimental Concert Troupe gave a concert on Wednesday and were very successful. The Divisional Band & Troupe also gave performances during the week.

SEPTEMBER 14 1918 - LE BARQUE

Showery. Battalion Concert in the Evening. During the night orders were received to be ready to move off towards the line, at 5.30 am. Nothing however materialized.

SEPTEMBER 15 1918 - LE BARQUE

Sunday. News wired through that the enemy had attacked but had been driven off with heavy losses.

Church Parades were held in the morning for all denominations. A successful inter platoon sports meeting was held during the afternoon.

The Corps Line (East of YTRES) was reconnoitred.

SEPTEMBER 16 1918 - SEPTEMBER 17 1918 - LE BARQUE

Training Continued - special attention being paid to Company Formations & Company Tactical Schemes. The Weather remained showery. Concert in the Evening by the Divisional Troupe.

SEPTEMBER 18 1918 - LE BARQUE

Orders received in the afternoon that the Brigade was to stand to at once ready to move forward as the S.O.S. had gone up along the Corps Front. Later orders were issued that the Battalion was at half an hour's notice to move.

SEPTEMBER 19 1918 - LE BARQUE

Information received that the Situation now normal.

During the day various orders were received concerning the move of the Brigade into the Line. Move orders received at 10.45 pm.

SEPTEMBER 20 1918 - LE BARQUE

Advance parties to the line and to the billets for the night left at 8 am. The Battalion marched out at 10.15 am via THILLOY, the outskirts of BAPAUME and FREMICOURT to a Nissen Hut Camp in I29 central.

SEPTEMBER 21 1918 - West of LEBUCQUIERE

Company Commanders reconnoitred the new line.

At 5.30 pm the Battalion marched out to Relieve 6th Bn. Middlesex Regiment in the Front Line. Route via BERTINCOURT, RUYALCOURT, MATHESON ROAD and HAVRINCOURT WOOD. Relief Complete 11.05 pm.

Dispositions shown on attached map.

During the night there was some spasmodic shelling.

SEPTEMBER 22 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Between 2 & 4 am the enemy fired about 2000 rounds of gas shell - yellow cross - chiefly on the Eastern Portion of HAVRINCOURT WOOD. The Remainder of day fairly quiet - spasmodic shelling and a few Light T.M. from the enemy although our artillery remained active throughout the day. Our patrols were very active during the night. Battalion Dispositions slightly altered to secure more depth with a more thinly held front line.

SEPTEMBER 23 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Much quieter - little artillery activity on either side. Visibility good. Dispositions further altered - the front line now now (sic) held comparatively thinly.

Enemy M.G.s active at night - on BUTLERS CROSS ROAD. About 10 - 10.30 pm about 30 light aeroplane bombs were dropped near BUTLERS CROSS.

SEPTEMBER 24 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Very quiet. Officers of 125th & 127th Inf. Bdes. reconnoitred the line to view the ground over which they shortly expected to attack.

During the night two enemy patrols approached our line but were driven off by our Lewis Gun Fire.

SEPTEMBER 25 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Quiet. Considerable increase in the amount of artillery covering the front. Tanks also came up in the rear.

SEPTEMBER 26 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Quiet. In the evening A Company took over the whole of the Battalion Front. Two companies of 1/5 Manch. R. came into the Battalion Area and the Battalion withdrew leaving A Co. in the front line until 4 am to enable the 1/5 Manch. R. to form up for the attack.

The night was very wet and after the withdrawal the Battalion proceeded to P4 and bivouaced in the open and in our old trench.

SEPTEMBER 27 1918 - FRONT LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

The Division attacked at 8.20 am & the Bn. as part of the Reserve Bde. was ready to move forward at very short notice.

At 5 pm orders were received to occupy the old front line before dark. This was done. The Battalion passed the night without incident although all preparations were made to advance at once.

SEPTEMBER 28 1918 - LINE [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

Verbal Orders were received at about 11 am for the Battalion to move forward in artillery formation to the valley in L31. Here the battalion was to form up ready to advance through the most advanced troops to exploit as much as possible up to WELSH RIDGE. It was understood that the front line ran along HIGHLAND RIDGE (L32, R2 & 7). Information was then received that the 1/10th Bn. Manchester Regiment had advanced further and was occupying WELSH RIDGE.

The Battalion moved forward from the position of assembly at about 3.30 pm. Right to Left A & C Cos. in Front, D & B in Rear. Coming under fire from WELSH RIDGE whilst crossing HIGHLAND RIDGE, the Battalion at once extended widely and A & C Companies pushed forward through the 1/10th Manchester R., over the difficult wooded & scrub covered COUILLET VALLEY, across the Railway & up the Ridge. Here considerable opposition was met with from about four M.G.s near the top of the ridge and although casualties were incurred chiefly in A Company progress was continued chiefly by infiltration.

Bn. H.Q. was established in COUILLET AVENUE at about L32 b70 which afforded very good observation of WELSH RIDGE. Visual Communication lamp & shutter was maintained successfully the whole time with the two forward companies.

At about 7.30 pm orders were received that early next day the N.Z. Division were to pass through the Division and make an attack.

Our line then ran approximately along CENTRAL AVENUE & SAILOR RESERVE (R3 d & b) with outposts on the road running N.E. through R9 c & b, R3 d, R4 a.

The Intelligence Officer was sent to reconnoitre for any available accommodation for the battalion in L32.

Casualties Killed 1 Officer (2LT A. McLAUHLAN) 5 O.R. Wounded 1 Officer (2LT GILPIN) 18 O.R.

SEPTEMBER 29 1918 - LINE [near RIBECOURT]

At 2 am the two forward companies withdrew to shelters in the sunken road in L32. The Support Companies (and shortly afterwards Bn. H.Q. withdrew) at 2.30 am. Bn. H.Q. L32 a91.

At 12 noon the Battalion marched out first to Q6 and then when new orders were received to Q1 & P12 a & c.

The Battalion was comparatively comfortable in bivouacs of corrugated iron.

SEPTEMBER 30 1918 - [near HAVRINCOURT WOOD]

The day spent in cleaning up, bathing and improving the accommodation - 30 tents were received so that accommodation was now quite good.

	Officers	O.R.
Casualties		
Killed	1 (2LT A. McLAUCHLAN)	12
Wounded	2 (2LT HULL gassed, 2LT GILPIN G.S.W.)	45
Sick to hospital	2	72

**WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT
OCTOBER 1918**

OCTOBER 1 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

The Battalion spent the day in cleaning up, kit inspections, bathing, etc.

The men are quite comfortable - with 30 tents and plenty of old shelters there is satisfactory accommodation for all.

OCTOBER 2 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

The Brigade paraded for the Divisional Commander to present Medal Ribbons to winners of decorations. The following O.R. of this Unit received decorations. Bar to M.M. - 300448 Sgt HARRISON & 348019 Pte. MARTIN, W., M.M. - 300239 Sgt. BOARDMAN, E., 348012 Pte, HARRIS, H.S., 44764 Pte. HOOPER, H.

OCTOBER 3 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Commencement of Training. One company on 50 yards range, remainder practicing the Initial Attack with Barrage. Afternoon Football (Inter Company League) & Pool Shooting.

OCTOBER 4 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

One Company on Range remainder practicing Advance Grounds & formations for open warfare. Games & Pool shooting in the afternoon.

OCTOBER 5 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Battalion practiced assembly on tapes for initial attack.

Football & other games in afternoon.

Weather remained fine.

OCTOBER 6 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

Church Parades in Morning - Bde. C. of E. Service.

Major A. HODGE proceeded on leave. Major C.G. MOORE took over the Command of the Battalion.

Afternoon Games.

OCTOBER 7 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

The Battalion carried out a practice for forming up for the attack and an initial attack with a Barrage, with two objectives (the troops attacking the second objective leap frogging the troops which had reached the first objective). The Brigadier was present & observed the scheme.

OCTOBER 8 1918 - CORPS RESERVE HAVRINCOURT WOOD

The Battalion was at 10 minutes notice to move from 7 am onwards. The Battalion actually marched off at 10.15 am. Route through METZ au COUTURE, GOUZEAUCOURT, LA VACQUERIE to bivouacs in R5 c & R11 a (East FORK SUPPORT). Here the Battalion was ordered to be ready to move off at short notice during the night.

OCTOBER 9 1918 - N.E. of LA VACQUERIE

The Battalion marched off at 7 am via LE QUENNET FARM, RUES des VIGNES, BOSQUET BRIDGE to bivouacs in the MASNIERE-BEAUREVOIR LINE in M6 a. The march was continued at 12.15pm via LESDAIN, PELU WOOD to BIVOUACS in the sunken road & banks in N10 b. Bn. H.Q. BRISEAUX CHATEAU.

OCTOBER 10 1918 - [Near BRISEAUX WOOD]

The Battalion remained in this area all day. In the afternoon the Battalion played 1/5 E.L.R. at Football. Result 0-0.

OCTOBER 11 1918 - [Near BRISEAUX WOOD]

Battalion marched to FONTAINE le PIRE missing ESNES & HAUCOURT. Very comfortable Billets in the village for the whole Battalion. A few civilians were still left in the village.

OCTOBER 12 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [FONTAINE LE PIRE]

The Battalion ordered to be attached to the 125 Inf. Bde. The Division was to go into the line that night - 125 Inf. Bde. is the Front Line, 126th Bde. Support, 127th Bde. Reserve. The Bn. marched off at 11.15 via BEAUVOIS thence along the CAMBRAI-INCHY Road. After dinner at junction with QUIEVY-CAUDRY Road the Battalion marched to VIESLEY where we were to take over the billets of the 1st Auckland R. (N.Z.). It was found that the enemy were shelling VIESLEY and that the N.Z. Battalion had withdrawn from the village. The Battalion then Bivouaced in the open field behind the Village. The night was very wet but was quiet.

OCTOBER 13 1918 - [VIESLEY]

Weather warm & dry. The men were able to build shelters with the wreckage from VIESLEY. During the day routes to the front line reconnoitred and arrangements made for counter attack (the Battalion was to form up E. of the road from VIESLEY to FONTAINE au TERRE Fm).

OCTOBER 14 1918 - [VIESLEY]

During the afternoon there was no enemy shell fire at all and it was suspected that the enemy had retired. It was soon found out that this was not the case however.

OCTOBER 15 1918 - [VIESLEY]

Training - smartening up drill, etc., musketry & platoon schemes. Some shelling of the Battalion Area during the afternoon & evening. No casualties.

OCTOBER 16 1918 & OCTOBER 17 1918 - [VIESLEY]

Quiet during the day but at night there were a considerable number of shells - including a few gas shells - fired into the area. Training continued.

OCTOBER 18 1918 - [VIESLEY]

The 126th Inf. Bde. Relieved 125 Inf. Bde. in the Line. The Battalion less D Co. remained in its present location but took over the role of the Support Bn. D Co. relieved the two forward companies of 1/5th Lancs. Fus. A gas operation was ordered but did not realize on account of the weather.

OCTOBER 19 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near BRIASTRE]

Cold & misty. At dusk Battalion H.Q. & A Co. moved to the Gulley in D23 d. B & C Cos. marched off independently to join the Battalions to which they were attached as local reserve, for the forthcoming operation - 1/10th Manch. R. & 1/5th East Lancs. R. respectively. The night very damp & drizzling.

OCTOBER 20 1918 - BRIGADE RESERVE [near BRIASTRE]

At 0100 hrs. D Co. which had provided the covering party for the forming up of the Bde. for the attack, withdrew West of the R. SELLE & rejoined the Bn. A & D Cos. were thus the Brigade Reserves for the attack. At 0300 the 126 Inf. Bde. - 1/5th East Lancs. on Right & 1/10th Manch. on left, attacked the enemy under a heavy barrage. This Battalion less B & C Cos. was in Bde. Reserve. Considerable opposition - chiefly machine gun - was encountered but the Brigade captured both objectives & 127 Inf. Bde. passed through. As the left flank of the Bde. was in the air, at first B Co. were in a difficult position. During the attack B Co. captured 90 prisoners.

At 1100 information was received that the Division on the Right - 5th Division - had not gained its objectives & was being counter attacked. A Co. was at once sent to 1/5th East Lancs. to form a defensive flank in E14 d & e20 b.

At about 1300 information was received from Bde. H.Q. that the enemy were about to counter attack & that the situation was grave. D Co. was at once sent to the Railway Cutting & Bn. H.Q. moved to the Chateau D30 b88. A, C & D Cos. were now under the orders of the Battalion & were disposed as follows C & D Cos. in the Railway cutting in E19 c, A Co. in E14 d & B Co. was in the Railway Cutting in E19 a (attd. 1/10th Manch. R.).

The situation was comparatively quiet.

The Battalion was now attached to 127 Inf. Bde. as Reserve.

OCTOBER 21 1918 - LINE [near BRIASTRE]

At 0300 C & D Cos. moved forward to the sunken road running N.W. through E14 b. The Battalion's dispositions remained unchanged until 1500 hrs, when the Battalion reverted to the Command of 126 Inf. Bde. & withdrew to Billets in VIESLEY. On the way from the line the Battalion was heavily shelled & some casualties incurred.

OCTOBER 22 1918 - VIESLEY

The Battalion very comfortable in the Billets. Slight shelling. Afternoon the Bn. marched back to CAUDRY Area to billets - A & D Cos. in GUISETTE Farm (with Bn. H.Q.) B & C Cos. in CAUDRY.

OCTOBER 23 1918 - CAUDRY

Billets good but dirty. Day spent in resting, cleaning up, fitting equipment, etc.

Major Hodge returned from leave to U.K. & assumed Command of the Battalion.

OCTOBER 24 1918 - CAUDRY

Battalion marched to new billets in BEAUVOIS and on the way marched past the Divisional & Brigade Commanders.

The new billets very dirty but otherwise very comfortable.

OCTOBER 25 1918 - BEAUVOIS

Cleaning up, bathing, kit inspections.

OCTOBER 26 1918 - BEAUVOIS

Training carried out in the morning - Smartening up, Close Order & Saluting Drill. Afternoon Games.

OCTOBER 27 1918 - BEAUVOIS

Church Parades.

OCTOBER 28 1918 - BEAUVOIS

Training - A Co. on Range. B, C & D Close Order Drill, Smartening up & Saluting Drill, Respirator Drill & Musketry. Platoon Tactical Schemes.

OCTOBER 29 1918 - BEAUVOIS

During the day the Battalion passed through the Gas Chamber to test Box Respirators. Companies not actually at the Gas Chamber carried out training - musketry & smartening up drill.

OCTOBER 30 1918 - BEAUVOIS

The Battalion carried out a combined tactical scheme & route march - via LA FOLIE, GUISETTE & HERPIGNY Farms, to BEVILLERS. From here the Battalion practised advanced guard formation back to billets.

OCTOBER 31 1918 - BEAUVOIS

The Divisional Commander presented medal ribbons to winners of decorations on a Brigade Parade.

No Casualty listings for the month.

WAR DIARY - 1/8th (ARDWICK) BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT NOVEMBER 1918

NOVEMBER 1 1918 - BEAUVOIS

During the morning a Battalion Tactical Scheme was carried out - Assembling on tapes & initial attack under barrage with two objectives. Afternoon football & games.

NOVEMBER 2 1918 - BEAUVOIS

The whole of the morning was devoted to musketry - range practices - and every man fired.

Afternoon football & pool shooting.

In the evening information was received that the Battalion would move forward the next day.

NOVEMBER 3 1918 - BEAUVOIS

At 1920 the Battalion marched off to SOLESMES, the move being made at night to ensure secrecy, as there were a number of civilians in the town. During the night a few high velocity shells were fired into SOLESMES but did not cause any damage.

NOVEMBER 4 1918 - SOLESMES

At 1230 hrs. the Battalion left SOLESMES and after a difficult march owing to road congestion & the bad state of the roads, was accommodated in crowded billets in BEAUDIGNIES.

NOVEMBER 5 1918 - BEAUDIGNIES

The march was continued at 0845 hrs. to HERBIGNY where a halt was made for dinner after which the Battalion marched into FORET de MORMAL towards FORESTERS HOUSE. At one spot the road was entirely blocked by a large crater, and the Battalion was held up about three hours. Eventually the Lewis Guns were unloaded from the limbers and manhandled forward - crossing two large craters en route. As it had been raining all day the men were wet through.

The Battalion then relieved the 2nd Bn. Canterbury Regt. in the front line. This was a very difficult operation as the night was extremely dark, and the tracks which had not been reconnoitred, were in a very bad condition.

The line then ran approx. O26 d46 to O14 a30 with an isolated post on the Brown Line (BAVAI - PONT sur SAMBRE Road). Orders were received that the Battalion as part of the 126 Inf. Bde. would form up on the Brown Line & carry out an attack on the enemy position. As the 62nd Division on the left was some 3000 yds. behind and as the wood had not been cleared up this presented some difficulties both in forming up and in the actual carrying out of the attack. Although there was little time left before the time ordered for the attack (0630), the company commanders had such slight information of the general situation that it was decided to hold a conference. This was done and the Company Commanders rejoined their Companies in barely sufficient time to assemble their companies on the "kick off time".

NOVEMBER 6 1918 - FORET DE MORMAL

The section of machine guns attached to the Battalion - later reinforced by a complete M.G. Company - was disposed in the scrub in O20 b & O21 a to protect the left flank whilst the battalion proceeded to the assembly positions by shooting the southern portion of the wood,

along the road running North East through O26 a & b, O27 a, O21 c and d. The assembly was however successfully completed just before zero - D right front, A left, C Right Support, B left. The attack was made with little or no artillery assistance although the enemy position was strongly held by machine guns particularly on the left flank from which a strong enfilading fire was catching our men in the rear. On the right D Co. succeeded in advancing several hundred yards before being held up by the intense machine gun fire which was causing heavy casualties. On account of the left flank being entirely exposed & the enemy using his machine guns with great effect only a short advance was made and eventually when there were signs of an enemy counter attack materializing from this quarter, the left flank was reposed back to the edge of the wood.

In the meantime the rations had arrived (about 0800) but as it was impossible to deliver the rations to the Companies - the movement of a single man at once drew heavy fire - rations dumps were made in the houses along the brown line so that the men could reach them easily at dusk. The remainder of the day the men were compelled to be out in the open in the rain without food or shelter - their last meal was at 1700 hrs the previous day.

Although there was not sufficient artillery to afford an effective barrage, very useful work was carried by them in firing on such enemy field & machine guns as were located.

In the evening orders were received for the Battalion to resume the attack early next day. As it was decided that the Bn. would not again attack until the division on the left (62nd Div.) had reached our kicking off line - the Brown line, the Zero hour could not be fixed and the Battalion was to advance as soon as the Barrage fell.

NOVEMBER 7 1918 - FORET DE MORMAL

The Battalion was however to be formed up ready by 0700. Again there was little time to issue orders & the men were withdrawn & formed up on the Brown line only a very short time before 0700. The barrage which was quite light fell at 0845, and the men despite their great fatigue & the fact that they were wet & cold advanced with great spirit & determination and reached their objectives - the road running N. & S. through HARGNIES - without more opposition than a solitary machine gun in VIEUX MESNIL. Patrols were at once sent forward into VIEUX MESNIL which they reported clear of the enemy. The advance was continued with the 1/5 East Lancs. on the right & 1/10th Manchester R. on the left - this Unit was now in reserve in HARGNIES.

NOVEMBER 8 1918 - HARGNIES

As the 62nd Division was not so advanced as the 42nd Division A & B Cos. were sent forward to fill the gap & defend the left flank. In the evening the Battalion concentrated in billets in VIEUX MESNIL as the enemy was now retiring quickly and no serious fighting was expected.

NOVEMBER 9 1918 - VIEUX MESNIL

The Battalion rested during the morning & in the afternoon moved to Billets in HAUTMONT. The accommodation was very good and the Battalion very comfortable.

NOVEMBER 10 1918 - HAUTMONT

The Battalion spent the day in reorganisation & cleaning up billets. The men were still very tired.

NOVEMBER 11 1918 - HAUTMONT

Day spent in cleaning up, washing equipment, etc. Afternoon Football.

At 11 am Armistice with Germany came into force. The Bugles of each brigade in the Division sounded "The Stand Fast" followed by the "Dismiss". There was little excitement about the Armistice even among the civilians.

NOVEMBER 12 1918 - NOVEMBER 16 1918 - HAUTMONT

Training commenced - chiefly drill for the purpose of smartening up the men & tightening up the discipline. Arms & saluting drill, close order drill, P.T. & B.F. Afternoon football and games.

NOVEMBER 17 1918 - HAUTMONT

Sunday. Church Parades were ordered but were cancelled on account of the Influenza Epidemic.

NOVEMBER 18 1918 - HAUTMONT

Morning Battalion Route March - NEUF MESNIL, VIEUX MESNIL, BOUSSIERRES.
Afternoon football & games.

NOVEMBER 19 1918 - NOVEMBER 22 1918 - HAUTMONT

One company on range daily. The remainder of the Battalion carried out smartening up training & musketry, followed by an hour's route march in full marching order so that the Battalion might be gradually hardened for the expected march towards the Rhine.

All men not inoculated during the past twelve months were again inoculated.

Afternoon football & games.

NOVEMBER 23 1918 - HAUTMONT

Battalion Route March in Full Marching Order via FONTAINES - ST. REMI MAL-BATI - BOUSSIERRES.

Afternoon Football & games.

NOVEMBER 24 1918 - HAUTMONT

Sunday. Church Parades for all denominations.

NOVEMBER 25 1918 - HAUTMONT

Battalion Parade. Company Inspections, Close Order Drill, Musketry, P.T. & B.F.

NOVEMBER 26 1918 - HAUTMONT

Brigade Commander's Inspection of Battalion including Transport Q.M. stores. All orderly Rooms & Regimental Institutes.

NOVEMBER 27 1918 - HAUTMONT

Brigade Route March - Route P15 b85.10 - LA LONQUEVILLE - I36 a55.60 - BOIS DELHAYE - HARGNIES - VIEUX MESNIL - BOUSSIERES - HAUTMONT.

Afternoon - games and football.

NOVEMBER 28 1918 - HAUTMONT

Smartening up drill - arms & saluting drill, close order drill, Musketry. Afternoon - games.

NOVEMBER 29 1918 - HAUTMONT

Brigade Route March via Q13 d11 - Q19 b75 - LES GRAVETTES - Q26 a32 - ST. REMI MAL-BATI - BOUSSIERRES - HAUTMONT.

NOVEMBER 30 1918 - HAUTMONT

The whole battalion spent the morning in salving & cleaning up the old battle area O24 b, P19.

No Casualty listings for the month.