

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

Engineers

Item number: 14/23/3

Title: 4th Field Company, Australian
Engineers

October 1915



AWM4-14/23/3

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194

July

Confidential
War Diary of

O.C. Right-Half Coy.
4th Field Coy. Engineers.

From 13/4/1915 to 30/4/1915.

Volume. 1.

Place	Date	Name	Summary of events and information	References to reports and appendices
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Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence
Summaries are contained in P.S. Regs. Part II
and the Staff Manual respectively. The pages
will be prepared in manuscript.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
OF
WAR DIARY

Army Form C 5118

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 211

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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Rt A Field Coy. LONE PINE.

3

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices																																										
LONE PINE	1-10-15		Enemy working close in LP8. Our work knocked off there.																																											
	3-10-15		Picking head in LP1 under Sap B & shaft started from LP1. Draining and terracing for winter quarters commenced by 23 Bn in BROWN'S DIP. New Dressing Station for LONE PINE completed at tunnel B5.																																											
	4-10-15		Rather heavy artillery bombardment & 5 Turks attempted to rush Sap C - 2 killed. Parapets rather badly knocked about. Coophole plater struck by a shell and liable to do damage - one beheaded 2 men.																																											
	5-10-15		Loaded LPA lower drive awaiting for Turks to start work again. Started LP 19 to blow up LP14 & dispense with necessity of a sally there.																																											
	6-10-15	1345	Fired LP4 50lbs ammonal. Charge 16' down, broke surface. Think we got a Turk. Working with bayonets to close up with enemy in LP1 where he is close under our barricade in Sap B.																																											
	7-10-15		Think enemy 3' off in LP1. Both enemy & ourselves stopped work.																																											
	8-10-15	0603	Fired LP8. Charge 20lbs ammonal & 33 lbs g.c. Detonators in each in series. No crater, charge 15' down. Started LP20 to protect head of Sap B. Mines in LONE PINE are driven 3'x2'. This small size is convenient in the hard ground as although driving is not quicker than with a larger face the small sized drive is quicker to tamp. The enemy are so close to our parapets that practically the whole of our workings are tamped up. The dirt is carried to dumps in sandbags. The progress is slow. The ground is of compacted sand almost sandstone carrying grit & coarse pebbles. Progress ranges in this material from 3' to 6' in 24 hrs.																																											
	9-10-15		Details of offensive mining scheme submitted. Scheme is for one tunnel 60' deep to get under enemy workings & drive 150' when branches will be put in for 6 charges. The enemy rear trenches being invisible measurements are taken from aeroplane photos. Mines in LONE PINE renumbered as follows.																																											
			<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Old Number</td> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Number</td> <td>19</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>14</td><td>18</td><td>16</td><td>15</td><td>13</td><td>21</td><td>17</td><td>20</td> </tr> </table>	Old Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	New Number	19	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14	18	16	15	13	21	17	20	
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New Number	19	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14	18	16	15	13	21	17	20																										
	10-10-15		Enemy put out Chevron de prise 15' from our parapet during the night																																											

C.S.B.

1

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2112

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Rt 4th Field Coy Engrs *LOVE PINE 4*

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<i>LOVE PINE</i>	<i>11-10-15</i>		<i>The opinion is expressed that mined charges of explosive in mines do not give the results expected to be obtained by using one kind of explosive only. Two such charges made up of ammonal & g.c. have been fired (LP2 & LP8). Whether loss of power is due to Partial Pressures, uneven rate of combustion or to other causes is uncertain. The subject might be investigated. Decided to drive mine saps (MS1 & MS2) out to edge of plateau between Sap C & Circus from PICCADILLY with object ultimately of forming a concealed firing line.</i>	
	<i>13-10-15</i>		<i>Enemy working near LP8. Here as elsewhere he is adopting dilly dallying tactics - tapping here & there & now & again working hard on his face. We are working LP8 irregularly.</i>	
	<i>17-10-15</i>	<i>1420</i>	<i>LP8 blown in by small charge by the enemy killing one of our sappers. We had an upper & lower level drive & the Turk was allowed to drive in between the two. We were tamping in our charge when he exploded perhaps 30 lbs. Our upper drive was blown in, the lower undamaged.</i>	
	<i>18-10-15</i>	<i>0600</i>	<i>LP19 at head of Sap B fired. As this was almost under our baricade only 50 lbs were used Sap B was previously timbered which prevented its collapse.</i>	
		<i>2150</i>	<i>LP8 fired 50 lbs. This destroyed enemy upper gallery & closed communications for us to them.</i>	
	<i>19-10-15</i>		<i>Charge in LP19 apparently did not destroy enemy gallery as he shortly after started 3 picks going therefore LP17 & LP20 were fired at 2230 electrically in series with 90 & 100 lbs resp. after firing the head of Sap B was mullocked up - the bombing hole being retained. LPs 16, 17 & 21A started to form envelope round Sap B.</i>	
			<i>Intention is now to join Sap A & Sap B at point LP16 by a new firing line. Before this can be done ground must be proved & therefore LP14 & LP15 driven E. to do this.</i>	
	<i>20-10-15</i>	<i>2115</i>	<i>Offensive timing scheme approved. When clearing out LP8 after firing there was a gas explosion of presumably carbon monoxide (CO) which had been imprisoned for 48 hrs in chamber caused by our charge. No damage was done.</i>	
	<i>22-10-15</i>	<i>0003</i>	<i>Fired 250 lbs in chamber of previous blow in LP8. This was 30' from our trench & 23' below surface. Some of our parapet was brought in. Surface disturbed only slightly.</i>	
			<i>1875 Wt. W593/826 1,000,000 4/15 J.B.C. & A. A.D.S.S./Forms/C. 2118.</i>	

C.S.B.

see 9-10-15

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2113

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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R 1/2 1st Field Coy Engrs

LONE PINE 5

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<i>LONE PINE</i>	<i>23-10-15</i>		<i>Work on offensive mine (called LPO) going ahead. Shifts are composed of 2 miners & 1 trucker 4 hrs on 12 off</i>	
	<i>24-10-15</i>		<i>Enemy working near SE Corner</i>	
	<i>25-10-15</i>		<i>" " " LP11.</i>	
	<i>26-10-15</i>	<i>1630</i>	<i>LP14 holed into enemy gallery under our drive. The hole was temporarily barricaded, then opened up but in attempting to enter our sappers were fired on. A 10 lb charge untramped then blew in the roof of timber gallery { 10 secs after explosion there was a rush of flame from entrance of tunnel } & a barricade was built. Work is now proceeding to get under. The new firing line between Saps A & B must be delayed till this gallery is seized. It is now certain that the enemy have an envelope all round our firing line. It would seem that it has been completed some time. It has now been definitely found at LPS 14, 16, 18. & the same with which enemy commence work near any tunnel we put out indicators its presence elsewhere.</i>	<i>1 windlass man } on Surface 1 air blower " } 2 wheelers " } 4 hrs on 8 off</i>
	<i>27-10-15</i>		<i>LP 8A started to ensure connection with right drive of LP9.</i>	
	<i>28-10-15</i>		<i>Enemy working again in LP11. The working LP9 & LP11</i>	
	<i>29-10-15</i>		<i>Sinking LP10.</i>	
			<i>Dumps:— These are in full view of enemy. Otherwise dirt must be carried 400'. They are being used to form new firing lines — the actual dumps will probably be dummy firing lines — blunting of the LONE PINE salient by going across head of COOEE GULLY on South & OWENS GULLY on North.</i>	
			<i>Apparently the two mines LP17 & LP20 & the one LP8 were successful as enemy has been heard at neither place since</i>	
			<i>Lieut RIDDELL detached to WIRE GULLY to replace Lieuts THOM & BOWRA killed by gas.</i>	
<i>31-10-15</i>		<i>Picking report from 22 Bn investigated during night of 30-31/10/15. Alleged noises appear due to footfalls in firing line.</i>		

CSB

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 211

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

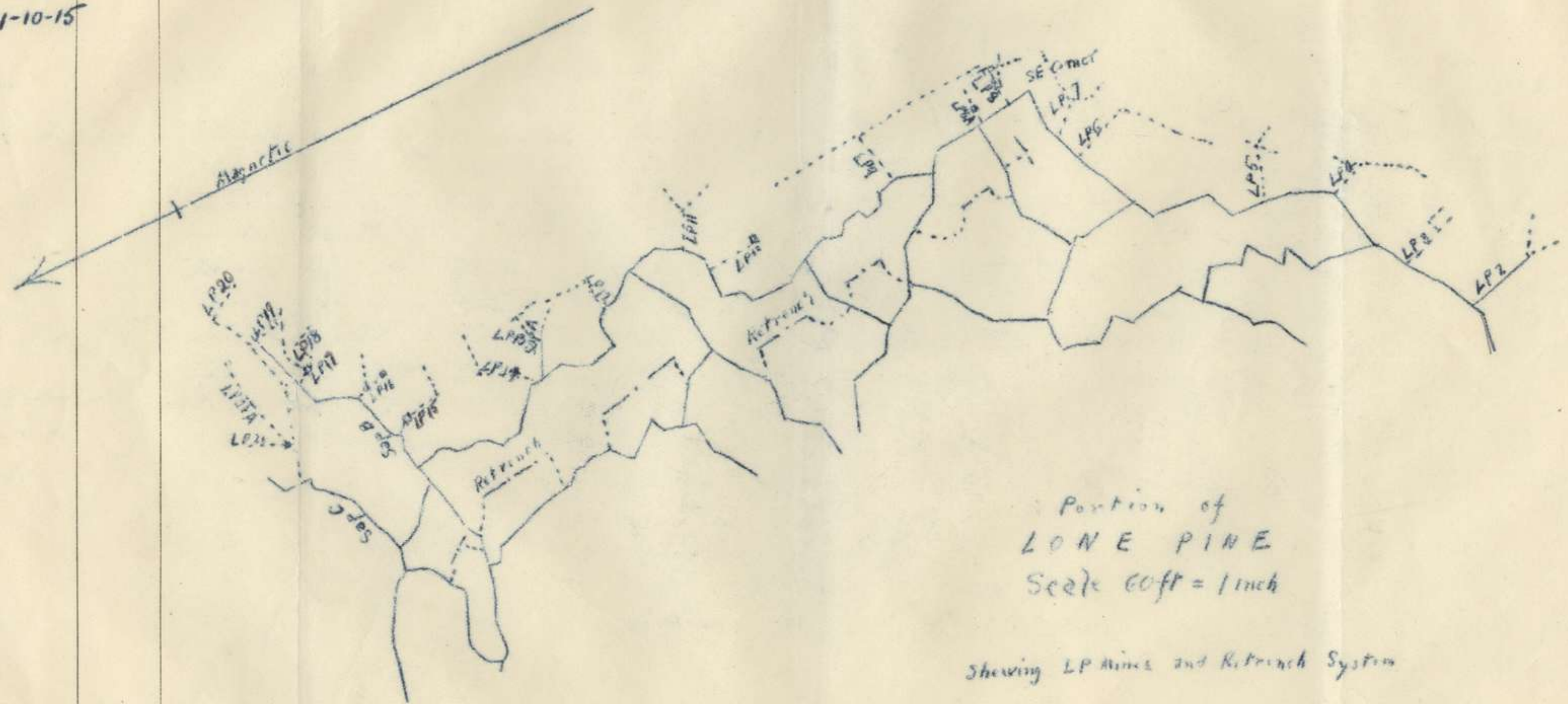
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Rt A Field Coy Engrs LONE PINE 6

2124

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
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LONE PINE 31-10-15



Portion of
LONE PINE
Scale 60ft = 1 inch

Showing LP Mines and Retrench System

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

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or ~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

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No 3 section 4th + 8th Coy.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRE GULLY	1.10.15		Tunnelling is being started in C24 as an offensive & also defensive line pending a decision as to what tunnels shall be dug for offensive purposes.	
	2.10.15		C39 & C22 are being dug to the ground underneath the junctions of the enemy wiring & the crater. Enemy are reported to be working in & near the crater on JOHNSTONES SOLLER & as a tactical measure, it was decided to mine underneath them & render the crater useless to them.	
	2.10.15		Gen. 2 nd Aust Div - decided, after seeing contoured plan of the week at WIRE GULLY that tunnels for offensive purposes be arranged from the present forward firing lines of JOHNSTONES SOLLER & of STEELE'S POST towards enemy trenches & not from far back by a big tunnel, with long T heads as was had been suggested.	
			Consequently it was decided to alter direction slightly of C24 & to start C2 as soon as men were available towards enemy lines, depth to be 60' when approaching enemy line.	
	5.10		C39 A chambers prepared for tamping. Auger holes made upwards, ammonal cartridges placed in them. 2 separate charges of 180lbs each = 360lbs. 2 detonators in each charge. Explosive is 30' below ground surface.	
	6.10.		C2 tunnel started as a main drive.	
	6.10.15		Started pushing C3 forward & timbering towards Crater: & opened up 2 recesses from forward firing line for bombing holes near C3	
8.10.		Picking up C. 39. Picking also heard near C24, hence started defensive branch		
9.10.		Picking is heard near C35 & C39 but must wait till C22 is ready at S.E. corner of crater before blowing up C. 39.		

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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No 3 Section 4th Div

7
10-2-67

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRE GULLY 11.10 ANZAC	11.10.		<p>After reconnaissance of the crater, it was found that the enemy did not occupy as hitherto thought. C22 & its protecting shafts were pushed on C39 & C22 were detonated at 4 am. at same time as heavy rifle fire started all along our line. C22 was charged with 180 lbs ammonal, 2 detonators & holes bored upwards. charge presumed to be below enemy barbed wire & probable tunnel to crater. The effect of C39 (360 lbs + 30' below surface) was to break the ground surface the being down enemy entanglement & certain damage any works he had underground in the neighbourhood: only very slight damage to tunnel C5, roof being slightly damaged. C22 did not break ground surface, hence explosion must have gone to enemy tunnel Since this date, no further trouble with crater or enemy working in this area till end of month.</p>	
	16.10			
	20.10		<p>Tunnels C2 C24 were continued, a shaft being sunk in C2 of 15'; difficulties began owing lack of air pumps & sufficient length of hose. Enemy pickets near C24 had to alter direction of tunnel & dig another protective branch. Water collected in one branch, but main line passed through water stratum. Started tunnel from Tambour as a further main line & commⁿ tunnel.</p>	
	21.10		<p>Enemy heard working in neighbourhood of C2 advance. Shaf shafts were dug both right & left of shaft to protect. & on sp as enemy heard to be</p>	

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2115

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

No 3 section 4th Div

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	21.10		<p>between left & main drive & above, this was tamped with 150 lbs ammonal. Left branch detonated 12.20. no results in our tunnels except slight crack in main drive which was 20' distant from charge: hence presumably charge went to enemy tunnel above us. Charge was 35' below surface & no rupture above ground noticed.</p> <p>Sgt. Bowra went to see result & first met with a second explosion from carrying a candle. He afterwards went down the shaft but was asphyxiated. Lt. Thom, Sapper Carrington & 2 men of 22nd Bⁿ lost their lives in trying to relieve recover Sgt. Bowra & some 20 men were temporarily disabled on a like attempt.</p> <p>Note. During the month tunnel work has gone slowly, mainly owing to hardness of clay soil: average progress only 5' in 24 hours though 3 shifts of 6 hours kept the pick going continuously. The front face is 4' x 2' + completed drive 6' x 3'. Attempts were made to blast with ammonal cartridges but were not very successful, as there are not usually suitable places for these charges which would not attract enemy's attention.</p>	
	21.10.		<p>2nd Corp^l Moore was killed at 21.00 while close to the parapet & outside, near the tambour he was repairing the parapet.</p> <p>Other work done during the month has been the usual repair of parapets, putting up steel loop holes & arranging dugouts for the 22nd Bⁿ. This Bⁿ has been so short of men that no more tunnels than necessary were dug: & dugouts were only required for the firing line. Hence no system on a large scale was feasible.</p>	

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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No 4 section 4th Field Coy

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRE GULLY	31.10.15		<p>During the month a road was made 9' wide up BRIDGE'S ROAD up to the dump near the signal office, sufficiently graded (1 in 8) to allow guns to be brought up & to facilitate carts & material, to Bde H.Q.</p> <p>Maps were completed on $\frac{1}{18000}$ from aeroplane photos, tachometer bases & traverse line along the firing line to control fixed points: contours, enemy trenches taken from photos: contours partly from observation but controlled by enlarging Turkish map of $\frac{1}{20000}$. Mr Meldrum of Eng Survey dept. did the tachometer & trig work: & some R.E. from Ordnance Survey</p> <p>The maps include the area RUSSELLS TOP to CHATHAM POST.</p>	
No. 4 section	1/10/5/10		<p>Work on D21E & D9B tunnels as protective measures: enemy heard working, spasmodically, as usual, near both.</p>	
		6.10	<p>Started D3 tunnel for new programme as offensive measure.</p>	
		9.10	<p>Mine D21E fired 17.15: having been charged on 5.10. with 80lbs ammonal: enemy had been working close: no damage to our mines, but a 2nd blast was seen a few seconds after the first, right up against enemy parapet & some 60' from our mine: hence gas went down enemy tunnel & exploded close to their lines: damaging their parapet & entanglement.</p>	
		12.10	<p>Shaft begun at D3 & deepening of D25. D1A begun.</p>	
		16.10	<p>Began D25B.</p>	
		19.10	<p>Put out barbed wire with French wire at night along firing line after Div. order.</p>	

WAR DIARY

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
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No. 4th section 4th Field Coy

529

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	24.10		Began D 26 forward: but on 27.10 our forward face was within 30' of enemy trench & at 22.30 enemy blew up a mine, forming a small crater but scarcely damaged our tunnel at all except for a crack of 1". Our men working there were not damaged. Heavy use of gunpowder.	
	27.10			
	27.10		D 13 was connected to D 1 A to facilitate communication. D 14 B joined to C 7 for same reason. D 1 A, D 3, D 26, D 25 were discontinued being too close to enemy trenches. A scheme was started for a 6'6" x 3'6" communication tunnel to join C to B Coy 6 to 12' under ground surface & have access to firing line at frequent intervals. The comm ⁿ between B & C Coy is very bad, & frequently shelled. A tunnel renders comm ⁿ here safe & easy: also provides safe accommodation to men close to front firing line & gives space for dugouts in good shelter from shell & rain.	
	28.10		After until 27.10 enemy rarely heard picking, but since then he appears to be casually picking near D 1 A, D 3, D 9 B & D 27 at various times; probably his envelope: nowhere very near. During the month much parapet repair work was done: & forward firing line shored & roof timbered, as far as very meagre materials allow: company kitchens started. loopholes repaired etc. At COURTNEYS the tunnels have been cleared out & deepened: & a mine blown up forming a crater close to enemy firing line on 26.10.15 to counter mine enemy. J. J. Newcombe W. J. R. E.	