

## TRANSCRIPTION.

### APRIL 1917 WAR DIARY APPENDIX 7

#### "J" Special Company R.E.

#### ARRAS 18.4.17

#### PROPOSED SCHEME for use of LIVENS PROJECTORS against the village of GUEMAPPE

Reference attached map –

- (i) **GENERAL PRINCIPLE** It is proposed to strafe GUEMAPPE with a flight of 400 drums of gas projected by means of LIVENS projectors from some point behind the present front line, at some time about dawn on 21st April 17.
- (ii) **POSITION OF PROJECTORS** Projectors will be dug in behind a small natural bank running S.S.W. & N.N.E. at N.12.c.7.6. This will easily accommodate 400 projectors
- (iii) **TARGETS** The targets will be along the line AB in GUEMAPPE (marked in green) in order that the groups will fall so as to cover the portion of the village marked in green.
- (iv) **CARRYING OF PROJECTORS** At present 200 are dumped on the ARRAS-CASMBRAI road at a point 300 yards E of FEUCHY CHAPEL. These projectors will be carried up by 'J' Special Coy R.E. and dug in on the night 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>.

A further 200 projectors are available on the ARRAS-CAMBRAI ROAD at the point G.30.c.5.2. sheet 51B (where our old front line cuts the road). For carrying these up to the forward dump (ie point N.4.a.1.1. sheet v51b) 4 lorries would be required to report to 'J' Coy guides wearing red, white & green brassard at BAUDIMONT GATE ARRAS at 6 pm 19<sup>th</sup> inst. The projectors will be fastened on poles & loaded by 'J' Coy on to the lorries and off loaded at the forward dump. Carrying parties of infantry will then be required to carry these from this point to the position as follows.

8 parties of 50 men exclusive of NCOs carrying 25 projectors per party. They would report to an Officer of 'J' Special Coy at this point at intervals of 20 minutes, the first party must be returned by the carrying parties to the dump. They will be guided to position by guides provided by J Coy. The whole of the projectors (400 in all) will be dug into position by J Special Coy.

- (v) **Carrying of Drums** 400 drums are at present laying in cellars at G.29.c.9.9. in FAUBOURG ST SAUVEUR. On the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> 4 lorries will be required to report to guides wearing red, white & green brassard of J Special Coy at the

BAUDIMONT GATE ARRAS at 6 pm. These lorries will then proceed to the cellars and after being loaded by J Coy with drums will proceed to the point N.4.a.1.1. where they will be off loaded. Carrying parties of infantry will then be required as follows.

Ten carrying parties will be required, each party 40 strong exclusive of NCOs ie 400 in all, each party to carry 40 drums (1 per man). These will be loaded and guided by J Coy guides to the position. The parties will come up at intervals of 20 minutes the first party at 8.30 pm on the night of the 20<sup>th</sup>. The drums will then be placed in position by 2.0 am or thereabouts when all should be ready for firing.

- (vi) **WIND** The wind limits for this operation are S.W to N.W. If the wind is distinctly unfavourable and shows no sign of improving on afternoon of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the carrying of the drums can be postponed until the next night or cancelled as late as 6 pm on the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>.

This course would be preferable to putting the drums in position with no prospect of a favourable wind as it would entail a great risk to remove the drums in daylight, if it was not possible to discharge them at the given time.

- (vii) **COMMUNICATIONS** Communications can be kept by a system of J Coy runners to the nearest brigade or battalion H.Q. whence wind messages can be sent to DIV H.Q. as soon as it is decided to carry up the drums. **ZERO**. I would suggest Zero at 5.30 am 21<sup>st</sup>. This can be communicated to Section Commanders at the positions by the runners.

- (viii) **INFANTRY ACTION** It will be necessary to clear the troops out of the line immediately in front of the projector positions. This can be done half an hour before firing takes place.