SIO.

AUBERS RIDGE.

DIVISIONAL HD. QRS. BATTLE POST AND LIGHT SIGNAL STATION.

Plate IOA. Photograph IO.

Plate roa shows the details of a German Divisional Commander's Command Post for an attack. As far as can be ascertained it was built for the attack launched in April, 1918, against the Portuguese. It consists of quarters for the G.O.C. and G. Stuff and a light signalling station.

Protection.—There are four rooms in the Command Post, three for officers and one for other ranks. The designer appears to have had great respect for British shell-fire. 5 ft. 6 in. to 6 ft. of headcover in reinforced concrete was provided and a 9-ft. parapet wall. In the cases of balmen, however, only 3 ft. 9 in. of head-cover was provided.

Observation.—Following their principle of observation by the Higher Command, an O.P. was built on the top of the dog-out. There is very little room inside it, and only 3 ft. of cover is provided. The view, however, is excellent. In order to obtain this essential observation the Hd. Qrs. appears to have been sited very far forward. It was only 2,000 yds. from the front line before the attack.

Light Signalling.—One ray from the light signal station goes to Fromelics, where there is an "observation exchange" which connects with the main light signalling framework, and three rays run forward. The forward termini were located as concrete structures, but as they had been blown up it was impossible to gauge accurately their use. One was probably a battalion Hel. Qrs. at N 21 a 7 6 and could signal by lamp to the Hel. Qrs. at Marlaque Farm in N 17 b 3 8.

This battle Headquarters is a good example of the ideas of German commanders for attack in the spring of 1918, and shows the three requirements on which they always laid particular stress. These were:—

- 1. Absolute protection for the commander.
- 2. Personal observation for the commander of the battle-field.
- 3. Protected light signalling communications.

Descriptif des installations allemandes par l'armée britannique en janvier 1920. In : Studies of German defences near Lille, p.14

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