

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

New Zealand Units

Item number: 35/20/8

Title: Wellington Battalion

December 1915



AWM4-35/20/8

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

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12.1

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 1-12-15 7 pm</p>	<p>The companies in the firing line and the supports were relieved to-day as follows:- Hawkes Bay Company took over Number 2 Post, Wellington & West Coast Company took over Number 3 Post, and Taranaki and Ruatime Companies went into reserve in X and Y Saps. At 1700, the remainder of the wire entanglements were placed in position in front of No 3 Post. Work was commenced in grading, putting in steps and paring main sap and principal communication trenches, and the work of deepening other communication trenches and constructing bivouacs was continued. Owing to the lack of supplies available, the biscuit ration was reduced by one-half to-day. Weather: fine. Casualties: 1 wounded.</p>	

WAR DIARY

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12.26

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 2-12-45 7 pm</p>	<p>At midday and again at 1600, the position was shrapnelled by the enemy's 75mm guns. but no damage was done. It was arranged to expedite the work on H.E. shelters. By working thereon continuously day and night.</p> <p>The biscuit ration issued to-day was $7/12$ lb. per man.</p> <p>Weather: fine.</p> <p>Casualties 1 killed and 1 wounded.</p>	
<p>7 pm</p>	<p>The night was quiet, but at several intervals during the day many enemy shells were fired into the position: no damage was done. Work on H.E. shelters was commenced and 30 men were set to work on a systematic method of grading, stepping and facing the main ramp. A Japanese trench mortar, capable of throwing a 35 lb. shell, was placed in position to-day, thus making a total of 6 trench mortars and 5 catapults available for use in the Apex position.</p> <p>Weather warmer than at last day for some days, but in misty intervals some rain in evening.</p> <p>Ration still $7/12$ lb per man. Water $3/4$ gallon. Casualties nil.</p>	

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12-31

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 4-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>At 11:30 A.M. 4th Howitzer Battery fired 12 rounds at enemies position on Pinnacle immediately to our front. There were several direct hits but apparently very little damage was done to the BLOCK HOUSE.</p> <p>The enemy retaliated by immediately subjecting the APEX to one of the heaviest bombardments that it has endured since Battalion occupied same approximately 100 75 MM shells being fired thereon in less than 30 minutes.</p> <p>Artillery of both sides appeared to be very active all day.</p> <p>Additional barbed wire entanglements were placed in position after dark and two sap heads were covered out for observation purpose 40 Ft. in front of our firing line immediately in front of enemies nearest trenches.</p> <p>Weather warm and fine.</p> <p>Casualties nil.</p>	

WAR DIARY

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Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 5-12-15 4 PM</p>	<p>Patrols are regularly sent out during the night from 3 different points of the A.P.E.X. position. During last night as one patrol was moving over the parapet to get to the enemy position a machine gun opened fire and Corp. Little who was in charge received 4 wounds none of which are likely to prove fatal. Pte Scott of the same patrol received 1 wound.</p> <p>At 0900 the enemy fired about 20 rounds of 6 inch and 8 inch HE howitzer shells into APEX position; and when the first shell burst it was observed to be a high explosive and all ranks were ordered into the special underground shelters that have been dug for the purpose and which fully justified their existence no casualties occurred although the parapet was destroyed in several parts of the trenches.</p> <p>At midday there was a sudden and terrific bombardment from the 75MM guns from the left flank which lasted about 30 minutes and caused 2 casualties. This was carried on with heavier shells along the beach one of which destroyed the hospital causing many casualties and one Corp who had been wounded through the night was amongst them and has both legs broken.</p> <p>At 1400 ten rounds were fired by our 6 inch howitzer battery on the enemy BLOCK HOUSE to our immediate front which demolished same. Our snipers accounted for 3 Japs during the day. Desert ration was slightly increased. Sugar ration was cancelled through deficiency in supply.</p> <p>Weather. Mild and dry. Casualties for 24 hours 6 Wounded</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">12-4</p>

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12.56

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 6-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>Some repairs to the BLOCK HOUSE having been effected by enemy during the night the 6 inch Howitzer Battery again fired 10 rounds to day and destroyed the same otherwise only a little shelling and firing was done during the day. Weather: Fine and warm. Casualties for 24 hours Nil.</p>	
<p>APEX 7-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>Usual shelling and sniping all day. At about midday the miners engaged in No 2 Tunnel broke into the enemies working gallery and immediately bombed. They retaliated in like manner and we put in a charge of 220 lbs of ammonal which was exploded at about 1630 with the object of delaying and frustrating the enemy. Weather: Fine Casualties for 24 hours 1 wounded.</p>	

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12.6

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 8-12-15 1/2 PM</p>	<p>At 2200 East night the mining Officer and 3 men working in No 2 Tunnel, were overcome by the effects of gas and had to be carried out but they recovered. Later, it was thought at the time that the enemy were pumping gas through their gallery into our mine and some of the supports stood to arms. There were no further developments however and it was finally concluded to be an after effect of our own explosion at 1630. This morning the weekly relief was carried out TARANAKI company relieving HAWKES BAY and as the Otago companies regularly allotted to assist in the defence of the APEX were stronger than usual the WELLINGTON WEST COAST, HAWKES BAY, and RUAHINE companies went into reserve in X.Y.V. Saps about 1/5 yards in rear of firing line. A considerable number of the enemies 75 MM shells were fired at the APEX position just before and after midday but no damage was done. Weather. Fine. Casualties. Nil.</p>	
<p>APEX 9-12-15 1/2 PM</p>	<p>At 0200 another charge was exploded in one of our mines to destroy a Turkish gallery. At 1400 the artillery allotted to the defence of the APEX fired 10 rounds per gun on their night lines. One 155 shell fell in our own bivouacs nearly burying one man but he was excavated uninjured but otherwise the bombardment was a success. Weather. Fine. Casualties. Nil.</p>	

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WAR DIARY

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12-16

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 10-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>The enemy did a considerable amount of sniping by means of concealed machine guns and at intervals searched our parapet rather more heavily than usual otherwise the night and day passed quietly. Full scale of rations were issued except biscuits which were short issued by $\frac{3}{4}$ of a lb. Weather. Fine. Casualties. Nil</p>	
<p>APEX 11-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>A quiet day. Ruahine Coy relieved the 12th Otago Coy in No 3 Post. Only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a lb of biscuits per man issued otherwise full scale of rations available. Weather. Mild and dry. Casualties. Nil</p>	
<p>APEX 10-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>At 0700 the enemy exploded a mine with the intention of damaging one of our mining galleries but no damage was done. at 1100 a Hotchkiss gun and 3 Machine Guns fired a number of rounds at two enemy machine gun emplacements. In one case a magazine was exploded and a member of the enemy were shot down as they were running out of the position. About midday a number of the enemies 75MM shells were fired into our position otherwise the day passed quietly. Weather. Fine. Casualties. Nil</p>	

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12-15

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 13-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>A quiet day. This evening the Maori platoon 33 strong which has been attached to this Battalion for some months were withdrawn with the object of re-embarking and proceeding to IMBROS with the Otago Battalion. Weather fine. Casualties nil.</p>	
<p>APEX 14-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>A new Japanese mortar which throws a 2 1/2 lb bomb was placed in position to day and several targets registered. The enemy fired several bombs into our position during the day. Full rations were issued. Weather fine. Casualties nil.</p>	
<p>APEX 15-12-15 7 PM</p>	<p>To day information was conveyed to all ranks that the ANZAC position was to be evacuated as speedily as possible. An advance party consisting of the Quartermaster Padra and 36 other ranks left at 1800. The enemy has been particularly quiet for 48 hrs and during this period we were less troubled by the 75mm guns than at any other time since we took over the APEX position. Weather fine. Casualties nil.</p>	

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12.96

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
<p>APEX 16-12-15 7 PM.</p>	<p>Orders were prepared and all arrangements made for the evacuation of the Battalion in two parties half one night (which we are advised may be Friday night) and the remaining half Battalion the following night. The enemy's 75mm Guns recommenced duty to day there being two severe bursts of fire at 1000 and at 1600. Weather. Fine day & brilliantly moon light at night. Casualties. Nil.</p>	
<p>APEX 17-12-15 7 PM.</p>	<p>The final evacuation was to day definitely, fixed for tomorrow and Sunday night. The first half to leave will be the two Companies in Battalion reserve the firing line and supports will remain intact until the final night. All ammunition bombs trench stores etc not actually in the trench were buried to day. Nothing is being burnt and every effort is being made to maintain the normality of the situation. Weather. Fine. Casualties. Nil.</p>	
<p>APEX 18-12-15 7 PM.</p>	<p>From 2am to daylight a big fire evidently supply stores was blazing on the beach near the north pier being easily visible from the APEX and consequently also visible to the enemy. At 8.50 PM the first party consisting of 1 Officer and 44 men moved away from Battalion position at the APEX to re-embark at 11.30. The second party comprising of Wellington West Coast and the remainder of Hawks Bay Coy to the strength of 2 Officers and 130 other ranks moved out at 10.45 to embark at midnight. Weather. Hazy. Casualties. Nil.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em;">DH</p>

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<p>APEX 19-12-15</p>	<p>At midday there was a very heavy bombardment lasting about half an hour by the enemy firing 8" High Explosive shells from what appeared to be a new battery. The trenches and dugouts were considerably damaged and if the two companies usually in reserve had been in their normal position there would probably have been a number of casualties. At 1430 the (a) party strength 3 Officers and 92 other ranks left the APEX to embark. (b) party 3 Officers + 76 other ranks left the APEX at 9-15 and the final (c) party 8 Officers + 59 other ranks left the APEX at 2010 on Monday morning 18th December 1915. The whole of the evacuation was complete and speedily carried out without confusion there were no casualties and the attitude of the enemy was quite normal to the east. Weather. Fine + moonlight.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20210</p>
<p>GALLIPOLI 20-12-15</p>	<p>The various parties were taking to the embarking piers and were taken on "baths" to the different transports. The battalion was again reassembled by 5 PM to day.</p>	
<p>MUDROS EAST 21-12-15</p>	<p>Remained in camp at Lemnos. Weather. Cold</p>	

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12-11

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices.
MILDROS EAST 22-12-15	Advance party 10 officers + 36 other ranks embarked to day proceeding to Egypt. Remainder of Battalion remained at Sinos.	
MILDROS EAST 23-12-15	No change in situation	
MILDROS EAST 24-12-15	Further party 7 officers + 40 men embarked to day for Egypt.	
MILDROS EAST 25-12-15	Remainder of Battalion embarked to day on transports "Simla" and	
ALEXANDRIA 28-12-15	Arrived in Alexandria but remained aboard transport	
MOASCAR CAMP 29-12-15	Entrained at Alexandria and proceeded in the party to camp at MOASCAR about 12 miles from ISMATHIA and bivouacked in the desert by the side of the railway line.	
MOASCAR CAMP 30+31-12-15	No change in situation.	

H. H. ...
Commanding Officer