

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

Veterinary

Item number: 27/8/12

Title: Deputy Assistant Director Veterinary
Services, 5th Australian Division

June 1917



AWM4-27/8/12

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

or
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(Erase heading not required.)

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.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
H 35-C55	1 June	9.30-12 noon	Continuation of a series of Lectures at Divisional Transport School given to Transport Officers & Sergeants.	Appendix I
	2nd June		1 case of Stomatitis reported in Divisional Artillery amongst Remounts received 26 th May. All remounts received that day isolated Animal with Stomatitis remaining under treatment	
	17th		A.D.T. moved from H 35. C 5. 5 (57 ^c) to Rubempic	
			Animal Wastage report for month of June.	Appendix II
			Report of Telermary Services with 5 th Austrn Division for year March 1916 - March 1917	Appendix III

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Divisional Transport School.

Syllabus of Lectures delivered at Divisional Headquarters to Officers and Other Ranks of Transport.

- Tuesday May 30 Grooming and stable management 9.30-11
Major M Kenny A.D.S.
- Responsibilities of Transport Officers
11-11.30. Major M Kenny A.D.S.
- Thursday May 31 Watering and feeding 9.30-11 Major M Kenny
- Friday June 1 (a) Care of Wagons including dismantling and setting up
(b) Loading & overloading
(c) Horse transport on the march and its control } Capt. M Greve M.C. A.D.S.
- Saturday June 2 Care and fitting of harness 9.30-12 noon
By Capt R Coppock R.S.A.
- Monday June 4 (a) Shoeing and care of the feet 9.30-10.30 am
Major M Kenny A.D.S.
- Tuesday June 5 (b) Transport from Ordnance Viewpoint
10.30-11.30 am Capt J M Rodd D.A.D.S.
- Tuesday June 5 The chief causes of evacuation of horses and how losses may be avoided by proper management } 9.30 to 11 am
Major M Kenny A.D.S.
- Wednesday June 6. The importance of an efficient transport from a tactical standpoint 9.30 am to 11 am
Lieut Col. C M Wagstaff C.S.B. D.S.B.R.

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5 Australian Division

— Animal Wastage —

— Month of June —
1917

Date.	Evacuated	Died	Destroyed	Missing
Week Endg. 7 th	18	1	2	1
" 14 th	13	2	.	.
" 21 st	6	3	2	.
" 28 th	21	1	1	.
Total	58	7	5	1

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- A Report on a years work of the -
Veterinary Services
- with -
5 Australian Divisions
March 1916 - March 1917.

Wastage in Horseflesh.

The wastage in the Division during the period under review has been - 2478. The strength of the Division varied from about 3500 to about 5500.

Debility. The chief cause of wastage has undoubtedly been debility due to the adverse climatic conditions, hard work, a reduced ration and lack of supervision.

This lack of supervision was most marked in one Artillery and one Infantry Bde. and in the former instance certainly had very serious results during the winter months. The value of shelter under the conditions existing on the Somme in the winter of 1916-17 was not realised by units the cold, biting winds being one of the chief causes of loss of conditions

Glanders

Some loss was occasioned through the introduction of Glanders from Egypt but it may be considered to be now eradicated as a result of systematic testing

Wange

The evacuations for Wange have not been heavy and would have been far less had the wishes of the DYS with regard to clipping in October and November been carried out.

A move of the Division was largely responsible for this omission

Lice

Lice appear to be always present though often dormant and this necessitates the continued upkeep of the hand clippers allotted to units in order that cases may be dealt with as they occur.

It is noted that after animals are clipped the lice and nits are found in the hair of the fetlocks and it would appear that clipping the legs will have to be enforced and a considerable extent during the summer

Shoeing

The actual shoeing of the Division has been very fair throughout and in the Artillery and Train where the establishment provided for a good staff of Farriers has been satisfactory.

The fact that the Veterinary Staff were given some control in the selection of Farrier Sergeants has ensured the appointment of capable men to their responsible positions.

With the Infantry the main cause of what trouble there has been, and in October-November 1916 it became very serious indeed, necessitating action by D.H.Q. lies in the establishment.

Each Infantry Battalion is at present allotted one cold shoe and nothing more.

It was apparently anticipated that the Train Companies would carry out their shoeing but under the conditions of warfare as experienced by the Division such a method of carrying out the work is quite impracticable.

Some C'sb were very slow in realising that it was necessary to appoint a capable man as cold shoe in each Battalion.

At the present time each Infantry Battalion has a man who is practically a shoeing smith although he draws no extra pay and is classed as a cold shoe.

Each Infantry Battalion should have a shoeing smith on the establishment and no shoeing smith should be appointed to the position until he has passed a satisfactory test before a Veterinary Officer.

There should be in addition a Farrier N.C.O on Brigade H.Q. Staff who should be responsible to the Staff Capt for the shoeing of the Bde generally.

The worst example occurs in the Pioneers who, with over 90 animals have only one cold shoer on establishment. They should have a Davis Cpl and a shoering Smith.

The instructions given at the School of Cold Shoering at Abbeville has been very valuable. As indicating however the peculiar ideas some O/s are capable of holding the following may be instanced.

A certain Battalion was instructed to select a man for the instruction at the School and sent not the man who was actually doing their shoering but a man who had never shod a horse in his life and was by trade a glass blower.

After that instructions were issued that the names of men to be sent would be first submitted to the A.D.C.

Late in 1916 there was a very serious shortage of mule shoes which resulted in a large number of casualties.

At the present time the shoering throughout the Division may be classed as good.

Feeding.

The experience of the year has shown the absolute necessity of laying down a settled routine for feeding and watering and of forcing units to conform to this routine. Wherever this routine has been best carried out, there the animals were found in best condition.

Comparatively few Australians are accustomed to regular feeding and all sorts of peculiar ideas had to be combatted. Even now if units are not kept continuously up to the mark there is a tendency to back slide in this matter.

It is very difficult to make many O's b realise the necessity if good results are expected of frequent and regular feeding and regular watering.

Owing to their unfamiliarity with the English method of feeding oats and long hay. many O's b were quite at a loss when confronted with this method of feeding and it took some time to make them realise that oats must be fed before hay and that the use of hay nets saved a great deal of loss.

One O. b. being unaccustomed to use them in Australia declared that oats was a poor horse feed and many were the complaints at receiving what they called "Dry grass" instead of the oaten chaff or lucerne hay they were accustomed to.

Experience shows that the scale of rations laid down for the Army is an excellent one and when fed with intelligence and care ample to keep any horse in good condition but it would be far better if portion at least of the hay rations were issued as chaff. Lately necessity has enforced a lower ration and it has not been without ill effects.

Horse Management.

As the Division was formed from details of various previously existing units and reinforcements. there was at first no standard of horse management and only as time passed were units brought slowly into line. From the very first the personal influence O's b units was observed to have a very marked effect on horse management and some units were observed to very rapidly take the lead in this matter.

Such were the 25th Old Artillery Brigade which always maintained a general high standard and the 28th Coy A.A.S.B. and 5th Mobile Veterinary Section.

As time progressed other units slowly improved and reached the same standard.

With regard to most units of the Division there has been a general up & down movement depending almost entirely on the influence of the C.O. and officers in charge of the Transport.

Of the Infantry Brigades the most consistently satisfactory has been the 15th.

Position of Veterinary Officers

As the formation of the Division commenced with the reduction in the Establishment of V.O.'s some Brigadiers, chiefly in Artillery, were unable to understand that they no longer had a V.O. entirely at their disposal and this caused some friction but with time a better understanding and some changes in personnel the position has become satisfactory and there is a general understanding that the V.O.'s are at the direct disposal of the G.O.C. for work wherever they may be required.

Gian Perry Major
A.D. 7 S.
5th Australian Division

Animal Wastage5th Australian Division

Date	Total	Date	Total
24. 3. 1916.	2	9. 11. 16	125
31. 3. 1916.	-	16 11 16	77
6. 4. 1916.	7	23. 11. 16	118
13. 4. 1916.	28	30 11 16	84
20 4 1916.	17	7. 12. 16	81
27. 4. 1916.	14	14 12 16	132
4. 5. 16	18	21. 12. 16	107
11 5. 16.	12	28 12. 16	159
18. 5. 16	19	4. 1 17	140
25. 5. 16	37	11 1 17	125
1 6 16	69	18 1 17	82
8 6. 16	37	25. 1. 17	53
15. 6. 16	57	1 2 17	13
6. 7. 16	22	8 2. 17	21
13. 7. 16	22	15 2 17	80
20 7. 16	52	22 2 17	55
27. 7. 16	36	1 3 17	45
3 8 16	23	8 3 17	18
10 8 16	45	15 3 17	35
17. 8 16	32	22. 3 17	36
24 8 16	40		
31. 8. 16	25		
7. 9. 16	39		
14 9 16	28		
21. 9. 16	37		
28 9 16	27		
5 10 16	24		
12. 10 16	33.		
19. 10 16	11.		
26 10 16	25		
2. 11. 16	54		

Total Wastage

2478

Animal Wastage
5 Australian Division 24.3.1916 to 22.3.1917
 (less Artillery)

Headquarters 5 Aust Div	21
8 th Austn Inf Bde	192
14 Austn Inf Bde	198
15 Austn Inf Bde	192
5 Aust Pioneer Bty	52
5 Austn Div Sig Coy	39
5 Austn Div Train	234
8 Field Coy Aus Engrs	53
14 th " " " "	55
15 " " " "	47
8 Austn Field Ambulance	24
14	15
15	35
CRC	1
CRA	2
5 th Australian Mob Tely Sectn	6

Wastage 5 Austn Divl Artillery 24.3.16. 25.1.17.

13 th Aus 2 A Bde	202
14 " " "	155
15 " " "	260
25 " " "	164
5 D A B	316

Animal Wastage
5 Australian Division

1916-17

Total

