

AWM4
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1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/26/48

Title: 9th Infantry Battalion

December 1918



AWM4-23/26/48

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

FOR

DECEMBER

191⁸

Signature of Officer compiling

S. J. Chapman Capt. ady

Signature of Officer Commanding

G. F. Ross Lieut. Col.

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices	
BEUGNIES.	1.12.18.		<p>Word was received late on the night of the 30th that His Majesty the King would be passing through the Corps Area and that all Units of the 3rd Brigade Group would line the MORBOURG-AVESNES Road and to be in position by 1100. At 1145 the King passed down the whole Brigade Group which consisted of troops lining both sides of the road. In the King's entourage was General Rawlinson, G.O.C. 4th Army and under whom this Battalion had often fought. At 1215 the Battalion marched home in column of route when the salute was taken by the G.O.C. 1st. Division. Weather very chilly and inclined to rain. Lieut. V.M. CHATAWAY from Base. Lieut. W.S. MACTAGGART to Australia on furlough.</p>		
	2.12.18.		<p>Battalion carried out ordinary training and at 1000 word was received from Brigade that this Unit had been selected from all Battalions to furnish a Kings Guard of 1 Captain, 1 Subaltern, and 50 Other Ranks. It was firmly understood to mount on the 4th inst. It meant a very quick and able selection to select a representative guard from all Companies. It was firmly understood that those finally chosen would be of a high standard to represent not only the Unit but Australia. G.S.O. 1st Division inspection the Guard at 1400 and passed highly complimentary remarks on the soldierly turnout and appearance. Equipment of those chosen was in disrepair owing to the length of service but were replaced at 1800 by the best from all Companies. Clothing was another big factor but Division helped us there wonderfully by supplying complete uniforms for the whole of the Guard. No time was lost in the scrubbing and blanching of this new equipment and artificial drying arrangements were made by using old enemy boilers. In regard to the issue of new uniforms this also entailed a considerable amount of work in the alterations. Work was practically carried on the whole of the night as we were fighting time. Brigade informed this Unit that the Corps and Divisional Commanders would inspect the Guard at 0930 3rd inst. Lieut. H.N. KNOWLES "M.C." from Divisional Wing. Lieut. H. FINTER from O.T.B.</p>	<p><i>J.P. Chapman (Capt) & ad</i></p>	
	3.12.18.	recently	<p>Battalion proceeded to carry out ceremonial drill from 0930 to 1130. Reinforcements who originally joined are sadly lacking in military training and in consequence special awkward squads were formed. Efforts were made to have the time for inspection of Kings Guard by Corps Commander altered from 1130 and were successful. The Guard fell in at 1115 on parade ground in drizzling rain and at 1130 word was received that they would be inspected in Glass Factory at SANS POTERIES. At 1140 the Corps Commander and Staff arrived and the general salute was played by the regimental band. After a very careful inspection the Corps Commander addressed</p>		<p><i>Appendix</i></p>

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	3.12.18.		the Guard informing them of his extreme pleasure and appreciation in regard to the turnout. and the soldierly bearing of all ranks. The Guard was addressed in a similiar manner by the G.O.C. 1st Australian Division. Lieut. KNOWLES "M.C." Subatern of the Guard proceeded to CHATEAU-SEBOURG to receive instructions as to the mountings and posting of the Guard. Rain set in for the afternoon and therefore cancelling all outdoor recreation. Quartermasters Staff of tailors was busy repairing and altering illfitting clothes of all Companies.	
	4.12.18.		At 0600 three Lorries arrived at Battalion Headquarters for conveyance of Guard to CHATEAU-SEBOURG. At 0745 the Guard was inspected finally by the Commanding Officer show all Officers before it moved off at 0815. At 0930 Battalion fell in in Mass and proceeded to carry on with ceremonial and rifle drill. In the afternoon the Education Officer Lieut. FINTER commenced organisation of classes and selection of instructors.	
	5.12.18.		Weather completely changed for the better the morning being like that of spring. It seemed to effect the spirits of everybody and the drills and recreation were an absolute pleasure. An interesting football match between keen and interesting players of "B" and "C" Companies was the main centre of attraction for the afternoon's recreation. On the football ground were tug-a'-war and Boxing contests. Nights fairly cold.	
	6.12.18.		Weather conditions still remain the same and the Battalion carried on with Military, Educational and Recreational training. Reinforcements who have joined without seeing any active service whatever are beginning to look like soldiers. Corps Commander was supposed to have inspected the billets at 1130 but was postponed. In the afternoon Rugby Football between Headquarters and "A" Company and Soccer between "C" Company and "D" Company was played on their respective grounds and in each instance the game was evenly contested. As sport will play a big part in the future every game is organised with that end in view. Fighting Strength 35 Offs. 677 O/Ranks. Detached 10 Offs, 171 O/Ranks. Total 45 Offs. 848 O/Ranks.	
	7.12.18.		Battalion carried out military training for 1½ hours- students enrolled under educational scheme were classified under their respective headings and tuition was given for 1 hour. This branch of the service is developing with remarkable results and the keenness of all be-tokens a bright future. In the afternoon interesting rugby matches between 6th Battalion.	

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S. Chapman Caprony

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	7.12.18.		and 4th Machine Gun Battalion and 2 representative teams from this Unit resulted in the 6th Battalion being defeated by 11 to nil and the 4th M.G. Battalion by 21 to nil. Personnel comprising King's Body Guard rejoined Unit at 1630. His Majesty the King conferred on O.C. Guard Capt. C.H. RYAN "M.C." the M.V.O. for services rendered. Weather looks like setting in for rain.	<i>J. Chapman Col. in ad</i>
	8.12.18.		Church parade held in factory commencing at 1030. Rev. SMITH McBAIN officiating. Arrangements were made to have the Unit bathed after Church Parade with a complete change of underclothing. By 1600 all Companies were completed.	
	9.12.18.		Battalion carried on with ceremonial training and smartening up drill during the morning. Divisional Commander inspected billets and transport lines and commented on their neatness and cleanliness. Weather showery and unpleasant and in consequence recreational had to be abandoned. Rations on issue to the troops have improved wonderfully and for the first experience the bread allowance works out at 1 loaf to max two men. Meals are added to by a vegetable supply being maintained by Companies from plots formerly cultivated by the enemy.	
	10.12.18.		Weather very showery and outdoor parades had to be cancelled. Companies were confined to billets carrying on with armed drill and physical exercises. At 1030 Lieut. Col. xxxx ROSS, G.S.O. 1st. Division lectured the Battalion in billet No. 7 of 10th Battalion on Tradition. It was a resume of the deeds and exploits of the Battalion since its inception right down to the last and most distinguished honour, that of supplying the body guard for the King. All ranks were keenly interested in the address and it was a lesson to be taken to heart by reinforcements who have recently joined. The weather cleared sufficiently to allow of a football fixture taking place between this Unit and 2nd Battalion on the latter's ground. The team selected was of the very best and highly representative resulting in their defeating the 2nd Battalion by 11 points to 3.	
	11.12.18.		Heavy rain set in during the early morning and was most consistent throughout the day. This meant training of all companies in billets. A very bad thing for the reinforcements who are sadly in need of close order drill. With rain this village presents a very dirty appearance and becomes a regular quagmire. Training grounds are invariably ankle deep in water.	

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	11.12.18.		after 24 hours rain. Fortunately the ration issue is up to a high standard with plenty of vegetables all ranks are fairing well. Officers were given the opportunity of seeing the new billeting area at CHATELET and all are extremely delighted at the prospect of resting there for sometime. Recreation for the afternoon was cancelled.	
	12.12.18.		The weather conditions are again unfavourable for outdoor training, so in consequence all Companies are carrying out rifle and physical training in Billets. G.O.C. Brigade inspected all ranks at work and the conditions of the Battalion billets. Word was received that transport would form up in line at 1030 for inspection by Brigadier. This was cancelled owing to weather conditions. Educational Classes, Shorthand, French, Bootmaking, Carpentering, Armouring were in full swing and this fact was favourably remarked upon by the Brigadier. Recreation in the afternoon could not be adhered to so the Companies were detailed for a short route march.	
	13.12.18.		Weather appears to set in as it has been consistently consistently raining the whole of the day. All training was carried on in Billets which is becoming monotonous owing to lack of floor space. A sad accident which became fatal to the former happened to two members of this Unit, Ptes. MORRISON and DOWLING at 1130 this morning, when examining a live noscap of an enemy Minerwerfer. This resulted in an explosion and the instantaneous death of Pte. MORRISON. DOWLING was severely wounded and little hope is entertained for his recovery. Rainings too heavily for recreation outdoors. Fighting Strength 38 Offs. 701 O/Ranks. Detached 70ffs. 115 O/Ranks. Total 45 Offs. 816 O/Ranks.	
	14.12.18.		Changes in the weather are remarkable. To-day is quite clear with sunshine. This allows of training being carried out with great spirit after such long confinement to such close indoor space. Sickness in the Unit is still very much above normal principally owing to weather conditions. A military funeral was accorded Pte. MORRISON and through the courtesy of Lieut. Col. MACARTNEY "D.S.O." 3rd. Army Bde. Artillery a gun-carriage complete was obtained. It is worthy of note that it is the second time on record of this Unit that a gun carriage has been used for a funeral. Recreation in the afternoon was enjoyed to the utmost and some exciting games of rugby between companies were witnessed. With the ration biscuits saved from issue all Companies were able to make plum puddings for tea.	

J. P. Rapman (Capt)

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	15.12.18.		Sunday Church Parade during the morning and sports in the afternoon. It is noticeable the keenness displayed by all ranks on recreational training and it answers well for the future. Bright clear day and surprisingly warm for this time of the year.	
	16.12.18.		Rain prevented outdoor parades and Companies were instructed to prepare for the forthcoming move. At 1000 Bde. Order received for first stage for the move to CHATELET. Battalion Order in accordance with above issued at 1500. This move is a three days march and everybody is pleased with the prospect of advancing still further to towns of far greater importance than BEUGNIES. The men will move the lightest on record. Blankets, steel helmets and box respirators will be carried on transport. Rout lies via SOLRE-LE-CHATEAU - HESTRUD - GRANDRIEU - points 35 and 36 both south of BEAUMONT, thence to final area in first stage SLORE-ST-GERY. Still raining with every likelihood of its continuance. Again companies had plum puddings for tea and these were made from ration biscuits ground up as flour. Vegetables are still plentiful and they are collected daily from patches planted by the enemy during his occupation of this territory.	Appendix S. Chapman's Column
	17.12.18.		The starting point detailed for the Unit was an enemy mine crater at the junction of four roads and the head of the column passed to time at 0802. Weather conditions were very unsettled but luckily the rain did not interfere with the comfort of the march. At noon the group halted for midday meal at about 1½ miles from the resting place of the first stage. By 1430 all ranks were comfortably settled and the billets were extraordinarily clean. SOLRE-ST-GERY did not show many signs of enemy occupation by the welcome extended by the inhabitants was very sincere in the extreme. At 1630 orders for move to the second stage were issued.	Appendix 3.
	18.12.18.		At 0700 the Battalion was again on the move amid heavy rain and the march ranks with one of the most unpleasant in France. The country through which the group was passing was highly picturesque and interesting and at about 0945 the Franco-Belgian border was crossed. To see so many villages intact was a novel experience particularly when for the last two years the division had become to war destruction. The column again halted for lunch from 1130 to 1210 and it was perishing cold. At 1430 THY-LE-CHATEAU was reached and every step was taken to procure fuel for drying garments and boots of all members of the Unit. The inhabitants of the village rendered every assistance and by 2100 the majority were practically dry and ready for the final march	Appendix 4.

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	18.12.18.		the next day. THY-LE CHATEAU was electrically lit and all the local industries were in full swing. In accordance with time-table issued from Brigade Battalion Order was issued for the final stage to CHATELET at 1700. The starting point necessitated a good deal of reconnaissance as the map of THY-LE-CHATEAU (NAMUR) was incorrect.	
	19.12.18.		At 0820 the Battalion was on the move and the weather was most favourable. In the early stages of the march it looked as though heavy rain would be experienced but fortunately it blew over. The route laid down, viz., through SOMZEE - TARCENNE - GERPINNES - ACOZ, was highly enjoyed by all ranks as it lay through towns whose industry had not suffered through the war. People en route cheered the column and at the entrance of the larger towns arches of welcome inscribed "Welcome to Australia" were frequently met with. On all the Cafes notices to that effect were posted up on all windows and the local citizens were loud in their praise of the Australian soldier. At 1130 the Battalion halted in ACOZ and the troops were supplied with light beer and coffee free. At 1210 the march was proceeded with and thoroughly enjoyed. At BOUEFLOUX all the inhabitants turned out in mass to cheer the passing troops and the military police had difficulty in keeping them back. This welcome was extended right to CHATELET and the warmth was highly appreciated by everybody. CHATELET was the Mecca of the soldier as all Companies were billeted in a very fine area, and practically all members had beds to sleep in. Transport and horses were billeted in a huge pottery factory and all stables were electrically lit. Lieut. F. PERRETT from Base.	<i>S. Chapman</i>
	20.12.18.		The full day was spent in adjusting the billeting accommodation and the formation of messes for all companies. All ranks are highly pleased with the prospect of wintering in CHATELET as the enthusiasm of the inhabitants in their desire to please and make them comfortable is unbounded. At midday the Battalion was informed that a composite Battalion composed of 1 Company per Battalion to represent the Division at an official welcome was extended by the Burgomaster and citizens to the troops. Major J.F. McCANN "D.S.O." "M.C." 10th Battalion selected as C.O., Capt. S.J. CHAPMAN "M.C." as Adjutant. Capt. F.J. BIGGS commanded the company from this Unit and it consisted of 1 platoon from each Company. This meant a good deal of cleaning up as the troops had been marching for three days under very muddy conditions. The food of the Unit was well maintained and the supply of vegetables sent forward from BEUGNIES helped considerably. Raining still with every likelihood of its continuance.	

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	21.12.18.		An inspection of the Battalion took place at 0930 and the Company representing the Battalion paraded for inspection at 1100 by the G.O.C. Brigade and the Battalion Commander. This completed the morning's work and at 1400 the composite Battalion formed up ready to move to the PLACE de VILLE for the official welcome and levee. The G.O.C. Division arrived at 1500 when the general salute was given and the Belgian National Anthem was played. The G.O.C. and Burgomaster inspected the troops finally taking the salute in the march past at the entrance to the HOTEL DE VILLE. This parade lasted about 2 hours after which the Commanding Officer and Adjutant were presented to the Burgomaster in the reception room of the HOTEL DE VILLE. During the parade a heavy sleet storm was experienced but it in no way hampered the proceedings. Lieut. E.H. MEYERS "M.C." from School, England.	Appendix
	22.12.18.		Church parade in the local Cineam hall after which all ranks were allowed on leave to CHARLEROI.	
	23.12.18.		An inspection of the Battalion took place at 0930 and on completion companies carried out smartening-up drill and physical exercises. Educational Classes, French and Mathematics commenced at 1100 till 1200. Battalion notified of the intention of Division to start a Rest House in BRUSSELS with the object of extending 3 days leave to each soldier of the Division. Major N.G. ARMSTRONG was appointed as O.C. Rest House	Chapman Capt. 5.
	24.12.18.		After Battalion Inspection all Officers were busy preparing for the Xmas meal of the men. The messes of the various Companies were furnished for the occasion and they presented a gala appearance. The cooking of the beef presented little difficulty as the Belgian people placed at our disposal huge ovens each capable of cooking for 200 people. In the afternoon the men were exercised and a good football match was arranged between "D" Company and Quartermasters Staff. This resulted in a win for the latter by 3 points after a close contest. Weather conditions are not the brightest but still that matter will not effect anybody. 2/Lieut. T.A. DALZELL from Base.	
	25.12.18.		The brightness of the day augmented a gay and festive gathering and round the cookhouses there was great bustle in the hope through friendly competition that one company would out win the other in the turning out of the premier meal. The greatest praise is due to the A/R.Q.M. Lieut. T.W. CAMERON and all the Company Cooks for the conservation of food preparatory to	

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	25.12.18.		Xmas, which made the actual meal far and away the best the men have ever experienced. Roast and Boiled Beef and Mutton, vegetables, plum pudding and sauce, with three bottles of beer per man constituted the Menu. The G.O.C. in company with the Battalion Commander and all Officers inspected the meals and all ranks were loud in their praises of the way in which the dinner was prepared. In the afternoon the Officers and men congregated in their respective Club Rooms and spent the balance of the day in a cheery manner.	<p style="font-size: 2em; transform: rotate(-90deg);">Lt Chapman's Copy</p>
	26.12.18.		The Divisional Commander had ordered that Xmas, Boxing and New Years Day would be set aside as a holiday so in consequence sports were arranged for the afternoon. The day was beautifully sunny and invigorating and it required little effort for everyone to join in. Inter-Company football matches were the main fixtures and they were witnessed by a good many local inhabitants and other troops billeted in the vicinity of CHATELET. In the evening a big dance was held in the Cafe Royal which further cemented the feeling between the Belgians and the troops.	
	27.12.18.		Brigade Review was held on Battalion Parade Ground. Battalion formed up at 0930 and were inspected by the Acting Brigadier Lieut. Col. RAFFERTY. D.S.O. The weather was bitterly cold and after a few movements Battalions were dismissed by 1030. Education Classes commenced at 1100 in the Battalion School Room. This branch of the service is assuming large proportions. Notwithstanding its being in its infancy. Men are keenly interested in attending and intent on obtaining benefit from the scheme. Recreation in the afternoon provided the greatest interest. A representative team from the 1st Bde. played the Battalion team and after a heated contest the Battalion team won by 8 points to 6.	
	28.12.18.		Rain prevented all outdoor parades so Companies carried on with physical training indoors till Educational Classes assembled. Both in the morning and afternoon lectures were given mainly on History. Battalion was warned that The Prince of Wales would visit the Bde, and present medals to recipients on 30th. Also Guards would be furnished for Bde.H.Q. and Concert Hall, the latter to be chosen from the two largest men in the Unit. This was easily obtained and Pte. TAYLOR, W. "A" Coy., and Pte. WICKHAM "B" Coy., were chosen each 6ft. 3ins. in height. Lieut. H.A. SLAUGHTER to U.K. Leave. Lieut. J.J. CHAPMAN furlough to AUSTRALIA.	

Appendix
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	29.12.18.		Church Parade was held in the Brigade Concert Hall RUE DE CALVAIRE at 0930, Chaplain Rev. DOUGLAS officiating. 2 Officers and 25 Other Ranks proceeded to BRUSSELS on leave. Remainder of day spent in Recreational Rooms.	
	30.12.18.		Prince of Wales paid the Brigade a visit and splendid arrangements were made for the reception. Troops of the four Battalions lined the streets from the PLACE DE VILLE to the RUE DE CALVAIRE. Sum Guards of honour were furnished by the 11th and 12th Battalions and the special party of two from this Unit took pride of place by being posted at the main entrance to the Reception Hall. His Royal Highness arrived at 1115 and commenced to present medals to all recipients from the 2nd and 3rd Brigades. On leaving the Hall he was loudly cheered and the inhabitants of CHATELET joined in heartily. The men's quarters were then visited and Ptes. ROONEY and SLOAN were presented. Inter-Company football took place in the afternoon and the keenness and interest displayed in sport of this nature is improving every day. Lieut. R.B. SALISBURY "M.C." to U.K. Leave.	<i>By Chapman Layton</i>
	31.12.18.		The Battalion was inspected by the Commanding Officer at 0930 and it is considered that the appearance and turn out has never reached such a high standard. The spirit of keen competition between companies is a large factor coupled with the comfort of the men which all goes to make efficiency. At 1000 Companies proceeded to the Baths of the Societe Anonyme du Charbonnage du Carabiner where every man had a hot plunge and shower and was issued with a clean set of clothing from the Comforts Fund. The sports fixtures for the afternoon were well patronized by the local residents who appear highly amused at our premier sport, RUGBY Football. Arrangements were well in hand for the big dinner to be given to the men on New Years Day and by all appearances it will surpass that of Xmas Day. Everything that could be bought in the way of vegetables seasoning, etc. was procured locally and the cooks were given 4 bottles of wine per Company for sauce for the puddings.	

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WAR DIARY

OF

NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

FOR

DECEMBER

1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1.	Memorandum (King's Guard)
2.	Movement Order No. 181
3.	Movement Order No. 182
4.	Movement Order No. 183.
5.	Training Programme for week ending 20th Dec. 1918.
6.	Memorandum - Visit of H.R.H. Prince of Wales.
7.	Training Programme for fortnight ending 11th. January, 1919.
8.	Medical Officer's Report.
9.	Quartermaster's Report.
10.	Transport Officer's Report.
11.	Commanding Officer's Report.

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War Diary

NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION

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Battalion Headquarters,
3rd. December, 1918.

MEMORANDUM - KING'S GUARD

The Guard will fall in on Parade Ground adjacent to "A" - "B" and "C" Coy's. Billets at 0730 tomorrow preparatory to moving off by lorries at 0800.

Dress - Fighting Order - Greatcoats and gloves will be worn.

Packs will be carried separately in lorries.

The Guard will be inspected by Commanding Officer at 0745. Any Officer desirous of attending will parade at this hour.

R.Q.M. will detail 1 Cook with two dixies and 1 Tailor with iron to accompany Guard. He will also ensure protection against dirtying of equipment by supplying bagging etc.

Blanco, Brasso and Boot Polish will be issued from Battalion H.Q. in sufficient quantities to enable Guard to maintain the highest standard during the whole tour of duty.

24 hours rations will be issued for all personnel proceeding.

D. Chapman
.....Capt.
Adjutant, 9th. Battalion.

Secret

Copy No 15

(2)

3rd BATTALION AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE ORDER NO. 101.

Ref. Sheet
M.A.R. 1/100,000.

Battalion Headquarters,
16th, December, 1918.

1.

The "3" Infantry Brigade Group will march to CHATELAIN Area in three stages commencing to-morrow 17th inst. Route for 1st. Stage - SOLRE-LE-CHATEAU - ELSTRUP - GRANRIEU - SOLRE ST. GERY.

The following distances will be maintained :-
Between Battalion. - 50 yards.
" Companies. - 10 yards.
" Infantry & Transport - 25 yards.
" Other Units - 25 yards.

Companies will pass Starting Point (Cross Roads at Commanding Officer's Billet) as under :-

"D" Company - 0755 "H.Qrs." Company - 0750
"A" " - 0757 "B" " - 0753
"C" " - 0759

Transport will accompany the Unit and Cooks will proceed in rear of Companies.

DRESS :- Full Marching Order less blankets, steel helmets and Box Respirator. Unexpended portion of days rations. Mess Tin will be carried on top of pack. Jerkins and Gloves to be worn.

2. OFFICERS'

VALISES.

Two dumps will be formed for Officers' Valises.
No. 1 Dump - Battalion Headquarters.
No. 2 Dump - Q.M. Store. Valises to be at dumps by 0715

3. BLANKETS.

Blankets will be rolled in bundles of ten, tied at both ends and centre, properly labelled and will be stacked as under at 0645 :-
"A", "B" and "C" Companies. - Factory Billets
"D" Company - Billet No. 141.
"H.Qrs." Company. - at Bn. Headquarters.

Packs of personnel authorised in Battalion Standing Orders will be dumped with respective Company's blankets. Packs of Band and Battalion Flag-bearer will be stacked at Battalion Headquarters at 0645 and be placed on G.S. Wagon carrying Headquarters blankets. Packs will be loaded first.

Packs of sick men issued under Authority from R.M.O. will be dumped at Q.M. Store at 0700.

C.Q.M.Ss. will supervise loading of their respective Company blankets.

R.Q.M. will detail 6 men of Pioneer section to load blankets commencing at Battalion Headquarters.

Transport Officer will detail Nos. 1 and 2 S.A.A. Wagons, each with double beams, to report at 0645 at Factory Billets.

The disposition of blanket wagons will be as follows :-

No. 1 S.A.A. Wagon - "B" and "C" Companies.
No. 2 " " - "A" and "D" "
Bn. G.S. Wagon - "H.Qrs." Company.

On completion of each day's march C.Q.M.Ss. will report to R.Q.M. and take charge of blankets.

Officers Mess Cart will call at Company messes as follows. "H.Qrs." Supplementary Mess 0715, thence to "A", "C", "D" "B" and Battalion Headquarters. R.Q.M. will detail a guide to proceed with Mess Cart.

4. BILLETING PARTY.

Battalion Billeting Party as laid down in Battalion Standing Orders will proceed in rear of "H.Qrs." Company. Personnel from Companies will report to Lieut. WRENCH "M.C." at Bn. H.Qrs. at 0750 on 17th inst. Billeting Party will proceed with his section to SOLRE-ST-GERY, and meet Bn. at the entrance to the village.

P.T.O.

5. SUPPLIES. Supplies will be drawn as follows :-
 17th Dec. - At EUGNIES at 0700 for consumption on
 18th inst.
 18th Dec. - At BARRINCEN at 0700 for consumption on
 19th inst.
 19th Dec. - At PRY at 0700 for consumption on
 20th Dec.
6. ADVANCE OFFICERS. Those authorised to proceed to CHATELET to-morrow will be Lieut. F. FINTER "M.C.", Lieut. E.L. ALCOCK and 2/Lieut. H.A. SLAUGHTER. Batmen will accompany these Officers, who will proceed under their own arrangements.
7. STRAGGLERS. Rear Company on each day's march will detail one Officer to collect all stragglers. This Officer will make himself acquainted with the Route in case he is delayed on line of march. In anticipation of the few who may possibly fall out on the line of march, 5 blank forms of authority have been despatched to each Company.
8. CLEANLINESS. Latrines will be left in a sanitary condition, and all rubbish burned or buried before billets are vacated. Usual Certificate will be forwarded to Battalion Headquarters by 0730.
9. FOOT PARADE. After each day's march Companies will have a thorough inspection of feet of all members of their Command. Those suffering from the slightest blisters or abrasions will be sent to R.M.O. at a time and place to be notified later.
10. TIME. Watches will be synchronised at Battalion Headquarters at 0700 to-morrow.
11. WATER CARTS. R.M.O. in conjunction with Transport Officer will ensure that Water Carts will proceed on line of march filled.
12. OFFICERS' HACKS. Hacks for mounted Officers will be at their respective Headquarters at 0745. Rations for one meal will be carried.
13. DISTRIBUTION OF BANDS. Brass Band will precede "D" Company and Pipe Band "B" Company. The Battalion Flag-bearer will march in rear of the Regimental Band.

J. J. J. J.
 Capt.
 Adjutant, 9th Battalion.

DISTRIBUTION

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Commanding Officer. | 2. Second in Command. |
| 3. 3rd. A.I. Brigade. | 4. "A" Company. |
| 5. "B" Company. | 6. "C" Company. |
| 7. "D" Company. | 8. "H.Q." Company. |
| 9. Transport Officer. | 10. R.Q.M. |
| 11. R.S.M. | 12. R.M.O. |
| 13. Education Officer. | 14. Lieut. C.L. WRENCH "M.C." |
| 15/17. War Diary. | 16. File. |
| 19/20. Spares. | |

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3

Copy No.

NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER NO. 182.

Battalion Headquarters,
17th December, 1918.

The "C" Infantry Brigade Group will continue its march to the CHATELAIN Area to-morrow.

Route :- Cross Roads E of point 41 on the BARBENOON - MOUSSU - LEZ - MAUCOURT ROAD, CASTILLON - FONTENELLE - MAUCOURT - THE LE CHATEAU.

Halts of ten minutes at 10 minutes to the clock hour will be observed. The column will halt for midday meal from 1100 to 1200. As far as possible all troops and transport will bivouac in fields during midday meal.

Dress :- Same as B.C. No. 181.

Companies will pass a starting point - (Billet No. 102 - "A" Company) as under :-

"A" Company	- 0730	"H.Qrs." Company	- 0731
"C" Company	- 0732	"B" Company	- 0733
"B" Company	- 0734.		

Transport will accompany Unit and Cooks will march in rear of Companies.

OFFICER'S VALISES. Three dumps for Officers' Valises will be formed :
No. 1 - R.Q.M. Store No. 2 - Chateau No. 3 - "A" Company's Billet No. 102. Valises will be at dumps by 0645.

BLANKETS. Blankets will be rolled in bundles of ten, tied at both ends and centre, labelled, and stacked as under at 0615.

"A" Company - Billet No. 102
 "B" & "C" Coys. - Chateau.
 "C" & "H.Q." - R.Q.M. Store.

Packs of personnel authorized by Battalion Standing Orders will be dumped with respective Company blankets. In every instance they will be loaded at the bottom of all wagons. Packs of sick men authorized by R.M.O. to be carried will be dumped at R.Q.M. Store at 0700.

ROUTINE.

Reveille	- 0530
Stack Parade	- 0620
Breakfast	- 0630

BAND. Brass Band will precede "A" Company, Pipe Band will precede "B" Company.

PACKS. Packs for mounted officers will be at respective Headquarters at 0715.

BILLETS. As soon as possible after arrival at destination Companies and Transport will forward a return to Battalion Headquarters giving number of Billet and number of Officers and men occupying same.

Paras. 4 & 8 and 11 of B.C. No. 181 hold good.

576 *W. J. ...* **Capt**
 **Lieut.**
 Last. Adjutant. 9th. Battalion.

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4

NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER NO. 183.

Battalion Headquarters,
18, December, 1918.

The "C" Infantry Brigade Group will complete the march to CHATELET Area to-morrow.
Route:- SONZEE - TARGINE - GLRPIINS - AGOE - BOUILLIOLLA - CHATELET.

Halts of ten minutes at 10 men minutes to clock hour will be observed.

Column will halt for midday meal from 1200 to 1300 when all troops and transport will be clear of the road if possible.

Companies will pass the starting point (R.Q.M. Store) as under.

- "C" Company - 0805 "B" Company - 0806
- "H.Qrs." " - 0807 "D" " - 0808
- "A" " - 0809

DRESS :- As per B.R.C. No. 182

2. BLANKETS. Blankets will be dumped as under :-

- "A" Company - Billet No. 15 top of Rue de Central.
- "B" Company - Billet 30 adjacent to Company Cooker.
- "C" Company - Company Headquarters.
- "D" Company - Billet 27 Rue de la URUX.
- "H.Q." " - Billet No. 19

All Blankets will be stacked and ready for loading at 0630. Packs authorized to be carried will be dumped with blankets. Packs authorised by R.M.O. to be carried will be dumped at R.Q.M. Store at 0700.

3. VALISES. Valises will be dumped as under :-

- "A" Company - R.Q.M. Store at 0715
- "B" " - Company Headquarters at 0645.
- "C" " - " " " 0645
- "D" " - Billet No. 33 at 0645
- "H.Q." " - H.Qrs. Mess. at 0715

4. MESS GEAR.

- "A" Company - R.Q.M. Store at 0730
- "B" " - Company Headquarters at 0715
- "C" " - " " " 0715
- "D" " - Billet No. 33 at 0715
- "H.Q." " - Mess Headquarters at 0715

5. HACKS.

Hacks for mounted Officers will be at respective Headquarters at 0745.

6. TIME.

Watches will be synchronized at Billet No. 11 at 0730.

7. ROUTINE.

Same as B.C. No. 182 of 17.12.18.

8. BANDS.

Brass Band will precede "C" Company, Pipe Band will precede "B" Company.

9. BILLETING.

Battalion Billeting Party will report to Lieut. C.M. WRENCH "H.Q." at 0800 at R.Q.M. Store.

S. P. Chapman
.....Capt.

Adjutant. 9th Battalion.

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NINT H AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

(5)

TRAINING SYLLABUS FOR WEEK ENDING 28th, DECEMBER, 1918.

Monday

Wednesday 23rd.

0900 to 0930

0930 to 1030

1030 to 1100

1100 to 1200

Company Inspection.

Battalion Inspection and Drill.

Bayonet Fighting by Platoons.

Educational Classes - French, Mathematics, Elementary

Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking,

Armouring.

Recreation.

1330 to 1530

Tuesday 24th.

0900 to 0930

0930 to 1030

1030 to 1100

1100 to 1200

Company Inspection

Battalion Inspection and Drill

Ceremonial

Education, Shorthand and English, Blacksmithing,

Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

Recreation.

1330 to 1530

Wednesday 25th.

Christmas Day.

Thursday 26th.

Boxing Day.

Friday 27th.

0900 to 0930

0930 to 1030

1030 to 1100

1100 to 1200

Companies under Company Commanders.

Battalion Inspection and Drill.

Musketry.

Education, French, Mathematics, Elementary Education,

Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

Saturday 28th.

0900 to 0930

0930 to 1100

1100 to 1200

Companies under Company Commanders.

Battalion Route March.

Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking.

Armouring.

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NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

Battalion Headquarters,
30th, December, 1918.

MEMORANDUM.

Visit of H.R.H. the PRINCE OF WALES.

Programme.

The Prince will arrive in the Place HOTEL DE VILLE at 1115, and will there inspect the Guard of honour of the 15th Battalion. He will then proceed to the Brigade Concert Party Hall, RUE DE CALVAIRE, where a presentation of medals to N.C.O.s and men of the 2nd and 3rd Edges. will take place.

After the ceremony the Prince will visit one billet in each Battalion area, beginning with 9th Battalion and finishing with 12th Battalion.

1. The role allotted to this Unit is as under :-
Companies less 1 Officer and 19 Other Ranks from each "A", "B", "C", "D" Coys, and Transport and recipients of medals, will line the streets from the Hall Entrance towards the Place HOTEL DE VILLE. Companies will report to the hall entrance as under :-

"A" Company	-	1030	"B" Company	-	1032
"C" Company	-	1034	"D" Company	-	1036
Transport	-	1037			

One marker from each of the above will report to R.S.M. at the Hall at 1028 with strength of Company frontage.

Dress :- Officers - Parade Dress.

O/Ranks - Greatcoats, belts and sidearms.

Transport - Greatcoats, Bandoliers, Belts and Bayonets.

When Companies are in position the Battalion will line both sides of the streets at half arm intervals. Officers will be evenly spaced on both sides of the street one pace in front of the men. As the Prince passes, Officers will salute, other ranks remain steady. Personnel lining the streets will be dismissed when the Prince has entered the Concert Hall.

2. Personnel of 1 Officer and 19 Other Ranks from each "A", "B", "C", "D" Companies and Transport as mentioned in para.1 will proceed to the Hall and be seated by 1045.

Dress :- O/Ranks - Overcoats and Belts.

Transport - Overcoats, Bandoliers and Belts.

3. The following recipients of decorations will report to the Hall and be in their allotted seats at 1040 :-

2662	Sgt.	T.G. GAYDON	"A" Company
757c	Pte.	J. HICKEY	"C" " "
6705	"	W. HELL	Transport.
3876	"	G.W. PORTER	Headquarters
1031	"	E. FEW	"A" Company
4458	Sgt.	S.G. REAL	"C" Company
5359	Pte.	G.V. EVANS	"A" Company

Dress :- Belt and sidearm. No overcoats to be worn.

The above personnel will report to Battalion Orderly Room at 1025 for inspection.

4. HALL GUARD. 2 Other Ranks selected from "A" and "B" Companies to act as door sentries will report to Lieut. E.H. MEYERS "M.C." at Battalion Headquarters at 1030.

Dress :- Skeleton Order.

This Officer will place them in position at the Hall by 1050.

P.T.O.

(2)

5. BATTALION GUARD. Battalion Guard furnished by "D" Company will mount at 0900.

6. BANDS. 9th Battalion Band will take up its position in the Place HOTEL DE VILLE at 1045 and will play alternately with 12th Battalion after the troops have taken up their position. The Band will remain in Place HOTEL DE VILLE until the Prince leaves Brigade Headquarters.

[Handwritten signature]
.....Capt.
Adjutant. 9th Battalion. A.I.F.

NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

TRAINING SYLLABUS FOR FORTNIGHT ENDING , 11th JANUARY, 1919.

MONDAY. 30th Dec.

0900 to 0930	Company Inspection.
0930 to 1030	Battalion Inspection and Drill.
1030 to 1100	Bayonet Fighting by Platoons.
1100 to 1200	Educational Classes -- French, Mathematics, Elementary Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

TUESDAY. 31st Dec.

0900 to 0930	Company Inspection.
0930 to 1030	Battalion Inspection and Drill.
1030 to 1100	Ceremonials.
1100 to 1200	Education, Shorthand and English, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

WEDNESDAY. 1st Jan. NEW YEAR'S DAY.

THURSDAY. 2nd Jan.

0900 to 0930	Company Inspection.
0930 to 1030	Battalion Inspection and Drill.
1030 to 1100	Bayonet Fighting by platoons.
1100 to 1200	Educational Classes -- French, Mathematics, Elementary Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

FRIDAY. 3rd Jan.

0900 to 0930	Companies under Company Commanders.
0930 to 1030	Battalion Inspection and Drill.
1030 to 1100	Musketry.
1100 to 1200	Education -- French, Mathematics, Elementary Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

SATURDAY. 4th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Companies under Company Commanders.
0930 to 1100	Battalion Route March.
1100 to 1200	Education -- Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

MONDAY. 6th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Company Inspection.
0930 to 1000	Battalion Inspection.
1000 to 1030	Bayonet Fighting
1030 to 1100	Smartening-up Drill by platoons.
1100 to 1200	Educational Classes -- French, Mathematics, Elementary Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

P.T.O.

(2)

TUESDAY, 7th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Companies under Company Commanders.
0930 to 1030	Battalion Inspection and Drill.
1030 to 1100	Bayonet Fighting.
1100 to 1200	Education - Shorthand and English, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

WEDNESDAY, 8th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Company Inspection.
0930 to 1000	Battalion Inspection.
1000 to 1030	Physical Exercises by platoons.
1030 to 1100	Bayonet Fighting.
1100 to 1200	Educational Classes - French, Mathematics, Elementary Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

THURSDAY, 9th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Companies under Company Commanders.
0930 to 1030	Battalion Inspection and Drill.
1030 to 1100	Bayonet Fighting.
1100 to 1200	Education - Shorthand and English, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

FRIDAY, 10th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Company Inspection.
0930 to 1000	Battalion Inspection.
1000 to 1030	Physical Exercises by platoons.
1030 to 1100	Bayonet fighting.
1100 to 1200	Education, French, Mathematics, Elementary Education, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Boot- making, Armouring.

SATURDAY, 11th Jan.

0900 to 0930	Companies under Company Commanders.
0930 to 1100	Battalion Route March.
1100 to 1200	Education - Shorthand and English, Blacksmithing, Tailoring, Bootmaking, Armouring.

RECREATION :- Every day from 1330 to 1530, Rugby, Soccer, Tag-o'-war, basket ball and medicine ball.
Inter-Brigade Matches when possible.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

34
SARS POTERIES.
 1-17/12/18.

During the first portion of the month the Battalion was billeted at SARS POTERIES and here we spent a quiet and monotonous three weeks.

Billets - The men were comfortable although a great deal of work was required at the outset to make their billets sanitary. Three companies were billeted in a large glass factory and the environs of this factory were very filthy and much was done to improve these conditions during our stay.

Recreation - Owing to the energies of the Battalion Sports Officer, Lieut. E.L. ALCOCK recreation was thoroughly organised and the men materially benefited. A good deal of enthusiasm was displayed and the Battalion witnessed several very fine rugby matches.

Health of men - Here there were heavy sick parades due to an epidemic of diarrhoea. Coughs and colds were also very prevalent. The health of the men in this area was far from satisfactory. The excellent work of Cpl. LYNCH and his staff in the Aid Post was highly commendable.

Prevalent Diseases.

Diarrhoea.- This epidemic was in all probability due to the appalling sanitary conditions which existed in the village. The water carts were used throughout and food supply was carefully supervised.

Cooks, cockhouses and their environs received careful attention. During the month seventy men reported for treatment. Of these three required evacuation.

Bronchitis - was fairly prevalent. Nine cases required evacuation from this village.

In all twenty-seven men were evacuated from this area, making a very high percentage of evacuations.

Food - The ration was light. Large supplies of vegetables however were available in this area and the stews in consequence were excellent. The large percentage of vegetable may have been a causative factor of the diarrhoea.

Water. - was drawn from local water point. Carts were used throughout.

13.12.18.

While at SARS POTERIES a most unfortunate accident occurred resulting in the death of two men, Ptes. MORRISON and DOWLING. The casualties resulted from the explosion of the detonating charge of a Minerwerfer nose-cap. Pte. MORRISON was killed immediately and Pte. DOWLING subsequently dies at the C.C.S. at MAUBERGE.

Baths - Excellent baths were situated in the factory. Here the men were frequently bathed and issued with clean clothes. Several cases of scabies were treated here by an ambulance orderly.

Chiropodist - The Battalion Chiropodist L/Cpl. BOWRING, was very busy in this area and did good work. The men's feet received careful attention and trench foot powder was issued to platoons. Foot inspections and foot drills were instituted in view of the march to CHATELET.

17.12.18.

On the 17.12.18 the Battalion marched from SARS POTERIES to SOLRE ST. GERY a distance of about 17 kilometres. The men travelled light for their blankets and box respirators were carried. The weather was good and the men marched well.

Only two men fell out but remained with the column throughout. At SOLRE ST. GERY the billets were good and the men spent a comfortable night. In the afternoon forty men paraded for foot treatment. Only one required evacuation.

- 18.12.18. This day was very windy and wet. The Battalion marched from SOLRE ST. GERY to THY LE CHATEAU a distance of about 18 kilos. Despite conditions the men marched well and only four fell out. Their packs were carried. We arrived at THY LE CHATEAU wet and miserable. There the men were very comfortably billeted and soon dried their clothes before large fires. Only five men paraded with sore feet.
- 19.12.18. The Battalion marched from THY LE CHATEAU to CHATELET a distance of 17 kilos. It was a beautiful day and the men marched splendidly. Only two men fell out and were carried. We arrived at our destination early in the afternoon.

CHATELET.

- 19-31/12/18. Here the men are very comfortably billeted. In most cases they are billeted in pairs and a large percentage have beds. The Battalion is spread over a large area and as a result sanitation is difficult to control. We were greatly handicapped at first by the scarcity of material but now central latrines for each Company have been constructed. These latrines are now being roofed over and protected. Refuse is dumped by companies and collected daily and removed to village refuse dump. An incinerator is being erected for organic refuse from cookhouses. The environs of cookhouses has received attention in all cases. As far as possible the use of trench latrines is prohibited but it is impossible to enforce this at present owing to the scarcity of material for latrine accommodation. The condition of the trench latrines in this area is on the whole fairly satisfactory.
- Recreation - Here the Battalion have a splendid field for recreation. Lieut. ALCOCK deserves great credit for his organisation of recreational training. Twenty showers have been erected in a building adjoining the sports ground and here the men can have a warm shower daily. Great enthusiasm has been displayed and the Battalion can produce several fine rugby teams. The health of the men has benefited considerably and their spirit is good for they are happy and contented. As well as outdoor sports recreation and amusement rooms have been selected for each company. These are all active now but as yet there has been some difficulty in getting sufficient books, magazines, etc. for them.
- Health - The health of the men has been excellent in this area. The epidemic of Diarrhoea has entirely subsided.
- V.D. - Throughout the month active measures have been taken to combat V.D. and many cases have received early treatment. In CHATELET there has been great demand for prophylactic treatment, as many as thirty have reported in one day. Two men have contracted Gonorrhoea in this village and have been evacuated. The following are the sick and scabies reports for the month :-

For week ending	Dec. 4th.	11th.	18th.	25th.
No. reporting sick	255	200	77	30
Cases of Diarrhoea.	40	35	22	2
" Pulmonary	20	20	6	5
" Rheumatic	5	2	3	1
" P.U.O.	10	6	4	-
" Trench Feet	-	-	-	-
" Scabies	-	-	1	1
" Venereal	-	-	1	1
" Measles.	-	-	-	1
" Mumps	-	-	-	1
Sent to Ambulance.	10	8	9	3
Remarks.	Diarrhoea	Diarrhoea	Diarrhoea	-
	Prevalent	Prevalent	Prevalent.	
Blankets last Disinfected.	30.10.18.	30.10.18.	30.10.18.	24.12.18.
No. of men bathed during week	All Coys.	All Coys.	All Coys.	All Coys.
Clean Clothing	2.12.18.	10.12.18.	15.12.18.	22.12.18.

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25.12.18. CHRISTMAS DINNER. - Owing to the energy of Lieut. CAMERON and the whole hearted co-operation of the cooks an excellent Christmas Dinner was provided for the men. Supplies were very short this year and the necessary food was extremely difficult to procure. Despite these facts Lieut. CAMERON was responsible for the best Christmas Dinner the Battalion has yet had in France.

J. Guai.

.....Capt.

R.M.O. - 9th. Battalion. A.I.F.

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NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

34 QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1918.

The month of December has been for the "Q" Branch of the Battalion a comparatively easy one for two reasons ; the first, the shortage in Ordnance Supplies received, and second, the moving from SARS POTERIES to CHATELET. The main reason for the shortages in supplies in ordnance material is due to the fact that being billeted in the SARS POTERIES Area we were quite a considerable distance from the main railway communications and the supplies had to be brought by Mechanical Transport some 40 to 60 miles from Railhead.

RATIONS have been well up to the average throughout the month. Mutton and Lamb formed the major portion of the fresh meat rations for several days preceding Christmas and with what economy was exercised throughout the month in view of the uncertainty of obtaining adequate supplies of fresh meat for the Christmas dinner, we were able to put sufficient mutton and lamb aside to provide the dinner and it is pleasant to record that there was an ample sufficiency for all.

The Plum Puddings at the rate of 1lb. per person were received on the 23rd and again there was plenty for all members of the Battalion.

Fresh vegetables, mostly cabbage and potatoes were purchased during the month with which to augment the ration issue. It is necessary to make these purchases regularly as for some time past, the vegetable ration is rather on the light side.

For the Xmas dinner some 320 kilos of Potatoes, 100 kilos of parsnips and 100 kilos of cabbage were required and all of these were purchased in CHATELET at a price that was satisfactory.

ORDNANCE SUPPLIES as already stated were very short and slow in coming forward but however since arriving in CHATELET these supplies have shewn signs of being back to the normal state very soon. Apart from the above however it is pleasing to record that all the requirements of the King's Guard (which the Battalion supplied at the beginning of the month) were met mainly to the splendid efforts of our Divisional Ordnance Officer - Lieut. KENT. Lieut. KENT visited all the Divisional Ordnance Branches to obtain the clothing that our D.A.D.O.S. service was not in a position to supply immediately and his efforts were highly successful. The greatest thanks due to Lieut. KENT for his efforts in enabling the Battalion to maintain the reputation it has.

COMFORTS. The regular big supplies of comforts which have been received from time to time were not kept up during December through no fault however of the A.C.F. Branch but however the Xmas Boxes were received in time for distribution on Christmas Day and were thoroughly appreciated by one and all.

A considerable quantity of Custard Powder which was received from the A.C.F. last month went to provide the Custard for the Xmas puddings and with it the "Sweets" portion of the Xmas dinner was all that could be desired.

The A.C.F. expect as soon as transport facilities permit to be able to supply a much larger quantity of comforts than has hitherto been received. The value to the troops of many of these comforts cannot be under-estimated in any degree as same are not procurable elsewhere at the present time.

No amount of thanks can suffice to applaud the benefits and splendid services of the A.C.Funds.

BATHS. Whilst at SARS POTERIES it was possible to bathe the Battalion on two occasions during the month and clean clothing was available on each occasion. On arrival at CHATELET the "Societe anonyme de Charbonnage du Carabinier" a' Pont de Loup placed at the disposal of the Battalion Commander the full use of the Baths of the company and needless to say were used on two occasions and voted by one and all - splendid.

Our deep appreciation and thanks is due to our Belgian friends and Allies for this very great concession on their part. Clean clothing was available also for these baths.

RECREATION - In conjunction with the Transport section a football team was formed during the month and two matches played with satisfactory ~~XXXX~~ results.

GENERAL - Under this heading in conclusion the two outstanding features of the month should be emphasized. The first is the splendid services performed by the Tailoring section under Cpl. KENNEDY who turned out the KING'S GUARD in record time and thus enabled the Battalion's reputation to be kept at its high standard.

The second feature which perhaps is the best of the two and this is the preparations of Xmas Dinner by the Sergeant Cook and Staff, viz., Sgt. JENKINS and his assistants, Ptes. STROUD, SLOANE, McKEOWN, PRINGLE, DREW and DELACOURT. These cooks in close co-operation and ably assisted by the Cnateen Staff, Storemen and Company Cooks spent no small effort in making the Xmas dinner the fine success it was and the very heartiest thanks and appreciation of the Battalion is their due.

(Sgd) T.W. CAMERON. Lieut.

a/R.Q.M., 9th. Battalion.

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NINTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

TRANSPORT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR DECEMBER, 1918. (10)

On the 2nd inst the Section was fortunate in drawing 1 H.D. from Remounts, and with looking after his present poor condition will improve. By all appearances he is sound and will eventually make a good limber horse.

The whole section was turned out for inspection by the Commanding Officer on the 4th and its smart and neat appearances was commented upon.

Following close came an inspection by G.O.C. Division, Major-General GALSGOW and he was keen on instituting racks for harness and suggested a few other improvements. On visiting the men's billets he remarked that he had never seen such clean and tidy Transport Billets during his experience in France. Every attempt is being made to reach the highest standard in Transport management and all members of the Section are enthused with that idea.

In accordance with the Educational Scheme submitted from Battalion Headquarters 3 pupils from Companies were attached to the Farrier for instruction in Blacksmithing.

Up to the 17th inst. Transport routine was maintained and the horses were extraordinarily fit.

On the 17th in company with the Battalion the first stage in the trek to CHATELET was commenced under very bad weather conditions. It was looked forward to by everyone and the section turned out as smartly as ever.

Prior to moving off, L/Cpl. JAMES was thrown from his horse and received a painful kick on the leg but with his accustomed fortitude he persisted in carrying on.

At 0800 the column commenced to move and the trek lay through SOLRE LE CHATEAU - HESTRUD - GRAND RIEU and the trip in spite of the weather was highly interesting. A midday halt was made on the road allowing sufficient time for water and feed the horses, and at 1500 the Section reached SOLRE ST GERY, remaining there for the night. Comfortable billets and stables were obtained and preparations were then made for the second day's journey.

This was a memorable day's march as it meant leaving an area of war devastation to reach one of normal appearance with populated and decorated villages and electrically lit.

The next days weather conditions were appalling, wind and sleet the whole of the trip and the cold was something to be remembered. The route lay through BARENCON - CASTILLON - PONTENELLE - WALCOURT and the road was in a very bad condition. It was so extremely cold that the column only halted for half an hour and reliefs in drivers were arranged every 20 minutes. After lunch the road gradients were very steep, but the loads on all vehicles were light and at 1430 THY LE CHATEAU was reached. Arrangements were at once made after the men had seen to the horses to procure coal for drying wet clothes of Section personnel. Fortunately each billet had a nice stove and at 2200 the men were completely dry and ready for the move on the morrow.

Next morning the final stage of the journey was commenced and the weather had completely changed overnight from heavy rain to a bright and clear day. The march was the most interesting to date and the route lay through towns of great importance and of historical interest. By this time the Unit was well in advance of war areas and not a sight of the usual war devastation was encountered. The G.O.C. Division inspected the column at GOURDINNE a village on the route; SOMZEE - TARCENNE - GERPINNES - ACOZ - BOUFFLOUX. En-route inhabitants from these villages cheered the passing troops and at ACOZ where the column halted for lunch they were quick in their offerings of beer and meal bread. Horses and drivers were well rested here in anticipation of the hard cobble roads to be encountered before completion of the march. After lunch the route lay through towns whose chief industry was coal-mining and at 1500 CHATELET was reached and a rousing reception was accorded the whole Brigade.

From now, commenced entirely a new kind of life. All drivers, grooms and
 Brakesmen had most comfortable billets and a recreational and mess room
 and for the first time since the Section's inception the issue dixie
 had to give way to nice clean plates and china cups. The horses fared
 as though they belonged to a wealthy civilian- separate horse boxes all
 lit with electric light was their stable accomodation, and a recreational
 paddock was obtained for exercise on soft ground. All the stables have
 concrete floors but straw is plentiful which gives them a rest at night.
 On the 21st the S.A.A. Section of the D.A.C. which has been attached
 to the Unit since BOHAIN returned to their own Column and the greatest
 thanks is due for the manner in which they helped at all times.

This small section was partly instrumental in allowing the Battalion to
 move on the march so lightly and with medium comfort.

Stable routine and the detail of the usual waggons, cleaning and paint-
 ing of limbers, and erection of harness racks occupied the majority of
 time up to Xmas.

Two days before the 25th arrangements were commenced to make the actual
 dinner the best up to date. The mess was decorated with flags and each
 member of the Section had a seat ~~XXXXXXXX~~ assigned to him.

This with the actual dinner and it will be long remembered, led to the
 festivities being such a success and all voted to the care and attention
 paid by B.R.Q. Staff to make the day so extremely pleasant.



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REMARKS BY COMMANDING OFFICER 9th. BATTALION for the MONTH

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ENDING, DECEMBER 31st, 1918.

1. During the early part of the month the Unit was billeted in BEUGNIES and the village was most unhealthy, being situated in a low valley, with practically no sanitation. It was deemed advisable that recreation should play a large part under these circumstances and in consequence Military Training was limited to an hour and a half daily. Weather conditions were invariably bad but if outdoor parades were cancelled steps were at once taken to do physical training indoors.
2. The appearance and spirit of the men is highly gratifying and all ranks appear to be enthused with the desire to maintain the reputation of the Unit under any circumstances.
3. The long looked for move to the CHARLEROI Area eventuated on the 17th inst. and all members of the Unit were greatly pleased with the thought of leaving BEUGNIES. The first two days march through very interesting, considering War devastation was being left behind, was to a great extent marred by the frightful weather conditions. Each night all ranks arrived at the staging area drenched to the skin, and it meant staying up late into the night while clothes dried. The third and last stage entirely made amends and all the townspeople en-route cheered the group and extended the heartiest welcome.
4. Billeting accomodation was the best encountered in France, the greater majority had bedrooms and the use of the sitting room.
5. Entertainments. Each evening local Cinemas, The Brigade and Divisional Concert Party all tend to amuse and help all ranks to pass away the time between Retreat and Lights Out.
6. Education. This branch of the service is assuming large proportions and classes are held daily from 1100 to 1200 and from 1700 to 1800. Subjects include French, Shorthand, Mathematics and History. Classes for the trades which may be learnt with the Unit are Bootmaking, Blacksmithing, Carpentering, Armouring and Signwriting.
7. Recreation. Recreation is organised on a Military basis. Battalion Headquarters have a Sports Officer and Staff and each Company a small committee. Inter Unit sports are arranged as frequently as possible and every interest is centred in all games which lends to the excellent health of the troops.
8. Transport. Under such conditions, the Transport Section is improving daily and limbers and horses are presenting a very fine appearance.
9. Health. The health of the troops is most noticeable and the sick parades are exceptionally small.
10. Leave. Leave to U.K. has been somewhat liberal and a Rest Club has been opened at BRUSSELS for Officers and other Ranks.
11. Behaviour. The behaviour of all ranks is beyond the highest praise, the soldiers are conducting themselves with natural dignity and are becoming favourites with the residents of CHATELET. Their general appearance and discipline has never reached such a high standard as at present and my thanks are due to all who uphold with such honour the fair name of Australia.
12. The R.Q.M. and his Staff have been instrumental in the maintenance of a high food standard and vegetables have been procured apart from issue in large quantities. The Xmas Dinner was thoroughly appreciated and the arrangements made for the general comfort of the men by all Officers is worthy of the highest commendation.

.....Lieut.Col.
 Commanding, 9th. Battalion. A.I.F.