

AWM4

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/35/16

Title: 18th Infantry Battalion

November 1916



AWM4-23/35/16

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.

original

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

187th Bn

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1916			
RIBEMONT	31		Situation quiet. Major G. Murphy, rejoined from England. very wet day normal. Major Murphy took over command from Major Travers who rejoined 17 th Bn.	
	1		180 men to baths at Heully. Lt Col Wisdom returned from leave to England & took over command. Lt Porter W. to Hospital	
	2		Contact Patrol scheme set down for to day was postponed (too foggy & wet)	
	3		Contact Patrol scheme was carried out. Fine day & well carried out. afternoon spent arranging for move to Montauban on 4 th inst.	
	4		Left Ribemont for Montauban. (9 am) latter part of journey was very tiring very muddy & great congestion of traffic. Arrived at Huts 4 pm & found them in filthy condition	
	5		Reveille 4 am. Moved off to Carlton Trench at 6 am & remained there in support till 3.30 pm when we returned to Huts. Lieut Lucas, Wilkes Lowther & 40 men went on to front line to make themselves acquainted with trenches & be ready to act as guides	

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Montauban	6	November 1916	<p>21 went BOOTH N.W. KIA. Lieuts Lucas, Wells & party returned 7am had been misdirected & did not reach the right trenches. Received orders to move onto front line. Left Huts at 1.30pm & reached Adv Bde HQ at 7pm. Relieved 98th Batta in front line relief completed 1-15 pm. B, D, & C Coy in front line A in support.</p>	L'Booth KIA
Front line at	7		<p>Trenches in fearful condition. Mud everywhere & knee deep in trenches. Men suffering badly from wet & cold. It was found that a gap existed between our right flank & the Right Batta (17th) so the front was extended another 150 yards to join up. C Coy extended to the right & D Coy took over another 100 yards. B Coy found that a gap existed between their left flank & the British Div on our left. This was capped across & communication established. Enemy Snipers were very active & shelling fairly heavy particularly along Turk LANE & sunken road. Raining practically all day. Captain Walklate wounded by shell fire. L' Readford arrived from Base.</p>	<p>L' Col Wisdom left to take command 7th Brigade Major G F Murphy now in command</p>
	8		<p>Mud & Mud. Rain continues. Men cannot stand still long in one place without sinking up to their knees. Packons arrived but it was only with great difficulty they could be carried up</p>	

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Front line at	8	November 1916	Enemy shelling still more severe both on front trenches & on Turk Lane to Dunken road. Our men silenced one sniper. L. O'Donnell wounded. One Lewis gun blown out by shell fire & two gunners killed, one wounded.	
	9		Dry day & fairly clear but mud as bad as ever. Relief notified as taking place to night. Shelling continues but snipers much less active. Leason officer from heavy batteries in front line with a view to drawing barrage in closer to our front line. Our artillery very active all the time. It is always much heavier than the enemy fire. Lt Wilkins to hospital wounded. Men suffering badly from the effects of exposure.	
Switch Trench	10		Relieved from front line by 20 th Battr 1.40 pm & moved back to Switch trench. Conditions not much more favourable here except that the shelling is only occasional & the men can move about without fear of snipers. No protection from the weather except such as can be improvised by themselves. The men were moved during the day gradually back to a position the backward slope of the ridge, thus withdrawing them from enemy observation and also securing dryer camping ground. Men were encouraged	

2353 Wt. W2544/1454 700,000 5/15 D. D. & L. A.D.S.S. Forms/C. 2118.

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Switch Trench	11 Oct. 1916	10.	to build bivouacs but material was very scarce. Enemy dropped a few H.E. near the trenches during the morning but no damage was done. Very big sick parade mostly of men suffering from exposure. Evacuators: Captain Morris H.C.M. & Lt Ross J.C. (sick) and Lt Lewis Appleby W.C. (sick) also 70 O.R. weather fine	
"	11		Still at Switch Trench in support. weather fine during morning but misty later. Men were employed improving bivouacs & have made themselves much more comfortable. 170 men supplied to Brigade for carrying parties during the day. Evacuators 2/1 Irvine A.W. O.R. 34. Battery of Artillery are situated on all sides of us & they keep firing at intervals all day. Fatigues 125 men in support all day. Men very tired. Supplied fatigues of 120 men. Orders received that the 20 th Bn would relieve us at night after being themselves relieved in front line by 25 th Bn. Moved back to Montauban Hill on small parties. Men tired road muddy & very slow progress made. Relief completed 1 am 13/10/16	
		12	Lt Cadle L.M. reported from Etaples	

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	November 1916			
McIntosh Huts	13		Ket inspection & general overhauled of the Battalion. Considerable trouble compiling casualties principally through the number of responsible officers & Senior NCO's who have been evacuated during last week. Weather fairly fine but misty. Mud everywhere. Parties were put on to clear enough away to make tracks between huts. Men very glad to get a rest on dry floors.	
"	14		Remained in huts all day. Men not worried except to overhaul their gear. Lt Dryden returned from Snipers School.	
"	15		Still at huts. Supplied 170 men to relieve 7 th Brigade fatigue. Cold wet day. Lt Dryden R & evacuated. Men improving.	
"	16		Still at huts very quiet day. Practically every man fit for duty is away on fatigue. Cold & wet day.	
"	17		Snow fell during previous night & during morning. Another quiet day. Received orders we will probably take over trenches again to morrow & that our fatigue will be relieved to night. Most of them have already reported back - with the exception of A Day.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line at	18/12/16	18	<p>Retained the 27th Battalion in the same trenches but on only half the frontage formerly occupied. 17th Bn on our right British Div on our left. Bn HQ were advanced to Trenches were slightly advanced over part of the front a new firing line having been dug but connection had not been dug through to either right or left flanks. Digging ordered for to night. Very heavy work on the men getting up to the front line, owing to the mud. Relief completed 3.30 am 19/12/16. Casualties 2 OR wounded.</p>	
"	19		<p>Cold wet day. Enemy shelling heavy. They have ranged on the Bn HQ & Turk Lane & shell the vicinity at regular intervals all day. Snipers very active. Casualties 3 OR KIA, 4 wounded. Trenches much improved.</p>	
"	20		<p>Still in Trenches. Relief ordered for tomorrow night. Enemy still shelling. But few casualties. Trenches now in fair condition. Gap completed from Turk Lane to front line so danger spot for snipers is avoided. Men very tired. Our Artillery very active.</p>	

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Carlton Trench	21		Relieved by British Reg. (Suffolks) & moved back to Carlton Camp. Men were utterly exhausted when they arrived. Night was foggy & the mud always ankle deep & sometimes knee deep all the way (about 3 1/2 miles) from front line. About the worst night the Battalion has experienced.	
Rebemont	22		Back in Rebemont. Moved off from Carlton Camp 9 am, entrained at Quarry siding & on to Meaulte, & thence marched to here (4 1/2 miles). Men very tired & some very foot sore, but they completed the journey by 4 pm & the prospect of dry weather has improved their spirits considerably. 21 Willes to hospital (seeks).	
"	23		Battalion resting, except for kit inspection to ascertain shortages. Bellets fairly comfortable. Men tired but cheerful.	
"	24		Resting. Very quiet day. Considerable trouble getting correct list of casualties & missing men. Leave to Adams granted 10%. Capt Bretherton rejoined.	
"	25		Parade for 2 hours during morning. Day turned out wet & cold.	
"	26		Church parade only. Men are improving very fast. C.Q.M.S. Ellison arrived with 40 men (originally 18 th) who were re transferred from 13 th Battalion.	

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RIBEMONT.	27.		Training was to begin but baths at Heilly were allotted to Battalion and not much could be done. Guard and prisoners were also sent to baths and 5 prisoners escaped. 2/Lt. Cadle L.M. evacuated sick.	
"	28.		Units were inspected by the C.O. (Major Murphy). Training continued.	
"	29.		Orders received to march to Cardonette tomorrow. L.M.G. carts and steel helmets to be left under guard at Ribemont. Captain Bretherton is ordered to report to Bde. H.Q. as intelligence officer.	
CARDONETTE,	30.		Left Ribemont 9-30 am, marched to Cardonette via Heilly, Pont Noyelle, Allonville 12½ miles. Men marched well. No stragglers. Arrived here and men all billeted by 4-30 p.m.	
(Original of above written on same sheet as entries for beginning of subsequent month and filed with volume for that month).				