

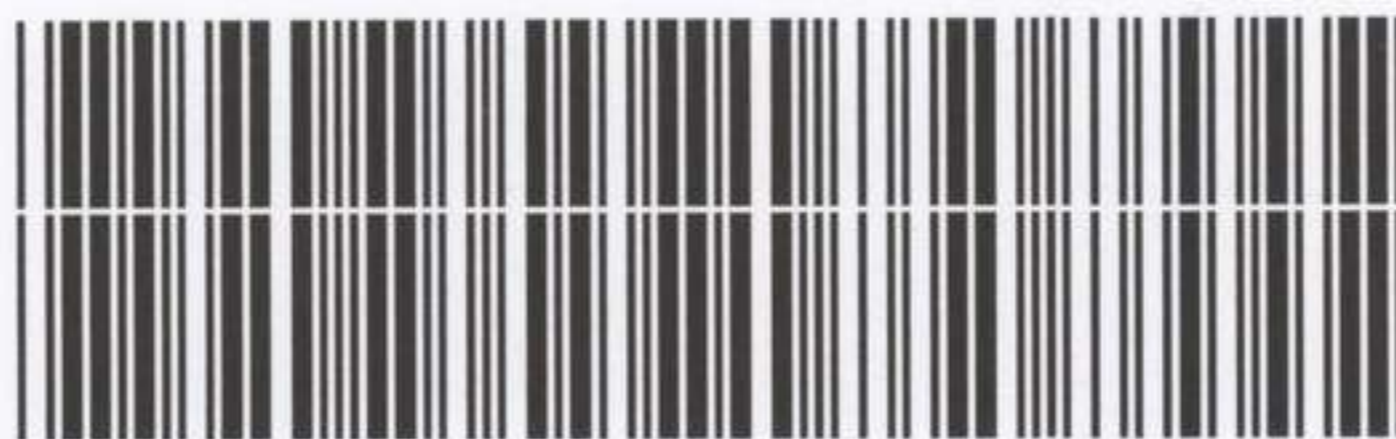
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Chaplains

Item number: 6/3/1

Title: Senior Chaplain, Presbyterian,
Headquarters AIF, London

January 1918



AWM4-6/3/1

War Diary of Chaplain The Rev. W. Hoyle, 5th Battalion, 1st Division, Australian Imperial Force

WAR DIARY

Presbyterian Denomination

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.

or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Page 1.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	January 1918.		<p>During the month of January 1918, owing to the winter season, and the fact that there was no great offensive proceeding on either side, things generally were fairly quiet, and there was not much worthy to be recorded beyond the usual skirmishes, intermittent raids, aeroplane activity, and the ordinary work and discipline of camp life. (5th Battalion)</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. C. Neville, had to supervise the administration of coffee stalls from about the middle of December at various places near and in the front line - passing through his hands an average of 1000 men per day. His chief centres were at Verne Dump and at Lamp Post Corner, but he also attended to the men in the line. But the Lamp Post Corner soon became untenable owing to the frequent attacks of enemy gas, and had to be evacuated. Being the only Chaplain of the Brigade in the forward area at that time he had also to attend spiritually to occasional casualties occurring. Most of the Brigade having gone for a rest, Mr. Neville returned to Kemmel after the New Year, and organized Concerts &c. and other entertainments for the men. and of course kept up official Church parades and voluntary services every Sunday, in which the various Chaplains work most harmoniously together. also Bible classes, and regular Communion services every Sunday and occasionally on week days also.</p> <p>The Battalion bands have proved a great help not only in the religious services but also in the entertainments. Mr. Neville is a member of the Sports Committee and manages a recreation hut well stocked with games, papers, writing material, and he also conducts a circulating library in his battalion which has proved most useful. He owes a great deal to the help of the YMCA and the Comforts Fund (Australian) which have been an invaluable assistance. He goes to the front line as far as, and as often as the authorities will permit him, to the Casualty clearing stations, and visits the</p>	

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Page 2

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			<p>January 1918.</p> <p>wounded and sick men there; during the three engagements at Paschendale he visited at least 300, and at Meun Road he had on an average 10 funerals per day.</p> <p>He also writes to the relatives of every man killed in the battalion, and sends all manner of message, at the request of men who are wounded. This, together with the task of answering numerous inquiries from people in Australia about their friends who have been reported 'missing', involves an immense lot of correspondence. He is also engaged at present in compiling an ^{official} record of the doings of the 5th Battalion during the campaign in France.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. T. J. Riddle (9th Battalion) was for some time after his arrival in France, working at the Base, and while there proved himself to be an exceptionally popular and efficient chaplain, his hands were always full of work for the benefit of the men, and admiration, confidence, and respect were mutual between him and them. His Church Parades and Voluntary services were remarkably well attended, so also were his Communion Services. He also assisted frequently in the Y.M.C.A. evening meetings, which were varied by the introduction of lantern services dealing mainly with the Life of Christ. Bible classes in the Y.M.C.A. hut were held every night, and men landing in France from England were always welcomed. Mr. Riddle took a keen interest in sports, and was a member of the Recreation Committee and Chairman of the Boxing Committee, and acted as official time keeper, and personally played in one of the cricket teams. He also helped to provide concert parties & to arrange Tournaments, & took special interest in the Camp Orchestra. On Sundays, weather permitting, excursions into the neighboring woods & places of interest historically, were organized, & these proved not only interesting, but instructive to the men. When the men were leaving the Base on long train journeys, magazines and Australian papers were distributed, which were very much appreciated. Visitation of the Hospitals also took up a good deal of time, & occasional funerals, besides communicating with relatives of men sick, wounded or deceased. Censoring letters also takes up much time.</p>	

Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's WAR DIARY (Rev. W. Floyd Shannon)

Army Form C. 2118.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>January 1918.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. D. P. Macdonald (2 D.A.C) has worked among all the units of the 2nd Divisional artillery, particularly in the Batteries and Wagon Lines, and also visited the Gun pits and Trenches. He holds regularly two Church Parades and one voluntary "Sing-song" service every Sunday, and several informal services and talks in dug-outs and odd places. Has held Communion services 14 times during the month of January, and has found it an experience of great value to the men to have shared their semi-subterranean life in the front. He has also visited Field Ambulance Hospitals + Casually Clearing stations. He has lectured and arranged Concerts in huts and barns behind the lines, and has visited the Engineers, Pioneers, ASC, Cyclists, Machine Gunners, etc.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. A. Forrest (13 A.F.A. Brigade, 5th Div. Artillery) visits each Battery + Gun pit and holds a service where he can. He conducts three and often four parades each Sunday, and one frequently during the week, and also holds Communion every Sunday. Bible Classes are also regularly held. He is a member of the Brigade Recreation Committee and often acts as timekeeper, Scorer, at football, and Chairman at Debating classes, + Concerts. Not only does he join in conducting services in dug-out huts, but does a great deal of personal work among the men in their own dugouts + gunpits; conducts funerals, writes to relatives of deceased men, + visits the wounded. Censoring letters + answering correspondence for men's relatives also take up much time.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. E. Nicholls (1st Aust. Genl. Hospital, Rouen) held two services and one Communion each Sunday, and visited the patients in the hospital regularly - seeing those dangerously ill every day. He took part in "The Interlude" an old 14th Century morality play, on several occasions in hospital, in camp, + in Town Hall, with excellent effect. Music, concerts, quartette parties, are arranged for the wards as often as advisable, much to the delight of the patients.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Wilson Smith (2nd Aust. Genl. Hospital, Boulogne) conducted regular services every Sunday and also took part in many voluntary services wherever they could be arranged. While in the 37th Battalion did a great deal of work in running a Canteen with much success, + took leading part in recreation. In the Hospital, tries to know every man personally, and held sing-song services frequently.</p>	

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Page 4

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	January 1918		<p>Chaplain the Rev. K. S. McCook Sept (3rd Command Depot Hurdett) says his work lies in a very different groove from ordinary Battalion work, because here men from nearly every branch of the Australian army pass through, and consequently a chaplain's acquaintance with the men is only a very short one — a slight acquaintance with a great number rather than an intimate knowledge of a smaller number. The movements of the men are too frequent to permit of connected work among them. Church parades, Communion, & voluntary services are held every Sunday, and Bible classes are also held, twice per week, with excellent results. Recreation and amusements are fully provided by the Depot Cinema, the YMCA, &c. & huts are furnished and equipped with various indoor games, so the men are kept constantly provided for. A library is also run with good success. Attention to patients in the two Hospitals near by, is also regularly paid, and many other minor duties are done.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Smith MacBain (1st Command Depot, Sutton Army) has not been long stationed here, but has conducted services regularly with marked success, & assistance given in YMCA meetings, visiting hospitals, &c.</p> <p>Chaplain W. E. Bradley (2nd Training Battalion) has held regular parade services, and also services for men in isolation — all of which have been well attended — and has had charge of much of the recreation of the camp which is exceedingly well catered for in that respect, both for outdoor and indoor sports. He has had a great deal to do with the Camp libraries which are well stocked with books, and well looked after, and well patronised by the men; he also most regularly visits the various hospitals within reach, and magazines for the camp, after being read, are passed on to the patients.</p> <p>As to my own work as Senior Chaplain the usual administration duties have been carried out faithfully, and I believe happily, and all of the 23 men under my charge seem quite contented in their positions. Two are unfortunately in the hospital as patients — one from wounds received in October, the other is sick with a complication of serious ailments which will probably necessitate his return to Australia. I have visited 19 hospitals, conducted two funerals, and taken services at two or three Camps. I had a most interesting visit to a Canadian Camp, in Surrey, where I was given a hearty welcome as an Australian friend.</p>	

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7