

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

Chaplains

**Item number:** 6/3/10

**Title:** Senior Chaplain, Presbyterian,  
Headquarters AIF, London

October 1918



AWM4-6/3/10

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senior ~~resbyterian~~ ~~craps~~ (Australian)

WAR DIARY Rev. W. Lloyd Shannon

Army Form G. 2118.

OR  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Aust. Adm. Headquarters  
London.

(Erase heading not required.)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October	1918	<p>Chaplain Rev. E. G. Petterick (5<sup>th</sup> Battalion) was on leave in England during the latter half of the month, and the Battalion was resting in billets during the whole month. Church parades were held as arranged, and voluntary services with Communion following were also held regularly on Sunday evenings. Mid-week meetings of a devotional nature were also held and at some of these addresses were given by competent N.C.O's and privates. The Lecture &amp; Debating Club has proved an unqualified success, the attendances ranging up to 250, and the debating being of a high order. Amongst the subjects were — "The League of Nations", "A White Australia", "Should Women Receive the same Wages as Men?" and amongst the lectures given were "Up the Great Barrier Reef in a Whaletrot", "Health", "Napoleon". A lantern lecture was given on "Australia" and the views of the homeland aroused great enthusiasm among the men. Mr Petterick also gave this lecture to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Engineers and to other units. The recently-formed Battalion Club meets in the padre's billets. Books, magazines, and socks were received by the Chaplain and distributed among the men. Recreational sports were held regularly during the month. Chaplain the Rev. Smith MacBain (9<sup>th</sup> Battalion) and his unit, along with the rest of the Division, enjoyed a period of rest during the month in the country districts far from scenes of war. This Battalion was billeted in the village of Gorenflo. The Padre had only one church parade during the month, being on leave two Sundays, and on another Sunday suffering from the effects of inoculation. But he was able to visit the</p>	

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Senior Australian Chaplain

(Australian)

WAR DIARY  
or  
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W. Royce  
Aust. Adm. Headquarters  
London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
		October 1918		
			<p>men's billets on various occasions, and also the sick in the aid-post. There were many cases of Influenza during the month, and one Officer Captain Donaldson died of pneumonia supervening, on this.</p> <p>Chaplain. The Rev. R. J. W. G. Crawford (20<sup>th</sup> Battalion) was on leave during the first ten days of the month.</p> <p>On the first Sunday after he returned he held in conjunction with the C. of E. Padre a morning, parade service and an evening song service; and <del>during</del> <sup>on</sup> each Monday morning, the three Protestant Chaplains meet with the YMCA representatives for study, prayer, and the planning of the work for the week. In this way they are able to cover most of the ground of the Brigade and keep every unit. Thus besides the actual Battalions there are within reach the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance, two companies of A.S.L., and a Motor Transport Column - these are at Flesselle, about 5 Kilometres distant. The division of the district thus gives some work to each Chaplain to do, and in accordance with this arrangement Padre Crawford holds one Sunday morning, parade service at Flesselle and three at Vignacourt during each month; and is also present at two song services at each of these places per month. On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> he held the parade at the YMCA Hall, and conducted the evening song service. On 27<sup>th</sup> he was taking his turn at Flesselle. The YMCA Hall has been renovated, and a Quiet Room will soon be completed &amp; should be a big advantage. Tuesday evenings are devoted to fun &amp; games; Thursdays to discussions on the deeper problems of life. In the</p>	

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Army Form 2418.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>October 1918</p> <p>Battalion (apart from the Ymca) there is a Recreation Hall inaugurated, with Canteen, indoor games, papers, magazines, etc. The Padre has also played and acted as umpire for the football which is now in full swing. Literature is distributed through the Quartermaster's department. One of Lena Ashworth's Concert parties visited the Brigade on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and gave a Concert which was much appreciated. Mr. Crawford keeps in touch with the Emergency Hospitals run by the Battalion and the Field Ambulance.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. Calder (34 Battalion) sent his report for September, but it arrived too late for insertion in the September <del>monthly</del> diary of the Senior Chaplain. This statement therefore refers to that month, not to October. No church Parades were possible on 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> as the Brigade was then in action, but on 8<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> + 22<sup>nd</sup> September parades were held + well attended. On the 15<sup>th</sup> during service, enemy aeroplanes circled overhead, + drew intense fire from our anti air-craft guns. No Bible classes were held during the month owing to uncertain movements and lack of accommodation. The Padre up till August had sole control and management of the Battalion Canteen, + carried it on without any assistance. But though it gave him many opportunities of knowing the men and helping them in their daily life, he realises that it took up too much of his time from more spiritual work. He had to do long journeys for stores, + passed through his hands 12,000 to 15,000 francs per month to purchasers, so he found it impossible to continue running the</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's

WAR DIARY Rev. W. Floyd Shannon

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October	1918	<p>Canteen singlehanded, while attending to his proper Chaplaincy work beside. So just before the beginning of September he was relieved of this responsibility, and an NCO + private were permanently appointed to the Canteen. Mr. Galder was sorry when it became necessary to hand it over, for he enjoyed the work + felt his opportunity was great. There was a certain Padre who used to do the round of the front trenches with a brief-bag full of "Woodbines". He did not talk religion to the men, - he brought them "fags", and talked to them about the folk at home. And his influence in his Battalion was enormous.</p> <p>Football + cricket matches were played off, and a Battalion Sports was held on 21<sup>st</sup> Sept. in front of Mt. St. Quentin. Great difficulty was experienced in obtaining in that forward area supplies of footballs, + other sporting materials, draughts + dominos, etc. Concerts were given on several occasions by the 1<sup>st</sup> Division Concert Party - the "Sentimental Blokes" + were much appreciated.</p> <p>A large hut was erected as a Regimental Institute for the men with newspapers and writing materials, but great need was felt for magazines and general reading matter which were almost unobtainable. During most of the month of September the Battalion was in billets at a safe distance from the front line, but on the 29<sup>th</sup> they moved forward to the front of the Guilleumont Farm Ruins, east of Rousoy. Later in the day they moved nearer Bony, + next day they occupied trenches a mile farther South. Under shell + machine-gun fire they sustained many casualties - and the padre had many hair-breadth escapes. He declares that since the storming of Passchendaele Ridge in October 1917 he witnessed no more tragic scenes than those of the close of this month of September, when in the vicinity of</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain,  
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floya Shannon  
Asst. Adm. Head Qrs

Army Form 100

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
		October 1918.	<p>Bony the American dead were lying in heaps — a grim and ghastly reminder of the awful price the Allies are paying for the defeat of Prussian militarism.</p> <p>This padre visited the advanced dressing stations at Havel, St. Emille, and Rousroy, as occasion offered, during the month. He officiated at the burial of 25 men during September, and three times was called on to undertake the most solemn and trying duty of searching the battlefield after a big action for the dead and missing. This Chaplain considers it a regrettable thing that very often when a soldier has given his life for his country, he should be buried perhaps in a shellhole near where his body is found, instead of being brought down to the nearest French Communal Cemetery &amp; interred in a section set apart for military burials. This would ensure accuracy in defining the location of graves and would be a great source of comfort to bereaved relatives at home.</p> <p>He had a great deal of correspondence to see to in connection with the many casualties. In the wallet of one man whose body he found on the battlefield after the advance near Bray on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, were several letters evidently written on the night previous to the attack. Each of them bore the directions — "If the worst happens to me, will the finder please forward?" He had also all his friends' photos and snapshots neatly arranged, and on each he had written "Please return to —" To comply with this soldier's last wishes the padre had to write over 30 letters — but it was a labor of love, and done most readily.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1918.		<p>During October Padre Calder has been endeavoring to establish a library for the men in order to keep them away from the local estaminets, and to give them an opportunity of reading something of advantage. He has also made plans for giving a series of educational lectures with lantern slides if possible. And probably much good will result from this.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. Fred J. Paton (temp. in 14<sup>th</sup> Batt.) succeeding Mr. Rolland, found that the latter had everything so magnificently mapped out for the winter's work that he had only to pick up the threads and "carry on". A program is kept going every night in the week, of a varied nature. On Sundays and Wednesday evenings there is singing and Bible class; on Mondays Educational work. Every night a beginners French Class; a Class for Officers on Tuesdays &amp; Fridays; an advanced Class for the men on Thursdays. Football each afternoon; Debates, Mock Parliaments, Lectures, an occasional Lantern night, easily fill up all the spare time. Padre Paton also takes a Bible class every Friday night at the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion.</p> <p>On the 2<sup>nd</sup> October the Battalion gave the children of the village (Picquigny) a treat - their first since the war began - a broken case of Colles and Chocolats was donated, with prizes for races, finishing up with Cocoa. The Mayor, &amp; a large number of the children's mothers were present; and the old Priest was asked to distribute the prizes. It was a delightful time - appreciated by all. [When Chaplain Rolland left for a three months spell in England, the whole Battalion was paraded by the Colonel to say farewell to him; the love the men have for him is extraordinary; and</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's WAR DIARY *Rev. W. Lloyd Shannon*  
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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1918.		<p>his influence is marvellous. He was always with the men, in the lines comforting them, &amp; out of the lines he played football &amp; cricket with them, &amp; they came to him in every emergency for advice &amp; sympathy. Chaplain Paton is a most worthy successor. He held Bible class every Sunday evening after Hymn singing. He took as his text book his brother's book "The Kingdom in the Pacific", and the men turned up in large numbers &amp; were deeply interested. On Wednesday evenings he gave lectures on the Western Pacific, chiefly on mission work. His mission experiences in the Hebrides have been wonderfully helpful to the men.</p> <p>By arrangement with the C. of E. Chaplain of the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion, who could not leave his C. of E. men of the 14<sup>th</sup> with an easy conscience to the care of the Presbyterian padre, a plan was adopted by which the three Protestant Chaplains go round in turn every three Sundays and hold service with the four Battalions and the Divisional Field Ambulance. and this appears to work out all right.</p> <p>The men were eager for Education classes, and application was made to the Education Committee in London for text books, but none were sent, &amp; a golden opportunity was lost. A Corporal Inalses, belongi to the Education Department of Victoria took classes, elementary and advanced, in French, &amp; these were well attended. The local School was lent for evening meetings &amp; proved a great boon. for it enabled a program of lectures, debates, concerts, etc. to be carried out without a break; helped the men to pass instructive evenings, and counteracted the influence of the Estaminets in the dull village.</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain  
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floyd Shannon  
Asst. Adm. Headqrs.

Army Form G. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
		October 1918.	<p>Officers &amp; others gave interesting lectures, &amp; the Comforts Fund supplied Cocoa on several occasions. Amongst evening entertainments of the month were the following, Mock Trials, Mock Parliament, Lectures on: "Microbes"; "New Hebrides"; "With the Light Horse in Egypt"; "History of a Cannibal"; "Wordless in War"; "How a Cannibal became a Christian"; "Rome" (with lantern); "West Pacific". Debates on: "Which is most useful - Animal or Motor Power?" "Is War beneficial to the Nations concerned?" "Is Compulsory Military Training necessary in Australia after the war?" "Has the Press or the Stage the Greater Influence?" "Will the Status of Women be improved by the war?"</p> <p>An exhibition of Boxing, and two concerts, &amp;c. Surely this was sufficient variety!</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. R. C. Foyster - (31<sup>st</sup> Batt - Temp.) had three parade Sunday services, but one was cancelled owing to heavy rain &amp; no indoor accommodation - attendance at one was 150, at another 100, but would have been larger only for wet weather. He had a large parade with the 32<sup>nd</sup> Batt, machine gunners &amp; T.M. Battery. He also supervised a Marquee, with the aid of two orderlies; the YMCA supplied the marquee, tables, forms, games, and some cocoa. The place became very attractive and was usually full from 4 pm. till bedtime. He managed to get a fair supply of literature from private sources. He had to search the area round Bellicourt near the Hindenburg line for dead, &amp; read services over the bodies of several men. As there were many casualties during the September battles, there was a considerable amount of correspondence with relatives to see to during October.</p> <p>There was a good deal of influenza, but happily not of a very serious nature.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1918		<p>Chaplain the Rev. M. McQueen (5<sup>th</sup> Div. Troops - 14 FAB) succeeded Chaplain Forrest at the beginning of the month and has organized the sport and entertainment of the Brigade where he is now much appreciated - the 14<sup>th</sup> not having had a padre of any denomination living with them previous. He obtained a Hall, + a piano, + an orderly to help him; and works most harmoniously with the Ymca representative who is attached to the D.A.C. When the batteries were scattered he used to wander round among them and have a service where he could, either Sunday or week day, + always managed to get a fair muster. He also holds Bible classes when possible. He got a room near the Hall and furnished it, but the "diggers" pinched all the furniture for their billets, so he had to start over again. The pinching started with some "Tommy Officers" + then the "diggers" thought it a pity to let the Tommies have it all. They also pinched about 30 chairs the padre had gathered for his Hall, so they had to get planks + stand them on barrels &amp;c. + in place of the candlesticks they pinched candles had to be stuck on the walls. Concerts were carried out now + again - very frequently in fact - five in ten days is not too bad!</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. W. J. Gray (3<sup>rd</sup> Tunnell's Coy) arrived in this unit on the 12<sup>th</sup> inst. and met with a most cordial welcome from the C.O. and the officers, as well as from the men. As soon as he got settled down he visited the men in their billets + at work, a few hundred yards from the line, till the 18<sup>th</sup> when they left that base + moved to another. Erecting bridges became a very urgent matter that Services had to be omitted, but the padre</p>	

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(Australian)

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
		October 1918	<p>found plenty to do in visiting the men, looking after the sick, censoring letters, arranging for amusements, etc. He held burial services for 5 English soldiers a few miles from the Camp. He has now undertaken to get a YMCA established, + to be responsible for some of its work.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. F. W. Rankin (A G B D. Havre) has only been with this unit a few weeks but has entered into his work with wonderful zeal and consecrated energy. He is concentrating chiefly on spiritual work, and during the last fortnight has seen over 26 deliberate decisions for Christ among the men.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. E. H. Merrington (A D B D) has had good parade services and also good voluntary evening services. On the last Sunday of the month there was a great united non-Anglican service at which the Senior Methodist Chaplain Holden who was passing through the Base gave an address. Owing to the recent appointment of a British Presbyterian Chaplain at Harfleur, Dr. Merrington does no longer go to No. 15 Hut on Sunday mornings, and consequently has more time for his Communion services and personal work among the men.</p> <p>Major General Sims, Principal Chaplain B E F visited the Base + held a Conference with all the non-Anglican Chaplains, and Dr. Merrington accompanied him on a visit to the Hospitals in Trouville + Deauville, + thus met several Australians, + got into touch with Chaplains and workers of the Scottish Churches Huts. "A.P.C." Miller of Rouen, and Prof. Hugh Mackintosh of Edinburgh also visited the Base + by their highly developed spiritual + intellectual graces</p>	

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Senior Sydney Chaplain's

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floyd Shannell

(Australian)

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Aust. Adm. Headqrs.

London -

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1918.		<p>helped very much all the padres of the area. The A.A.P.C. of Havre has expressed deep appreciation of the help the Australian chaplains have given to the British Camps and Hospitals. Dr. Merrington has given addresses to Officers &amp; to men at No 39 (V.D.), and has visited No 4, + Casino, + Quai d' Escala Hospitals; + also our Australian Camp Hospitals where he reads the news from the latest French newspapers to the men, &amp; they much appreciate the recent good news from the fronts. Services are still held for drafts of men going to the front, though without the grants of Cigarettes from the Comforts Fund; but sweets &amp; newspapers are still distributed; and Communion services are availed of by many; the Sunday &amp; Saturday "stunts" to the woods have ceased, owing to an order of Base H.Q. requiring a regular supply of Officers &amp; N.C.O.'s for march discipline on every draft of 50 men. In the Convalescent Camp Dr. Merrington has given addresses on "The Existence of God" and "Immortality" and also his lantern lecture on Anzac in the base and other Camps - and has been in many ways kept very busy during the month -</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. P. A. Smith (1st Aust. Gen. Hospital, Rouen) conducted two voluntary services each Sunday in this Hospital, both in the evening, they were fairly well attended. Every Sunday morning he conducted a service at the British Y.M.C.A. &amp; had a weekly service on Tuesday evenings. The Recreational affairs are in the hands of the Y.M.C.A. &amp; the Chaplain does not need to give much aid in that way. Books, Australian papers, &amp; English magazines, sent by the Aust. Red Cross are regularly distributed, &amp; eagerly looked for by the patients - and the Aust. soldiers of this unit have access to the English Y.M.C.A. close by for recreation, books, etc.</p>	

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Senior Wesleyan Chaplain's  
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WAR DIARY

Rev W Ford Shannon

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Aust. Adm. Hdqrs.

London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
		October 1918	<p>Regular visitation of the wards has been carried out, and owing to the prevalence of Influenza and subsequent complaints there have been a large number of serious and dangerously ill cases always on the list. Padre Smith paid 654 visits to these cases during the month, as well as <sup>many</sup> to the ordinary patients, wrote letters for them, got them supplies with note paper &amp; envelopes; wrote 136 letters for men who could not write for themselves; conducted 15 funerals, wrote many letters to the next of kin of deceased soldiers, &amp; answered many inquiries from relatives - superintended the fortnightly distribution of fruit from regimental funds to the patients - So he had plenty of work to keep him busy all the time.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. J. E. Nicholls (Engineers Troop Depot Brighton) only went to this unit at the middle of the month, was given a very hearty welcome. He conducts the usual camp services on Sundays and takes an active part in YMCA ventures - He also as secretary to the depot's Sports Club, arranges concerts &amp;c, and oversees all social activities in the Camp - He visits each week the Australian patients in Colchester and Clacton on Sea.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. Frank H. L. Paton (1 Com. Depot) arrived at the depot on 5<sup>th</sup> inst. and at once made the Wesleyan the centre of his work - here he holds his Sunday morning parade services, &amp; his voluntary evening services, and he visits regularly the Military Hospital &amp; gets into very close personal touch with the men. During part of the month he attended the School of Instruction for Chaplains held at Tidworth by Lt. Col. May, and speaks in highest terms of the excellent arrangements made, &amp; of the benefit received from this school.</p>	

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Senior Australian Chaplain

WA. DIARY

Rev W. H. Gray  
Aust. Adm. Headqrs

Army Form 2118.

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London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1918.			
Chaplain			<p>The Rev. R. C. Racklyeft - (2 Command Depot, Weymouth) was given a hearty welcome at the beginning of the month by the C.O. and being attached to the Monte Video camp has been able to hold the usual services on Sundays, morning and evening. But an outbreak of Influenza resulted in an order forbidding men to congregate in a room, &amp; thus a Bible Class which was begun had to be suspended. But he visited the men in their huts, &amp; gymnasium, &amp; massage rooms, or at work in the workshops or incinerators &amp;c. In the afternoon he visited the wards of the hospitals; and distributed cigarettes &amp;c. for the Red Cross Society in the lock hospitals and isolation wards. During the latter half of the month he attended the School of Instruction for Chaplains held at Tidworth, &amp; found it most profitable and also enjoyable.</p>	
Chaplain			<p>Rev. G. M. Baird on Transport "Barambah" arriving from Australia had services on the voyage nearly every Sunday except when an outbreak of Influenza made it inadvisable. He held 8 parades, 9 voluntary services, 5 Bible class meetings, visited the Hospital &amp; men's cells, &amp; conducted several funerals of men who died en route &amp; were buried at sea.</p>	
Chaplain			<p>Rev. Donald Dow - (1 Light Horse Brigade Egypt) found it impossible owing to circumstances to hold regular parade services, but voluntary services were held on every possible occasion, &amp; were well attended, and Communion dispensed as required. Managed also to get a Bible class established. Amusements are got up when possible, but owing to movements, settled plans cannot be made for such. There has been no chance of running a library; but comforts for men have come from YMCA &amp; other agencies, &amp; are regularly distributed; and hospitals are regularly visited.</p>	

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Senior Chaplain

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. F. Shannon

Army Form C. 2118

(Australian)

Aust. Adm. Headqn.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	October 1918.		<p>Senior Chaplain Rev. W. F. Shannon (Aust. Adm. Headqn. London) was engaged at three marriages of Australian soldiers during the month - at two of which he officiated. One was that of Lt. W. P. Boland to Sister M. A. L. Bell (A.A.N.S.); the other was that of Capt. N. A. Nicholson to Miss G. J. L. Lyne. At the third he did not officiate, but performed the duty of "giving away the Bride" - that of Capt. Marshall (7<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance) to Sister R. Tyers (A.A.N.S.); He also conducted four funerals of Australian Soldiers; and gave a lecture on "Australia's Effort in the first war" to a good attendance at a Guild meeting in London. He visited Hospitals in Southall, Guildford, Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings, Leeds, York, Newcastle, and in London. He also paid a visit to his Chaplains on Salisbury Plains including Tidworth, Warminster, Sutton Veny, Hurdcott, &amp; Fovant - and carried out the usual administrative work of the Presbyterian denomination during the month -</p>	

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