

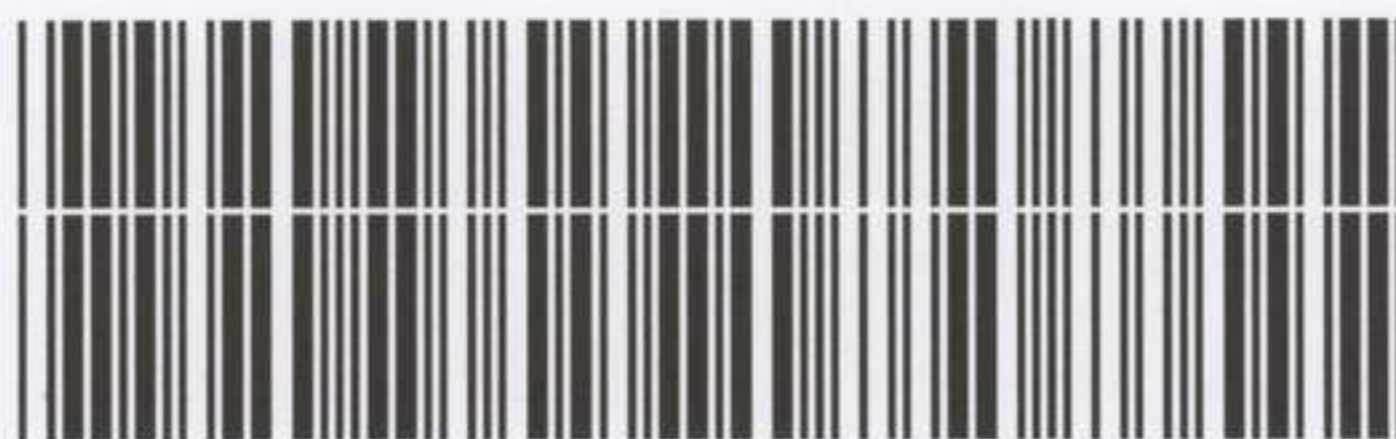
**AWM4**  
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
**1914-18 War**

Chaplains

**Item number:** 6/3/4

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

April 1918



AWM4-6/3/4

original

Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's  
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Lloyd Shannon  
A. I. F. Headquarters  
London

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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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>April 1918.</p> <p>This month generally has been full of strenuous times, hard work, and sometimes exciting experiences. It is almost marvellous that our men have escaped decimation considering the huge strength of the enemy, his resources, his almost boundless numbers, and his infinite determination to force his way.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. C. Neville (5<sup>th</sup> Battalion) went in advance train when the whole Brigade was sent forward to the Somme. From the entraining point the journey occupied 14 hours, &amp; for many it meant two nights' discomfort. In spite of great difficulties he provided for the Brigade hot comforts, mostly in the way of Cocoa &amp;c., from 4 a.m. till 2 a.m. next day. Never has he done anything more generally appreciated. On another journey back the same thing was done, and Cigarettes distributed along with hot cocoa, though shells and bombs gave constant trouble.</p> <p>On another occasion at a very risky corner another coffee stall was set up, though fearing at any moment to be taken prisoners, while shelling was continuous, and enemy aeroplanes were busy. For 24 hours cocoa &amp;c. &amp; cigarettes were provided. Next day the spot where this was done was a big shell crater, &amp; a house where this Chaplain had rested now &amp; again was a mass of ruins.</p> <p>He also attended to the lightly wounded &amp; wearied men, who were constantly passing. In addition he attended later to Casualties passing through the Field Ambulance, buried several men who were killed. A few days later the Field Ambulance was hit, and the farm they occupied was also shelled, &amp; several Casualties resulted, &amp; they had at last to retire. Only a very few Casualties however resulted at the retirement. These times were so exciting that there was no opportunity for Church Parades.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Smith MacBain (9<sup>th</sup> Battalion) moved with his battalion from the north to Amiens &amp; back again, from area to area, &amp; from billet to billet, and later to an advanced Dressing Station. Everything was in readiness to evacuate if the enemy shells became too severe. But one Sunday during the month he was able to hold a reasonably large Church service.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. R. J. W. G. Crawford (20<sup>th</sup> Battalion), found difficulty in holding services owing to the constant movements, and almost continual attacks by the enemy.</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain  
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floyd Shannon

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	April 1918.		<p>This Brigade was joined to an English Division, and the Chaplains were temporarily detached and lived with a Nucleus Battalion. This Chaplain later got to Picquigny in touch with the wounded at the C. E. S. He was definitely forbidden to enter the area where the transport lay, but managed to get in touch with the men by travelling long distances. On two Sundays he was able to have large parades, and fortunately without interruption. Canteen arrangements had to be partially dropped owing to inability to obtain supplies. Amusements were not very easily provided. He had 14 funerals during the month.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. A. Malcolmson - (31<sup>st</sup> Battalion) was kept very busy in the forward area, and had some narrow escapes.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. A. Forrest. (5<sup>th</sup> Divisional Artillery) did good work of a varied nature during the month. On the 24<sup>th</sup> April his section was bombarded and chased out of their billets by gas with a few casualties. Being generally close to the firing line it was not advisable to have large numbers of men grouped together, consequently Church Parades were practically stopped. But wagon lines, Batteries, &amp; other smaller units were visited and service held for men gathered under the trees. This Chaplain also visits the laos in their dug-outs, and gets into a deeper personal touch with them in this way. Bible Classes &amp; other Societies had to be postponed at least for a while, but literature and writing material have still been supplied. Mr. Forrest conducted several funerals during the month, and on several occasions has been called upon to do similar service outside his own Division.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. E. Nicholls (1<sup>st</sup> A. G. H. Room) carried out regular daily visitation of the wards of the Hospital, &amp; also provides music and singing where the condition of the patients permitted. The week night Bible Study has been increased in membership. A United Service is held in the Hospital every Sunday night, &amp; makes easier intercourse between Chaplains, nurses, and orderlies. An excellent service was held on Anzac Day, when a large Parade was held, and the address given by this Chaplain, while the rest of the service was conducted by the Anglican Chaplain. It was most successful &amp; impressive.</p>	

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	April 1918		<p>Chaplain the Rev. Hume Robertson (2<sup>nd</sup> A.G.H. Boulogne) has just returned to duty after a long time in Hospital as the result of a severe wound received in October last. He has carried on the usual Sunday services regularly, and with good results. Owing to the great rush of patients he has been kept busy, having had at times nearly 70 on the "Dangerously ill" list.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. R.C. Fosdyke (1<sup>st</sup> Command Depot, Sutton Army) has been doing good work in that centre. Had a great service on Anzac Day, &amp; song services every Sunday, &amp; prays at some hut each evening. Assisted in conducting the U.A.B. canteen, about 300 men being thus served daily. Has helped also in about four concerts per week, and also in recreations. Acts in hearty cooperation with Y.M.C.A. and U.A.B. - Visits the Hospitals regularly, and distributes literature to the men. Most of his mornings are taken up with correspondence on behalf of the men of the unit or the relatives of deceased men.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. W.J. Gray (Engineers Training Depot, Brighton) has been visiting regularly both the three Hospitals in Colchester and the Hospitals in Ipswich, in addition to his work in the Camp. He meets with every draft leaving the Depot &amp; has a short service with them. While he also conducts a song service every Sunday in addition to the parade services, and helps in the Y.M.C.A. concerts, he had also special services on Anzac Day, and sports in the afternoon.</p> <p>Senior Chaplain the Rev. W.L. Shannon (Adm. Headquarters London) in addition to the usual administrative work conducted one funeral, and visited ten hospitals in the London area, and also at Brighton, Eastbourne, Guildford, Exeter, Plymouth, Devonport, Penzance, and Bristol, and the Jews Detention Barracks. He also took part in the magnificent Commemoration service held in the Central Hall Westminster on Anzac Day. It was a huge success, the Commandant of these Headquarters having spared no trouble to make it so, and to him the credit is mainly due. The Large Hall was packed, the singing was excellent, the whole service (especially the playing of the Dead March on the Great Organ, &amp; the Last Post) was a most impressive one, and not likely to be forgotten.</p>	