

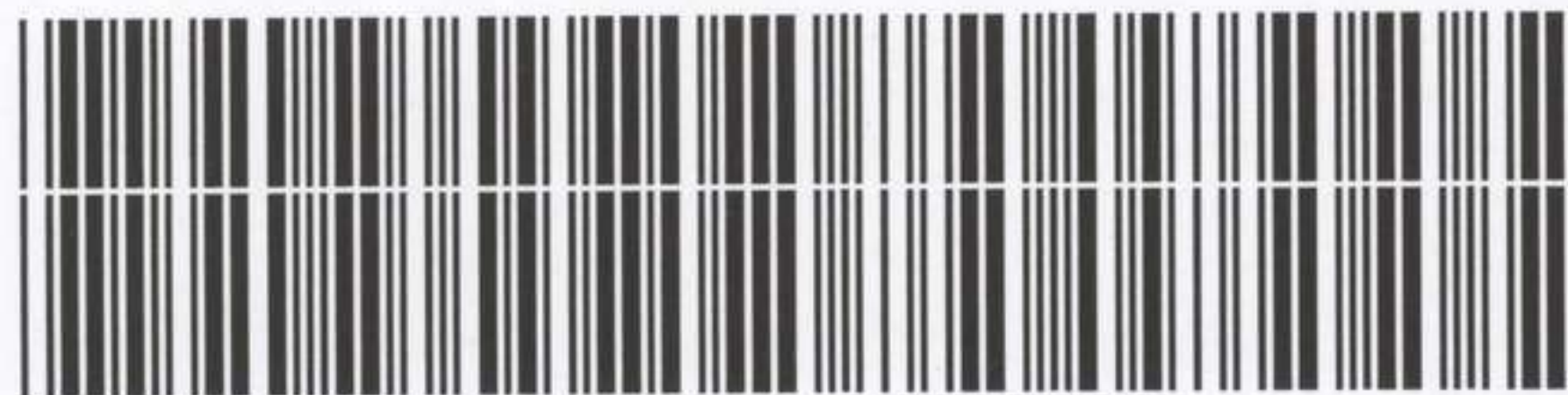
AWM4
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Infantry

Item number: 23/32/33

Title: 15th Infantry Battalion

December 1917



AWM4-23/32/33

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.
DUPLICATE.
TRIPLICATE.



201

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

15th Battalion A.I.F.

FOR

December 1917

Signature of Officer compiling

(Sgt) B.S. Atkinson Capt

Signature of Officer Commanding

(Sgt) J.P. McSharry
Atol

ORIGINAL.

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C. 2118.

201

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.

CONFIDENTIAL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRIVILLE ESCARBOTIN	1-12 17. 2nd. 3rd. 4th. 5th.		Strength of Battalion 42 Officers 691 Other Ranks. Battalion Parade and Drill. Football Match in the afternoon. Brigade Church Parade. Lewis Gunners on Range, and Company Training. ditto. ditto. Full Marching Order parade and inspection of Billets prior to moving. A. Company entrained at Woincourt at 3 p.m. and detrained at La Chapelle at 2 a.m. on the 6th inst. Arrived at Moislains 6 a.m. Remainder of Battalion entrained at Woincourt 10 p.m. and detrained 8.30 a.m. 6th inst.	
MOISLAINS	6th. 7th. 8th. 9th. 10th 11th. 12th. 13th. 14th. 15th. 17th. 18th		Marched to Moislains arriving there 12 noon. Billeted in huts, accomodation good. Supplied Working Party of 3 Officers and 150 Other Ranks erecting Camp at Templeux la Fosse. Remainder of Battalion practicing Company exercises. Ditto Ditto. Brigade Church Parade cancelled on account of wet and cold. Meeting of all Officers and N.C.O.s of and above rank of Corporal in Pierott Hall to discuss a Brigade exercise to take place on the 13th inst, followed by lecturette by Major Marks on Messages and Reports. Platoons and Companies practicing attack. Battalion under orders to move at an hours notice at any time. No Musketry possible on account of no S.A.A. being available. Voting took place in connection with Australian Referendum., 712 votes recorded, strength of Battalion 741 all ranks. Two Officers and 6 Other Ranks reconnoitring tracks to forward area. Working party cleaning up camp and making tracks and salvaging wire pickets for C.R.E. who complains of shortage of same in forward area. Company training. Football Match Versus 4th Field Ambulance in the afternoon. Brigade exercise, practicing Advance Guard, the 33 % represented the enemy. Companies and Platoons practicing extended order drill and artillery formations. Battalion in conjunction with 13th Battalion practiced Brigade exercise. Brigade exercise similar to that practiced on 13th inst. The positions of Units were altered. Orders received for move to Templeux la Fosse. 2 Officers each from A and B. C oys. reconnoitring track track to where the Unit we shall relieve are working on Corps Reserve Line. Fall of snow about three or four inches. 1 Officer each for front line and 49th Battalion to reconnoitre tracks. Completed three foot wall round all huts for protection against hostile air raids.	
TEMPLEUX la FOSSE.	19th.		Move from Moislains passing starting point Sheet 62 c D 13 c 05 05. at 9.17 a.m. Took over camp at Templeux la Fosse recently occupied by 49th Battalion. Roads very slippery, First Line Transport had difficulty in moving.	

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 201

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

(Erase heading not required.)

CONFIDENTIAL.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TEMPLEUX la FOSSE	20 19-12 17 21st		Digging drains in new camp in case of thaw. 4th Field Coy. Engineers building Q.M. Store and Officers Mess. Companies route marching.	
	21st		Two parties each of 6 Officers and 150 other ranks digging Corps Line near Sheet 62 c E 9 b 21 Work from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Party of 2 Officers and 50 other ranks cleaning snow from roads in Templeux la Fosse. Practically every man used up on working parties.	
	22nd.		Inspection of First Line Transport by G.O.C. Brigade. All Lewis Gunners on range. Party of 2 Officers 50 other ranks on roads.	
	23rd.		All Officers reconnoitring ground for Brigade exercise to take place on 28th inst. Church parades	
	24th.		Party of 2 Officers and 50 other ranks on roads. Lewis Gunners on range. Companies over ground for Brigade exercise.	
	25th.		Voluntary Church Parades. No working parties supplied. Christmas Dinner for the men supplied out of Regimental Funds, everyone seems very satisfied.	
	26th.		Lewis Gunners on range. Companies over the ground for Brigade exercise. All Officers over ground with Brigadier.	
	27th.		Battalion practiced Brigade exercise. C. O. and O.C.s. discussed final stages of tomorrow's exercise at Brigade Headquarters.	
	28th.		Battal Brigade exercise in attack and defence. This Battalion acted as outpost Battalion, 16th Battalion pushed through as Vanguard 15th Battalion formed the Main Guard. Useful experience gained and any small defects noticed were discussed with all Officers and Sergeants at Pierott Hall in the afternoon. Working party of 300 on Corps Line (Satisfactory report).	
	29th		Working Party of 5 Officers and 200 other ranks on road work under D.A.D.R. 7th Corps. Work reported on very favorably. Baths for the remainder of the Battalion.	
	30th.		Church Parades. Working party of 2 Officers and 50 other ranks on roads.	
	31st.		Battalion practicing Brigade exercise. Party of 2 Officers and 50 other ranks on roads. Lieut. E. S. Robinson and 4 N.C.O.s. to 12th T. B. Strength of the Battalion 43 Officers and 724 Other Ranks, excluding detached.	

.....*Don Sharny*.....Lieut.Col.
COMMANDING 15th BATTALION.

201

3

18,000-12/17 8723

WAR DIARY

OF

15th Battalion. A.I.F.

FOR

December 1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.

Subject.

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | 15 th Bn. Order No 11 |
| 2 | 15 th Bn " " 12 |
| 3 | Brigade Tactical
Exercise |
| 38 | |
| 39 | |
| 30 | |
| 4 | Syllabus Training week 9/18 |

15th BATTALION ORDER No. 11.

In the Field.

Reference Sheets 62.c. and 57.c. 9th DECEMBER 1917.

1. The enemy outposts are still approximately on the line RANCOURT - C.12.central - Road Junction in D.13.a. - St. PIERRE FARM - AIZECOURT-le-BAS.
2. The 4th Australian Division is holding the sector MOISLAINS (exclusive) to D.19.central with outposts in touch with enemy outposts about 400 yards distant. The 1st Division and 2nd Division are on our left and right respectively.
3. The patrols of the 4th Infantry Brigade holding the whole Divisional front reported at 8 a. m. on 13th December that the enemy appeared to have thinned his outpost line. This was confirmed by aeroplane observation at about same time, and withdrawal appeared general along whole German front.
4. A general forward movement is ordered, the 4th Aust. Infantry Brigade acting as Advanced Guard to 4th Australian Division, with the 12th and 13th Brigades as support and Reserve respectively. The 6th Infantry Brigade on the right is advanced Guard to 2nd Division and 3rd Infantry Brigade on left for 1st Division.
5. The Advance Guard composed as under will advance at 10 a. m. with its right approximately on Road Junction D.13.central - D. 8.central - SIGI du BOIS - V.26.central and its left on the CANAL.

VANGUARD.

(C.O. Lieut-Col. T. P. McSHARRY, D.S.O., M.C.)

15th Battalion
42nd Battery
1 Sect. 4th M.G. Coy.
1 Sect. 4th Fld. Coy.

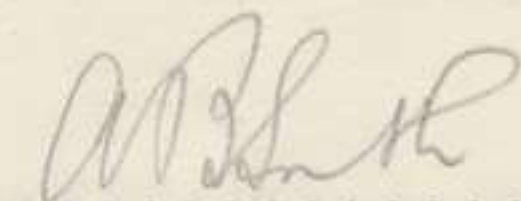
Left Flank Guard.
14th Battalion

Right Flank Guard
15th Battalion.
/3

MAINGUARD.

4th Bde. Forward Party
16th Battalion
11th F.A. Bde. less 42nd Btty.
4th M.G. Coy. less 1 Section
4th ~~XX~~ A.L.T.M. Battery

6. At commencement of advance, Companies will be disposed as shown on attached diagram.


.....Lieut.
A/ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

- No. 1. War Diary
2. "A" Company
3. "B" "
4. "C" "
5. "D" "
6. File

P.T.O.

INSTRUCTIONS.

1. Object of the exercise -
 - (a) To practise protection on march.
 - (b) To practise communication within the Brigade and with formations on flanks.
 - (c) To practise dealing with unexpected situations.
 - (d) Advancing under Artillery fire.
2. This Battalion relieves the 46th Battalion in the line on night 12th/13th December on a 3 Company frontage with outposts as stated in para. 3.2.
3. This Battalion will be in position at 9.30 a. m. Patrols sent out an hour earlier are at 9.30 a. m. only able to reach the MOISLAINS - NURLU roads on account of Machine Gun fire from enemy outpost line (exact position of these hostile Machine Guns will be pointed out on ground.)
4. The outpost Line is understood to be the line of posts. This applies to enemy as well as us.
5. There must be no movement of patrols on either side before 9.50 a.m.
6. Machine Guns will be simulated by the rattle of tins and a rifle held perpendicularly indicates troops are under its fire; rifle held horizontally above head indicates advance held up.
7. Cookers to be at mid-day rendezvous in Square D.l.c. leaving Camp at 11 a. m. via MOISLAINS under the order of Assistant Staff Captain.
8. The return to camp will be in the nature of a withdrawal. Details to be given half hours notice.

APPENDIX. 2

SECRET

Copy No. 6

15th BATTALION ORDER No. 12.

Reference Map Sheet 82.c. 1/40,000.

In the Field.
17th DECEMBER 1917.

1. The 15th Battalion will move to TEMPLEUX la FOSSE, to relieve the 49th Battalion on 19th instant.
2. Battalion will pass starting point, Road Junction D.13.c.05,05 at 9.17 a. m. in the following order :- D., A., B., C., Transport.
3. One hundred yards to be maintained between Companies, and 200 yards between rear Company and 1st Line Transport.
4. (a) Men will carry full marching order with Blankets.
(b) Limbers to be loaded previous afternoon.
(c) D. Company will take charge of prisoners until move is complete.
(d) Officers valises and all surplus gear to be dumped at Q. M. Store by 8 a. m. 19th instant.
(e) Huts and camp to be left in a clean and sanitary condition.

B. Sathum.....Captain.

ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

1. War Diary.
2. "A" Company
3. "B" Company
4. "C" Company
5. "D" Company
6. File.

201

APPENDIX. 2.

6

201

APPENDIX. 3

Fourth Australian Infantry Brigade.
HEADQUARTERS.
22nd December, 1917.

C. O.

ALL UNITS.

This exercise will take place on 28th instant.
No notice should be taken of rumours re moving.
All leaders will commence reconnoitring the ground.

AUSTRALIAN
IMPERIAL FORCE

G. H. S.
4th Infantry Brigade.

C. H. S. Major.
Brigade-Major.
4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.

APPENDIX. 3. a.

FOURTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.TACTICAL EXERCISE.NARRATIVE.

1. As a result of offensive operations on 24th - 26th December the GERMANS have been driven back to the line CLERY - HAUT ALLAINES - DRIENCOURT - LIERAMONT - VILLERS - TEMPLEUX-le-GERARD with a salient having its Apex at LIERAMONT out of which his troops were forced on night 26th/27th December.

2. The 110th Regiment (13th and 14th Battalions) after being driven out of LIERAMONT is in fighting touch with the BRITISH outposts which occupy the high ground in D.13.c. and d. and E.13.a.

The BRITISH attack from SAULCOURT with LONGAVESNES as objective was repulsed at 8. a.m. on 27th December. The patrols from AIZECOURT-LE-BAS report BRITISH concentration N.W. of that village dispersed by artillery fire but small parties still remain in BOIS-de-EPINETTE.

22/12/1917.

201

APPENDIX

"B" FORCE.

26

1. The Fifth Army has been operating against the GERMANS on a front of about 8 miles and on 28th December after 48 hours spent in replenishing ammunition, stores, etc. 1st ANZAC has been ordered to resume the offensive at 10.30.a.m. on the LIERAMONT Salient. Indications point to the GERMANS evacuating that salient.
2. The 4th Aust. Division is holding the line near LIERAMONT with one Brigade (the 4th Brigade) in, which unit succeeded in driving the enemy out of LIERAMONT on night 26th/27th and establishing its outposts on the high ground in D.18.c. - d. and E.13.a., enemy patrols still aggressive.
3. (a) The 4th Aust. Division with 4th Brigade as Advanced Guard has been given BOIS LE TINCOURT as objective.
 (b) The 2nd Aust. Division with 5th Brigade as Advanced Guard has been ordered to seize AIZECOURT-LE-BAS then advance on TEMPLEUX-LA-FOSSE co-operating with the 41st British Division from the direction of ST. PIERRE FARM.
 (c) The 1st Aust. Division with 1st Brigade as Advanced Guard has been allotted LONGAVESNES as First objective and eventually joining with 4th Aust. Division at TINCOURT WOOD in K.1.c.
4. The 15th Battalion is holding the Outpost Line and G.O.C. 4th Brigade details 16th Battalion to form the VANGUARD with 15th Battalion, 24th M.G. Company and 4th T.M. Battery as MAINGUARD, "A" and "B" Battalions moving in echelon on the right and left flanks respectively.
5. The G.O.C. VANGUARD is ordered to cover a frontage of about 1000 yards with his centre directing on a true bearing of 180 degrees.

On despatch file

Fourth Australian Infantry Brigade.
HEADQUARTERS.

19th December, 1917.

APPENDIX

2C

C. O.,

ALL UNITS.

To-morrow the ground for the Brigade exercise to be held on Friday the 20th December will be chosen.
The outline of the exercise will be as follows -

- "A" Force has decided to withdraw about 3 miles to a shorter line in order to reduce a prominent salient
- 14th Battalion
 - 13th Battalion
 - 4th M.G. Company
- is allotted a certain frontage with 14th Battalion as rear party and 13th Battalion as counter attack Battalion.
- "B" Force obtains a few hours warning of this intended withdrawal and has been ordered to press the hostile troops.
- The 4th Brigade has been detailed as Advanced Guard and is composed as under -
- 16th Battalion.
 - 15th Battalion.
 - "A" and "B" Battalion.
 - 24th Machine Gun Company.
 - 4th T.M. Battery.

The frontage will be about 1200 yards and the 16th Battalion will be vanguard with the 15th Battalion, 24th Machine Gun Company and 4th T.M. Battery as Main Guard and "A" and "B" Battalions represented by Blue Flag as right and left flank guards respectively.

Details of the exercise will be available on 22nd instant.

The training of Platoons and Companies during the next few days should be carried out with a view to the above exercise.

AUSTRALIAN
IMPERIAL FORCE

4415/1
4th Infantry Brigade.

C. M. Johnston Major.
Brigade-Major.
4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.

H. M. G. L. G.

On destroy file

APPENDIX. 4

15th BATTALION, A. I. F.SYLLABUS of TRAINING for week ending 8th DECEMBER 1917.

MONDAY	3rd.	Close Order Drill, Bayonet Fighting, Rapid Loading, Guards and Sentries, Organised Games.
TUESDAY	4th.	Elementary Musketry, Trigger pressing and aiming, Bayonet Fighting, Close Order Drill, Organised Games.
WEDNESDAY	5th.	Battalion Route March. Route to be notified later.
THURSDAY	6th.	Close Order Drill, Rapid loading, Rapid Wiring, Bombing, Organised Games.
FRIDAY	7th.	Route March.- Battalion on Brigade.
SATURDAY	8th.	Battalion Parade, Ceremonial. Football Match.

N O T E S

1. PARADES From 7.15 a.m. to 7.45 a.m.
9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
2. MUSKETRY One Company from 9 a.m. to 12 noon daily.
" " " 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. "
3. SPECIALISTS Signallers under Battalion Signalling Officer.
Lewis Gunners under Battalion L. G. O.
Scouts under Battalion Intelligence Officer.
4. CLASSES. All N. C. Os. under Company Commanders for at least one hour daily.
All Subalterns under Senior Major or Adjutant daily.
5. GENERAL Saluting Drill and Gas Helmet Drill daily.
Live S. A. A. to be used in all Rapid Loading practices.
R. M. C. will lecture daily to Platoons on First Aid and Trench Feet.
Baths when available.

B. Sathumson Captain.

ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

30th NOVEMBER 1917.