

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/32/34

Title: 15th Infantry Battalion

January 1918



AWM4-23/32/34

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.

~~DUPLICATE.~~

~~TRIPLICATE.~~

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

1st Div. A.I.F.

FOR

January 1918

Signature of Officer compiling

Driff + Capt & Adjt

Signature of Officer Commanding

H. Corrigan



201

O R I G I N A L

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.)

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TEMPLEUX la FOSSE.	1918. Jan. 1		Strength of Battalion 44 Officers, 728 Other ranks excluding detached. Working party on Corps LINE of 300. Satisfactory Report. 50 Working Party on Roads. 3 Officers reconnoitring front line and communications.	
	"	2	Brigade Tactical Exercise in attack and defence on same lines as that of 28th ulto, which provided useful results and exposed a few minor defects which were discussed and remedied. 300 Working Party on Corps Line. Lewis Gunners on range - new men being pushed on in their practical work. 3 Officers reconnoitring line and communications.	
	"	3	Full marching order parade to check adjustment of equipment, neatness of packs etc. Camp cleaning and improvement. Working Party of 50 on roads. Football - inter Company - in afternoon.	
	"	4	Baths me for men. No change of clothing available. 50 Working party on roads. Training as per Syllabus. Lewis Gunners on Vickers Gun for instructional purposes and our L.G. Officer instructing in L.G. work with V.M.G. Coy. men.	
	"	5	Open order work and bayonet fighting, and Lewis Gunners on range and on Vickers Gun instruction in morning. Football in afternoon. Working party of 50 on roads.	
	"	6	Working party of 50 on roads. Church services.	
	"	7	Working party of 50 on roads. Coys. Training as per Syllabus. Lewis Gunners on German Gun and Lewis Gun instruction.	
	"	8	Working party of 50 on roads. Baths for men - no clean clothes ¹⁹¹⁸ available. Training as per Syllabus. Lewis Gunners on range and on gun instruction.	
	"	9	Working party of 150 on roads. Training as per Syllabus. Specialists on usual training.	
	"	10	Full marching order parade and thorough cleaning up of camp prior to move. Area Commandant after inspection reported camp exceptionally clean after our moving out. Marched out at 3 p.m. for Peronne. Entrained there and moved out at 6.30 p. m.	
LA CLYTTE	"	11	Detrained at 9.20 a. m. at BAILLEUL and had hot cocoa for men at Y.M.C.A. Marched at 11 a.m. for camp at LA CLYTTE which was reached at 3.15 p.m. Inspection of men's feet showed they stood the march well.	
	"	12	Camp cleaning and improvements in morning. Camp was found to be in a dirty condition and drains in a neglected state.	
	"	13	Church Parades in morning. Camp cleaning and improvements. Tracks being duckboarded, drains cleared etc. Baths for men.	
	"	14	Small parties out on semi-permanent duties - dump work etc. Training as per Syllabus. Specialist training in morning. Camp work being carried on.	
	"	15	Small parties on semi-permanent fatigues. Training as per Syllabus. Camp Improvements.	
	"	16	ditto ditto ditto do	

ORIGINAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
LA CLYTTE	1918 Jan 17		Small parties on semi-permanent fatigues. Training as per Syllabus. Camp Improvements.	
	" 18		ditto ditto ditto do	
	" 19		ditto ditto ditto do	
HOLLEBEKE AREA	" 20		Sheet 28, BELGIUM and FRANCE. Marched out at 10.45 a.m. and entrained at KILMARNOCK SIDING - near LA CLYTTE - at 12 noon, detraining at SPOIL BANK from which point Coys. moved independently into the line, relieving the 45th and 46th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALIONS. Relief completed at 7.10 p. m. Battalion boundaries - on right, line running from O.6.d.90.35 to O.6. central; on left, line running from J 32 d 15 to J 31 central and thence West along grid through I 36 central. Battalion Headquarters I 36 c 95. Defence system was, "A" A line of outposts divided into four groups, each group having four posts garrisoned by 8 men each. Group Headquarters were situated in following spots and posts were pushed out within a radius of 100* in front and to flanks of them. Chateau Road Group Headquarters O.6.d-79, Hessian Wood Group Headquarters P.1.a.20; Potsdam Group P.1.b.0.6; Wood Farm Group Headquarters J.31.d.42. "B" Support line extending from O.6.b.87 to J.31.c.56 garrisoned by 4 sections forming a nucleus force on which to build up in case of attack, with two platoons in Chateau Dug-outs I.36.d.44. "C" Reserve Line, Railway Trench O.6.a.54. to O.6.a.39 and Reserve Trench I.36.c.93 to I.36.d.27 with one Company as garrison. "B" & "A" were right and left front line Coys. respectively, with "D" support Coy. and "C" Reserve Coy. until night of 24/25 January when they were relieved - "B" by "C" and "A" by "D" the relieving Coys. holding the forward positions for balance of our stay in the line, and "A" and "B" staying in support and reserve respectively for that period. All available men were hard at work whilst we were in the line improving and strengthening the posts, wiring our front, improving the communication trenches and constructing fresh accommodation in support and reserve lines.	
HOLLEBEKE AREA	" 21		Enemy Artillery shelled THE CLUSTERS I.31 c 14 and IMPERIAL AVANUE intermittently during the 24 hours, and our artillery was active engaging targets behind enemy's lines.	
	" 22		Low visibility with consequent inaction on the part of both artilleries.	
	" 23		Enemy artillery active, shelling THE CLUSTERS, sap head at I.31.c.56, and IMPERIAL AVENUE. M.G. fire normal. Our artillery normal. Aircraft active.	
	" 24		Enemy shelling normal. OLAF AVENUE and FUSILIER WALK shelled during the night. Enemy Trench Mortar firing from MOAT FARM on WOOD FARM posts. Normal fire by our artillery.	

8A

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

CONFIDENTIAL

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HOLLEBEKE AREA	1918 Jan 25		Foggy fixe ^{day} and little fire from our or enemy artillery.	
	26		Enemy fire quiet, ours normal.	
	27		Enemy artillery very active. OLAF AVENUE and support line shelled at intervals throughout the 24 hours. Our artillery active in reply. Enemy patrol approached one of our posts, and was fired on, one being killed. His body was searched and identification proved normal.	
	28		Enemy put over 15 Gas shells at 8.15 p. m. on OLAF AVENUE and FUSILIER WALK. Our artillery showed usual activity. Our aircraft very active.	
	29		Enemy artillery fairly quiet; ours very active. Throughout our occupation of the line enemy machine guns were quiet by day, but fairly accurate and consistent fire was maintained at night over the forward parts of our sector. We were relieved on the night of the 29/30 January by the 14th Battalion, A.I.F., the relief being complete at 8.15 p.m. We marched to TOURNAI CAMP N.10.b. moving independently by Companies. CASUALTIES, 2 Killed and 8 wounded whilst in line.	
TOURNAI CAMP. Sheet 28 N.10.b.	(30		Supplying fatigues of 360 men at work on Reserve Line and pushing stores from Dumps to forward area. Balance of men cleaning and improving camp. Men in good form after their tour in the line, the mild weather being in their favor. Baths on 30th.	
	(31		Strength of Battalion 46 Officers, 675 Other Ranks excluding detached.	

..... J. Carrigan MAJOR.

COMMANDING 15th BATTALION.

18,000-12/17 8723

WAR DIARY

OF

15th Battalion A.I.F.

FOR

January

191

appendix
8.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.

Subject.

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16 }Instructions. Bde Exercise
on 4/1/18

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15 Bn. Order No. 13

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15 Bn Order No. 14

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Inter-Bn. relief-order

5

15 Bn Order No. 15

6

Syllabus Training week 5/1/18

7

" " " 17/1/18

8

" " " 19/1/18

201
Detail 2. Officers
 Fourth Australian Infantry Brigade.
 HEADQUARTERS.
 30th December, 1917.

INSTRUCTIONS

for

BRIGADE EXERCISE ON 1st JANUARY, 1918.

1. Units to be in position at 10.15.a.m. on 1st January.
2. The Scouts of "B" Force (Advancing) may pass through the posts of the Outpost Line at 10.25.a.m.
3. No portion of "A" Force (Retiring) is to move before 10.30.a.m.
4. Tins rattled will indicate Machine Gun and Lewis Gun fire. Rifles held horizontally denotes that no further advance can be made frontally.
5. Umpires are allotted as follows :-

"A" Force (Retiring) - Lieut-Colonel W.J. SMITH.
 Lieut-Colonel D.G. MARKS, M.C.
 Major C.E.M. COX.
 Capt. R.H. BROWNING, M.C.
 Capt. A. JACKA, V.C., M.C.

"B" Force (Advancing) Lieut-Colonel T.P. McHARRY, D.S.O., M.C.
 Lieut-Colonel A. MARSDEN, D.S.O.
 Major J.J. CORRIGAN.
 Capt. C. MEARS, M.C.

All umpires to assemble at G.O.C.'s. Hut at 4.p.m. on Monday 31st instant to receive detailed instructions.

6. Brigade signal officer will arrange for sufficient personnel to maintain communications within "A" Force and within "B" Force and with flank Brigades.

7. The G.O.C. Vanguard and G.O.C. Rear Party will arrange for an officers party with flag to represent units on flank.

AUSTRALIAN
 IMPERIAL FORCE

24/15/19
 4th Infantry Brigade.

C. M. Johnston

Major.
 Brigade-Major.
 4th Aust. Inf. Brigade.

FOURTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

app 1A

TACTICAL EXERCISE.NARRATIVE.Reference Sheet 62.c. N.E. 1/20,000.

1. As a result of offensive operations on 28th - 30th December the GERMANS have been driven back to the line CLERY - HAUT ALLAINES - BRIENCOURT - LIERAMONT - VILLERS - TEMPLEUX-le-GERARD with a salient having its Apex at LIERAMONT out of which his troops were forced on night 30th/31st 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.18.c. and d. and E.13.a.
The BRITISH attack from SAULCOURT with LONGAVESNES as objective was repulsed at 8.a.m. on 31st December. The patrols from AISE-COURT-LE-BAS report BRITISH concentration N.W. of that village dispersed by artillery fire but small parties still remain in MOIS-de-EPINETTE.

201

7
app. 1/B.

201

app. 1/B

"B" FORCE (commanded by Lieut-Colonel T.P. MOSHARRY,
P.S.C., M.C., 15th Battalion).

1. The Fifth Army has been operating against the GERMANS on a front of about 8 miles and on 1st January after 48 hours spent in replenishing ammunition, stores, etc. 1st ANZAC has been ordered to resume the offensive at 10.20 a.m. on the LIEBAMONT Salient. Indications point to the GERMANS evacuating that salient.
2. The 4th Aust. Division is holding the line near LIEBAMONT with one Brigade (the 4th Brigade) in, which unit succeeded in driving the enemy out of LIEBAMONT on night 30th/31st 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 the high ground between BOIS-de-TINCOURT and TEMPLEUX-LA-FOSSÉ as objective.
(b) The 2nd Aust. Division with 5th Brigade as Advanced Guard has been ordered to seize AIZENCOURT-LE-BAS then advance on TEMPLEUX-LA-FOSSÉ 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 J.C.a.
4. The 15th Battalion is holding the Outpost Line and G.C.C. 4th Brigade details 15th Battalion to form the VANGUARD with 15th Battalion and 4th T.M. Battery as Main Guard, "A" and "B" Battalions moving in echelon on the right and left flanks respectively.
5. The G.C. VANGUARD is ordered to cover a frontage of about 1000 yards with his centre directing on a true bearing of 138 degrees.

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SECRET.

app 2
Copy No. 1

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER No. 13.

Reference Maps AMIENS 1/100,000
HAZEBROUCK 1/100,000

In the Field
9th JANUARY 1918.

- 1.a. The Battalion, less 4 Officers and 100 Other Ranks, unloading party will move by rail to BAILLEUL on 10th instant, entraining at PERONNE in No. 19 Train.
- b. Entraining Officer Capt. J. C. BROWNE
Asst. Entraining Officer Lieut. G. S. HERON
2. Battalion will assemble on flat just below our camp and will move out at 3 p. m. in order, Band, A. B. C. D.
3. Blankets - one per man will be carried on G. S. Wagons. They will be rolled in section bundles and dumped at Q. M. Store by 10 a. m.

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

.....Captain.

A/ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

APP. 3.

201
SECRET

Copy No. 1/

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER No. 14.

APP. 3.

REFERENCE SHEET No. 28 1/10,000

In the Field.
19th JANUARY 1918.

1. 15th BATTALION will relieve the 45th. and 46th. Aust. Inf. Battalions on the night of 20th - 21st JANUARY 1918.
2. Battalion Boundaries will be:-
 - a. On right - line running from O.6.^a90.35. to O.6. central.
 - b. On left - line running from J 32 d 15 to J 31 central and thence West along grid through I 36 central.
3. Dispositions of Coys. will be,
 - a. B. and A. Coys. right and left front line Coys. respectively.
 - b. C. and D. Coys. right and left support Coys. respectively.
4. 13th Aust. Inf. Battalion will be on our right flank and 13th Aust. Inf. Brigade on our left.
5. z. Guides under Company arrangements.
6. a. k. Head of Battalion will pass starting point - entrance of camp at 12-30 p. m. 20th January, Coys. moving at 50 yards interval and in order Hqrs. A. B. C. D.
 - b. Will entrain at KILMARNOCK siding by train for SPOIL BANK leaving at 2 p. m.
 - c. Entraining Officer Capt. S. F. Porter, M.C.
7. Officers Valises, Packs, Hats and one blanket per man to be dumped at Q. M. Store by 10 a. m.
8. DRESS. Fighting Order, one blanket, jerkin, greatcoat and waterproof sheet to be carried.
9. All Lewis Guns and 16 magazines per gun will be carried by L. G. teams. Remainder of magazines and reserve S.A.A. will be dumped with packs.
10. Cooking utensils will be sent on to forward Cook houses under arrangement of the Q. M.
11. On completion of reliefs Os. C. Coys. will wire Battalion Headquarters in code.
12. Distribution list (including location of Company Headquarters) to Battalion Headquarters as soon as possible after relief.

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

.....Captain.
 ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

app. 4'

Secret

Copy No. 6.

Operation Order by F.A. app. 4'
 Reference Sheet E1 49000 Part Sheet 28.

1. 15th Bn will effect an inter Company relief on night of 24th/25th January 1918. - probable hour of relief - 7 p.m.
2. Platoon in support will relieve those in Front Line C Coy relieving B and D Coy relieving A. and B & A will take up positions vacated by C & D.
3. Details of relief - including times will be arranged between Company Commanders.
3. Completion of relief to be notified by wire to Bn. H.Q.

1. File
2. A. Coy
3. B. "
4. C. "
5. D. "
6. War Diary
7. " "
8. Right Flank Bn
9. Left " "

81100 for Captain
 Adjutant F.A. Bn.

24-1-18

APP. 4^ASecret.

Copy No. 7.

Operation Order by Fade.
 Reference Sheet E1 1/10000 Part Sheet 28.

- 1/ 15th Bn will effect an inter company relief on night of 24th/25th January 1918 - probable hour of relief - 7 p.m.
- 2/ A Coy in support will relieve those in Front Line 'C' Coy relieving B and D Coy. relieving A, and B and A will take up positions vacated by C + D.
- 3/ Details of relief - including times will be arranged between company commanders.
- 3/ Completion of relief to be notified by wire to Bn HQs.

- 1 File
- 2 A Coy
- 3 B "
- 4 C "
- 5 D "
- 6 Warliary
- 7 Right Flank Bn
- 9 Left " "

W. J. P. Captain
 Adjutant Fade Bn

24-1-18

Secret.

Not to be taken into front line

Copy No. 6

12

15th Aust. Inf. Battalion Order No. 15.

aff. 5

Reference Map. Kollibekke. 1:10,000.

Sheet 28. 1:40,000.

1. The 15th Battalion will be relieved from the Line on the night of 29th/30th January 1918 by the 14th Battalion and will proceed to TOURNAI CAMP in N. 10. b. Companies moving independently after assembling.
2. a. Details of relief will be mutually arranged by Company Commanders concerned.
b. One - Will be relieved by their:-

A. coy	Coy
B "	"
C "	"
D "	"
- c. A and D will move out by Imperial Avenue and Stafford Walk and B and C by Olaf Avenue and Canal Walk.
- d. Where road crosses Canal one Officer per Company will meet each Company at Spoil Bank I 33 a 22 and guide Companies to Tournai Camp.
- e. Lewis Guns and Magazines will be loaded on a Limber at Spoil Bank I 33 a 22. under supervision of Lewis Gun Sgt.
3. Lists of Trench Stores will be at once prepared and receipts for them will be handed to Battalion Headquarters by 9 a.m. 30th January.
4. Completion of relief will be wired to Battalion Headquarters by code.
5. Acknowledge.

1 File

2 A. coy

3 B "

4 C "

5 D "

6 War Diary

7. Capt. B. S. Atkinson M.C.

Booper Captain
Adjutant 15th Battalion

app. 6.

15th Dec 1917
 Training Programme for
 Week ending 21/12 app. 6

Monday Dec 17. Battalion Parade,
 Full marching Order. Fitting of
 Equipment. Cleaning Camp, Organise
 Guns. Helmet Drill.

Tuesday Jan 18. Battalion Working Party on
 Hill. Bayonet fighting

Wednesday Jan 19. Platoon scheduling
 Attack. Organised Game
 Close Order Drill

Thursday Jan 20. Company Rear Guard
 Exercises. Organised Game.

Friday Jan 21. Company Drill
 Training. Bayonet fighting

Saturday Jan 22. Battalion Working
 Party on Hill.

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app 7.

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING.

7th - 12th. JANUARY 1918.

MONDAY	7th.	Elementary extended order work by Signals. Platoons in Attack and Defence, Platoons in Advance and Rearguard work.
TUESDAY	8th.	Platoon and Company schemes in Attack and Defence - Open Country, Woods and Villages.
WEDNESDAY	9th.	Corps Line fatigues.
THURSDAY	10th.	Platoon and Company Advance and Rearguard actions.
FRIDAY	11th.	Battalion in Attack and Defence, and Battalion in Advance and Rearguard work, Enemy being represented in all practices.
SATURDAY	12th.	Inspection of Kit and Fitting of Equipment. Camp cleaning.

NOTES :- N.C.O's. will be given constant opportunities in handling Platoons in all the above practices, special attention will be paid to the training of Section Commanders.

LEWIS GUNNERS on Range daily and instruction in Vickers Gun by arrangement with 4th. M.G. Coy.

GAS HELMET Drill daily.

BAYONET FIGHTING and SEMPHORE SIGNALLING Classes for a short period daily.

.....*Thompson*.....Captain.

Ady ADJUTANT 15th. BATTALION.

4th. January 1918.

15th BATTALION, A.I.F.

SYLLABUS of TRAINING for week ending 19th JANUARY 1918.

SUNDAY &
MONDAY
13/14-1-18 Close Order Drill, Bayonet Fighting, Musketry, Rapid Wiring
Lecturette by Platoon Commanders on "PATROLS."

TUESDAY
15-1-18 Organised Games, Guards and Sentries, Musketry, Close Order
Drill, Lecturette by Platoon Commanders "Trench Sanitation."

WEDNESDAY
16-1-18 Musketry, Bayonet Fighting, Close Order Drill, Rapid Wiring
Lecturette by Platoon Commanders on "Trench Feet and Preven-
titive Measures."

THURSDAY
17-1-18 Musketry, Organised Games, Close Order Drill, Bayonet Fight-
ing, Route March by Companies, Lecturette "March Discipline."

FRIDAY
18-1-18 Close Order Drill, Guards and Sentries, Musketry, Rapid
Wiring, Bayonet Fighting, Read Standing Orders re Gas.

SATURDAY
19-1-18 Kit Inspection and fitting of equipment, Organised Games.

PARADES From 9.30 a. m. to 11.30 a. m.
1 p. m. to 3 p. m.

MUSKETRY Range practice daily as detailed in Battalion Orders.

SPECIALISTS Signallers under Battalion Signalling Sergeant.
Lewis Gunners under Battalion L. G. O. for instruction and
range practice,
Scouts under Battalion Intelligence Officer for training and
line reconnaissance.

GENERAL Saluting and Gas Helmet Drill daily.

BATHS When available.

Daily reconnaissance of forward area and lines by Officers
and N. C. Os.

.....Captain.

A/ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

12th JANUARY 1918.