

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/32/37

Title: 15th Infantry Battalion

April 1918



AWM4-23/32/37

201

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.
~~DUPLICATE.~~
~~TRIPLICATE.~~

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

15th Battalion A.I.F.

FOR

April.

1918

Signature of Officer compiling

*Compiled by Capt. J. B. Heffer
(at present in trenches)*

Signature of Officer Commanding

*M. Craig Major
for C.O. 15th Bn
A.I.F.*

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

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.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HEBUTERNE Sheet 57 D.	Apl 1918	1.	Strength of Battalion excluding detached 40 Officers and 671 Other Ranks. Artillery and Machine gun fire of both sides quieter than usual owing to wet weather. At 6 p.m. our line was advanced 200 yards on the left on a frontage of 200 yards with posts established on sunken road in K.16.b. The enemy had evacuated the position leaving their packs behind.	
		2.	very wet, enemy artillery and machine guns very active throughout the 24 hours firing on support line and roads and tracks in HEBUTERNE. Our artillery very active firing on enemy forward and rear positions all day.	
		3.	fairly quiet during day. Machine Guns very active during night sweeping No Man's Land and roads in HEBUTERNE.	
		4.	Enemy artillery very active. Front and Support lines shelled intermittently with H.E. and Gas shells. Trench Mortars registered on our front line between 5.30 p.m. and 6 p.m. Good shooting done by our artillery on parties of enemy moving in the open.	
		5.	At 5 a.m. a heavy barrage was put down by enemy on our front and support lines. H.E., Shrapnel, Trench Mortars and machine Guns used. HEBUTERNE and back areas shelled with Gas and H.E. shells until 10.30 a.m. No enemy attack took place on our front. At 5 p.m. enemy party of 20 attempted to raid our post at K.17.a.10.85 under cover of a machine gun barrage. They were driven off by rifle fire and bombs, suffering many casualties. Our casualties two other ranks killed by Machine Gun fire.	
		6.	Very wet, enemy very quiet with the exception of 15 gas shells fired into HEBUTERNE. Our artillery carried out the usual harrassing fire on enemy position.	
		7.	Fairly quiet. Our front line shelled with H.E. and Trench Mortars at intervals during day. There was more night shooting by enemy artillery than usual. Our artillery were active as usual as also our Machine Guns.	
		8.	Very quiet. No enemy shelling. Raining most of the day and trenches very muddy. Three of our aeroplanes dropped bombs on enemy trenches about 12.30 p.m. Our artillery below normal.	
		9.	Our and enemy artillery moderately active all day, HEBUTERNE being subjected to fairly heavy shelling. Battalion relieved by Royal Fusiliers (relief complete 10 p.m.), and moved to Bivouacs at ROSSIGNOL FARM near COIGNEUX (J.3.Sheet 57.D). which were reached by 12 midnight. Total casualties during our whole tour in the line, Killed in Action 11 Other Ranks, Died of Wounds, 2 Other Ranks, Wounded, 2 Officers, 52 Other Ranks, Accidentally Wounded, 2 Other Ranks, Self Inflicted Wounds 1 Other Rank - Total 2 Officers 68 Other Ranks.	
		ROSSIGNOL FARM SHEET 57 D.		10.

C O N F I D E N T I 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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date 1918	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
ROSSIGNOL FARM, near COIGNEUX.	Apr. 11		Cleaning up of arms, equipment and clothing and improving camp. Divisional Commander visited Battalion and expressed his appreciation of the Battalion's recent work in the line.	
	12		Training - General and Specialist; new Lewis Gunners and Signallers being trained. Information was received in the afternoon that an enemy attack was anticipated on our front on the morning of the 13th. At 8.30 p.m., Battalion (less 33% and Transport who remained at ROSSIGNOL FARM) moved up into Support and bivouacked in J.12.d. at 11 p.m. with Battalion Headquarters at J.18. b.5.3. in SAILLY-au-BOIS. Brigade front K.21.d.0 0 to K.16.c.2.3.	
HEBUTERNE SUPPORT LINE	13		Resting in J.12.d. in morning. Received orders at noon that we were to move to K.14. and occupy the support trenches there in rear of 16th Battalion, A.I.F. who hold the front line of our Brigade Sector. Afternoon spent salvaging iron to construct shelters for the Battalion in new Sector which had no accomodation. Moved to K.14. at 7.30 p.m. Night spent constructing shelters Lewis Gun and Signalling training being pushed on at ROSSIGNOL FARM.	
	14		Party of 100 at work under engineers on Support trenches in our sector. Remainder of Battalion working on shelters.	
	15		Working on support line of our sector.	
	16		Working on Support line of our Sector.	
	17		Working on Support line of our Sector. 200 Reinforcements arrived - Good type of men.	
	18		Working on Support line of our Sector.	
	19		do do	
	20		do do	
			Relieved the 16th battalion A.I.F., in the front line from K.21.d.2.0. to K.16.c.2.3. with Battalion Headquarters at K.14.d.8.9. 1st Otago (N.Z). Regiment on right, 6th Manchesters on left. Relief complete 8.30 p.m. Companies were disposed as follows from right to left:- B. Coy. 2 platoons in line, one in support and one in reserve; C. Coy, one platoon in line, two in support and one in reserve. D. Coy, two platoons in line, one in support and one in reserve. A. Coy, 2 platoons in line and 2 in support. The front line consisted of a good trench, well sited, but the support and reserve lines were not defensive positions, but merely lines of accomodation shelters, the troops being disposed there to avoid overcrowding the front line, and to have them distributed in depth. In case of receiving orders to fall back to conform to the movements of flanking units we were to occupy the support line system in K.14 - i.e. the position we occupied before moving into the line. Night passed fairly quietly.	
	21		Enemy artillery and machine guns active - the left of our front and rear area to our left flank being shelled intermittently during the day. Our own artillery and machine guns were active in reply. Trench improvements and salvaging work being vigourously carried on. Our front was patrolled throughout the night but no trace of enemy seen. By day there was little to be seen	

801

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.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HEBUTERNE SUPPORT LINE.	Apl. 21	22	of the enemy, beyond a few scattered men well to the rear. Weather fine, and men in good form. Enemy artillery and ours active at intervals all day, our front line generally and left rear receiving fairly heavy fire. Machine Guns of both sides normally active at night. Trench improvements and salvaging being pushed on. Patrols out on our whole front throughout the night had nothing of unusual interest to report.	
		23	both artilleries showed normal activity and machine gun fire was normal. Artillery fire was dispersed over all our sector and was intermittent throughout the day and night. Work on trenches and salvaging being pushed on. Partolling was vigorous during the night, but nothing of importance was reported.	
		24	Day spent cleaning up and improving trenches. A fairly heavy mist made shooting difficult and artillery of both sides was quiet. Relieved at night by 2nd Wellington Battalion of 1st N.Z. Brigade. Relief complete at 9.30 p.m. Moved to bivouacs on western outskirts of COIGNEUX which were reached at 11.30 p.m. Total casualties for our tour in the line, Killed 1 Other Rank, Wounded 4 Other ranks. Transport moved for ALLONVILLE at 9 a.m. and rear details of Battalion embussed for there at 2 p.m.	
		25	Embussed at 4.30 a.m. and proceeded at ALLONVILLE which was reached at 8 a.m. and Battalion went into billets. Day spent cleaning up clothes, arms and equipment. Portion of Battalion had baths with clean change of clothes. Officers reconnoitring forward sectors in view of an early move.	
ALLONVILLE SHEET 62 D 1/40,000		26	Close order drill and inspection by C.O. Box respirators inspected by Brigade Gas N.C.O. and defective helmets exchanged. Remainder of Battalion had baths with clean change of clothing Officers reconnoitring forward sector.	
		27	Preparations for a move occupied us all morning and at 2 p.m. the Battalion less 33% and portion of Headquarters details moved to PONT NOYELLES, and went into billets there at 3.30 p.m. 33% and details moved to camp in wood N.E. of ALLONVILLE. Weather fine and men in good condition after their short spell.	
PONT NOYELLES		28	All morning at PONT NOYELLES. At 1.30 p.m. advance party went forward to support area near VILLERS BRETTONEUX in Squares 0.16.17.22 and 23 to prepare bivouacs for remainder of Battalion who moved up in afternoon leaving at 5 p.m. and reaching new sector at 9 p.m. Headquarters were established at 0.16.c.5.2. Our Bri gade HEADQUARTERS holds the line with 13th and 14th Battlms. in line from right to left and 16th and 15th Battlms. in support of them respectively. The two latter Battalions have no defences to man but are there to reinforce or counter attack if required.	
SUPPORT LINE SHEET 62 D		29	Day spent digging bivouacs and camouflaging them as work was not completed the day before.	
		30	Improving bivouac accomodation. Strength of battalion (excluding detached) 57 Off. 955 O/Ranks.	

J. P. Craig Major for C.O. 15th Battln.

23

WAR DIARY

APPENDIX

OF

15th Battalion - A.I.F

FOR

*April**1918*

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
<i>1.</i>	<i>Defence Scheme - Neuve Eglise Area</i>
<i>2.</i>	<i>Code. Br. Order. No. 20</i>
<i>3.</i>	<i>" " " No. 30</i>
<i>4.</i>	<i>" " " " 31</i>
<i>5.</i>	<i>Disposition. statement.</i>

201
S E C R E T.

Copy No. /

15th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.

DEFENCE SCHEME

for

NEUVE EGLISE BRIGADE AREA - SUPPORT DIVISION.

REFERENCE SHEET 28 S. W. 1/20,000.

1. CONTINGENCIES. It is anticipated that the 4th Australian Division (Support Division) may be called upon to carry out moves to meet the following contingencies:-

- A. Position of readiness to meet all contingencies.
- B. Occupation of 3rd Zone South.
- C. Occupation of 3rd Zone North.
- D. Dispositions for action in support of "A" Division.
- E. Dispositions for action in support of "B" Division.
- F. Dispositions for action in support of "C" Division.
- G. Occupation of Front - A.1. Supplementary Scheme.
- H. Movement of a Brigade to support adjoining Corps on South.

Moves of this Battalion are as set forth in Appendix "A".

2. ACTION IN CASE OF ATTACK.
- (a) On receipt of the order "POSITION OF READINESS" from Battalion Headquarters, Companies will fall in on Company Parade Grounds in fighting order and fully equipped for offensive action, and will report to Battalion Headquarters immediately they are ready to march.
 - (b) As the situation demands, Companies will, on receipt of the order "MOVE" from Battalion Headquarters, at once move into their allotted positions in accordance with the contingency quoted, by route communicated to Company Commanders. Order of March, "A" "B" "C" "D" Headquarters. Companies to notify Battalion Headquarters immediately they are in position.

3. ROUTE - DIVERSION OF If the route laid down to be followed in the contingency quoted is shelled, Companies will move 200 yards off the road and parallel to it.

4. DISTANCES. Companies will move by Platoons at 50 yards distance.

5. RUNNERS. Four Runners per Company will report to Battalion Orderly Room immediately the order "POSITION OF READINESS" is received.

6. RATIONS. In the event of alarm, the unexpired portion of the day's rations will be carried by each man in addition to his iron rations.

7. WATERBOTTLES. Waterbottles will be kept filled with water, contents being changed daily.

8. AMMUNITION. On receipt of the order "POSITION OF READINESS" each Company will send one N.C.O., and six men to draw S.A.A. and one N.C.O., and six men to draw bombs from the Q. M. Store. The issue will be on the scale of S.A.A. 50 rounds per man and bombs 2 per man.
9. RECONNAISSANCE. Company Commanders will take advantage of every opportunity of detailing Officers and N.C.Os. to reconnoitre approaches to all parts of the Corps front.
10. TRANSPORT. First Line Transport less Cookers, Water Carts, Company Limbers and Mobile Reserve will remain in the present locality except in the case of contingency F. when it will accompany Battalion.
11. DUMP. Battalion Dump will be established in building where "A" Company's cooker is at present located.
12. REPORTS. Reports to Battalion Headquarters at location given on the move order.

W.R.H.
.....Lieut.
A/ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

DISTRIBUTION.

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

201

APPENDIX

19

APPENDIX "A"

MOVES OF 15th BATTALIONunderVARIOUS CONTINGENCIES.

CONTINGENCIES	POSITION TO BE OCCUPIED.
<p><u>A.</u> Position of readiness to meet all contingencies.</p>	SHANKHILL CAMP.
<p><u>B.</u> Occupation of 3rd Zone South</p>	No. 1 Sector, via PETIT-PONT - ROMARIN.
<p><u>C.</u> Occupation of 3rd Zone North.</p>	(a) Reserve to 13th Battalion, which Battalion will occupy No. 7 Sector. Move via LINDENHOEK - KEMMEL ROAD.
<p><u>D.</u> Supporting "A" Division.</p>	Square E. 4. c. via PETIT-PONT - LE DON.
<p><u>E.</u> Supporting "B" Division.</p>	As for contingency "A".
<p><u>F.</u> Supporting "C" Division.</p>	WAKEFIELD HUTS via DRANOUTRE. (51st Battalion). M. 29. c.
<p><u>G.</u> Occupying Front Line.</p>	BRISTOL CASTLE & BRISTOL TRENCH.

(a) Distributed in depth.

18th MARCH 1918.

201

SECRET

Copy No. 5

FADE BATTALION ORDER No. 90.

REFERENCE SHEET No. 57 d. H.E.

In the Field.
12th APRIL 1918.

1. On 13th April 1918, FADE Battalion will relieve 15th ROYAL FUSILIERS in Support Line K.8.K.7.d. and K.13.b., relief to be complete by 6 p.m.
2. Details of relief to be arranged mutually between Company Commanders concerned including guide arrangements.
3. Packs (with one blanket inside) and Officers' Valises will be dumped at Q. M. Store by 10.30 a. m. on 13th. All packs to be legibly marked with number and name.
4. One limber per Company will report at Q. M. Store at 1 p. m. and Lewis Guns and 12 magazines per gun will be loaded at that hour. Each Company will detail a guard of one man to accompany its limber.
5. 33 per cent of Company strength will remain at ROSSIGNOL FARM under command of Major J. J. Corrigan, B.S.C.
6. Head of Battalion will pass starting point - Main gateway of ROSSIGNOL FARM - at 2 p. m. Coys. will move at 10 minutes interval with platoons at 200 yards distance. Order of march - Hdqtrs. A. B. C. D. Dress - Fighting Order, greatcoat (bandolier fashion) over right shoulder, one blanket rolled in waterproof sheet and strapped to web belt at back.
7. List of trench stores taken over (in duplicate) to be handed to Battalion Headquarters by 9 a. m. of day following relief.
8. Completion of relief to be wired to Battalion Headquarters in code.
9. Acknowledge.

A. J. H. H. Lieut. Asst. Adjutant.

FADE.

DISTRIBUTION.

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



Secret

War Diary

Copy No 5

7th Gade Battalion Order No 30

Reference Sheet 57 d NE.

- 1. 7th Gade Battalion will relieve FILE Battalion in front line on night of 20th April 1918, relief to be complete by 6 pm.
- 2. a. Battalion frontage (which is also Brigade frontage) is from K 21 d 20 to K 16 c 23
 b. Companies - (less one platoon of each) will hold the front line from right to left as follows:-
 B. C. D. A.
 c. Remaining one platoon per Coy will be in support.
- 3. Detail of reliefs - including guide arrangements - will be arranged mutually between company commanders concerned.
- 4. Companies will move out independently at a time to be arranged later.
- 5. Lists of trench stores (in duplicate) will be forwarded to Batt Hqrs on night of relief.
 b. Completion of relief will be notified to Batt Hqrs by code message "Battalion Order No 30 acknowledged."
 c. Acknowledge.

Distribution

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

W. H. P. for Capt
 Adj. Gade
 18-4-18



FADE BATTALION ORDER No. 31.

REFERENCE SHEET 57D. 1/20,000
LENS 11 1/100,000
AMIENS 17 1/100,000

1. Fade Battalion will move by bus to COISY Area as detailed hereunder.
2. Rear details of Battalion under Command of Major J. J. CORRIGAN, D.S.O., will rendezvous - in full marching order - at 1 p.m. on 24th instant on Western outskirts of COUIN, on COUIN-AUTHIE ROAD, for embusment under orders of Major C. M. JOHNSTON, D.S.O., who will act as Brigade embussing officer.
3. Transport, brigaded under Major B. S. SAMPSON, will march to RAINNEVILLE, via COIGNEUX-BUS-LES-ARTOIS - ACHEUX - LEALVILLERS - TOUTENCOURT - HERRISART - RUBEMPRE - RAINNEVILLE, passing the starting point J.9.c.44. at 9 a.m. on 24th instant in the following order:-
4th Brigade Headquarters, 15th, 13th, 14th, 16th Battalions, 4th M.G. Coy, 4th L.T.M. Battery, 4th Field Ambulance.
4. C. O. Rear Battalion details will detail :-
a. A Billeting party of one Officer and six other ranks to proceed on bicycles and meet Staff Captain at 10 a.m. on 24th instant at church at RAINNEVILLE.
b. Capt. ATKINSON, M.C., (with two runners) to remain ~~at~~ behind and act as embussing officer for remainder of Battalion.
5. a. Fade Battalion will be relieved in front line on night of 24th instant by 2nd Wellington Battalion, 1st N. Z. Brigade.
6. b. Details of relief (including guides) will be arranged direct between Company Commanders concerned.
7. Our patrols will not be withdrawn till patrols of incoming Battalion are out and covering the front.
8. a. On relief, Companies will proceed independently with 200 yards interval between platoons, and rendezvous on hillside south of ROSSIGNOL FARM to embus before daylight on 25th instant.
b. One guide per platoon to reconnoitre route beforehand.
9. A spare lorry will accompany bus train to carry L. Gs.
10. Receipts (in duplicate) for trench stores handed over will be taken and copies handed to Battalion Orderly Room as soon as possible after relief.
11. Acknowledge.

Lt Col J. R. Keffer
.....Captain.

ADJUTANT 15th BATTALION.

23rd APRIL 1918.

DISTRIBUTION.

1. "A" Company
2. "B" "
3. "C" "
4. "D" "
5. War Diary
6. File.
7. Major J. J. Corrigan, D.S.O.
8. Transport Officer Fade.

FOURTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE DISPOSITIONS
as at 6.a.m. 21/4/1918.

Reference Sheet 57.D. N.E. 1/20,000.

Brigade Headquarters J.18.a.8.8.

Front Line Battalion.
15th Battalion H.Qrs. K.14.d.80.90.
R.A.P. K.14.b.50.55.
Right Coy.
"R" Coy. H.Qrs. K.21.c.5.3.
No. 5 Pltn. From K.21.d.25.00. to K.21.d.35.45.
6 " From K.21.d.35.45. to K.21.d.15.80.
7 " From K.20.b.10.70. to K.20.b.20.80.
8 " From K.21.e.35.35. to K.21.e.90.35.
Right Centre Coy.
"C" Coy. H.Qrs. K.21.b.30.35.
No. 9 Pltn. From K.21.central to K.21.b.10.40.
10 " From K.20.b.20.80. to K.20.b.40.90.
11 " From K.21.d.15.80. to K.21.b.25.35.
12 " From K.21.a.40.50. to K.21.a.40.70.
Left Centre Coy.
"D" Coy. H.Qrs. K.21.b.30.90.
No. 13 Pltn. From K.21.b.25.35. to K.21.b.45.65.
14 " From K.21.b.45.65. to K.21.b.80.90.
1st " From K.21.a.40.70. to K.21.a.50.95.
13 " From K.21.b.20.80. to K.15.d.20.40.
Left Coy.
"A" Coy. H.Qrs. K.21.b.50.75.
No. 1 Pltn. From K.21.b.80.95. to K.13.c.00.05.
2 " From K.13.c.00.05. to K.13.c.20.30.
3 " From K.15.d.70.10. to K.15.d.85.45.
4 " From K.15.d.70.10. to K.15.d.85.45.

Support Battalion.
14th Battalion H.Qrs. J.18.b.8.3.
R.A.P. J.18.b.1.3.
"A" Coy. K.14.b.
"B" " K.14.c.
"C" " K.14.a.
"D" " K.14.d.

Reserve Battalions.
13th Battalion H.Qrs. J.18.b.7.9.
R.A.P. K.13.a.2.3.
"A" Coy. K.7.c.
"B" " J.13.b.
"C" " J.12.d.
"D" " J.12.d.

15th Battalion. At ROSSIGNOL FARM J.3.c. and d.

4th Machine Gun Coy. H.Qrs. K.9.d.18.57.
No. 1 Gun. K.21.d.33.30.
2 " K.21.d.10.80.
3 " K.21.b.48.70.
4 " K.13.c.18.22.
5 " K.20.a.95.30.
6 " K.20.b.30.65.
7 " K.15.a.80.05.
8 " K.15.b.27.28.
9 " K.8.d.80.65.
10 " K.8.d.92.30.
6 Guns in Reserve at ROSSIGNOL FARM.

4th A.L.T.M. Battery H.Qrs. J.18.b.95.50.

Handwritten Signature

Lieut.
Brigade Intelligence Officer.
4th Aust. Infantry Battalion