

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/42/27

Title: 25th Infantry Battalion

November 1917



AWM4-23/42/27

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

C.O. 25th. A.I. Battalion.

Lieut. Col.,

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
Nov.	1st. 1917.		<p>Strength 25 Off. 799 O/R. including effective but detached 11 Off. 290 O/R.</p> <p>Relieved 26th. A.I. Bn., who were left front line Bn. of 7th. A.I. Brigade on BROODSIENDE RIDGE.</p> <p>Relief was completed by 4-15am.</p> <p>The relief was ordered to commence at 7-30pm. 31-10-17 but at about this time the enemy shelled GARTER POINT & WESTHOEK RIDGE heavily with Gas shells. Two Companies were at either place and it was deemed inadvisable to move the men, who, already were all more or less affected by the Gas from the previous nights Gas shell bombardment, until time was allowed for the gas to drift away. However the night was very still and there was no perceptable wind until about 10pm. when it began to rise very slightly and blew in a Northerly direction. As a result of this slight breeze the gas was drifted from GARTER POINT down into the valley near ZONNEBEKE and from WESTHOEK RIDGE into the valley between it and GARTER POINT. Through these valleys was the direct route to the part of the front line we were to take over and if we were to move with the gas still hanging in the valleys it would be necessary for the men to wear their gas helmets practically the whole distance to the line. Moreover the enemy continued his gas shell bombardment until about midnight which with the very slight wind which was now more than sufficient to drift the gas into the valleys increased the density of the gas in low lying places and also our difficulties of reaching the front line. The commencement of the relief was therefore delayed until about 1-30am. Even then some gas was still hanging about in the valleys and gas helmets had to be worn for a few minutes whilst passing through it. The relief was carried out without casualties and without any men being further affected by the gas. Bn. H.Qs. was situated at Sheet 28 NE D 29. C. 26.46.</p> <p>and Company dispositions were as follows:-</p> <p>"A" Company. Sheet 28 NE D 29. C. 26.46. "B" Company. Sheet 28 NE D 28.6.25.1.</p> <p>"C" Company " " NE D 29. C. 26.46. "D" Company " " NE D 28.6.40.1.</p> <p>A patrol of 2 Officers (Lieut. G. BEDSOR & 24th. Bn. Officer) and 20 O/Rs. patrolled "No mans Land" leaving our lines at about 9pm. and returning about 1-30am. No enemy were encountered. (A copy of patrol report is attached).</p>	
"	2nd.	"	<p>Relieved in front line by 18th. A.I. Bn. Relief was completed by 11pm. Bn. then moved to DICKEBUSCH AREA in relief of 23rd. A.I. Bn. who were a Bn. of Support Brigade.</p> <p>Bn. H.Qs. situated at Sheet 28 H-20-c-9-1. The last company arrived at the camp at about 3am. on 3-11-17. The men were very tired and about 90% were suffering from the effects of the heavy enemy gas shell bombardment to which they were subjected on the nights of 27-28-29-30 & 31st. whilst in supports at GARTER POINT. About 50% of the men were suffering from temporary loss of voice and watering eyes. Washing with Sodi Bicarb gave speedy relief to the latter.</p> <p>The whole Bn. was billeted in huts.</p>	

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(Erase heading not required.)

Davis
Lieut.Col.,
C.O. 25th. A.I.Battalion.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Nov. 3rd. 1917		Resting in hut in DICKEBUSCH AREA.	
	" 4th. "		In huts in DICKEBUSCH AREA, Baths at WINNEPEG CAMP were allotted to Bn. and men who were able and well enough had a warm bath and change of underclothing. We were called on to supply a fatigue party of 100 men for work on Artillery Horse lines near YPRES and we could only supply 80 O/Rs. and 2 Officers (Lieut. H.I. SOLOMON & 2/Lieut. P.H. RERDON) as the others were unfit.	
	" 5th. ")	In huts in DICKEBUSCH AREA during which the whole time was devoted to resting the men and attending to their comforts and medical wants and cleaning up and re-equipping.	
	6th.)	Lieut. G. BEDSOR, 2/Lieut. P.H. RERDON and 154 O/Rs. evacuated suffering from effects of Shell Gas.	
	7th.)		
	8th.)		
	9th.		Relieved by 5th. West Riding Regiment and left DICKEBUSCH AREA by bus at 10-35am. for STEENEVOORDE arriving there at 2pm. and went into billets. Bn. H.Qs. situated at Sheet 27 - U-30-c-6-0. Lieut. T.W. PAYNE embussing Officer fell with his horse, injuring his hand and was evacuated.	
	10th.		Men fairly comfortable in billets. Raining and no training done.	
	11th.)	In billets near STEENVOORDE. A little training fix done to keep the men fit.	
	12th.)		
	13th.)		
	14th.		Corps Commander General Sir W.R. BIRDWOOD presented medals and ribands to members of the 7th. A.I. Brigade on the ground opposite Bn. H.Qs. Sgt. ANNAT & Pte. FERGUSON presented with riband for M.M.	
	15th.		Billets STEENVOORDE.	
	16th.		Moved from STEENVOORDE by march route to BERTHEN AREA. Passed starting point in STEENVOORDE at 8-30am. and move was completed at 11-5 0am. and men settled in billets. No one fell out on the march. Bn. H.Qs. situated at Sheet 27 - R-33-d-9-9. Transport was Brigaded and did not accompany Bn.	
	17th.		Bn. moved to NEUVE EGLISE by march route - left billets at 10-35am. and arrived at NEUVE EGLISE at 2-35pm. The whole Bn. billeted in the town. Bn. H.Qs. situated at Sheet 28 - T-15-a-40-15.	
	18th.		In billets in NEUVE EGLISE. The billets are very comfortable and warm and although the weather is cold palliasses and straw are not supplied to the men, the men themselves preferring to do without them on account of the billets being warm and the palliasses making it difficult to keep the billets clean.	
	30th.			

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

F. Dawson Lieut.Col.

C.O. 25th. A.I. Battalion.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Nov. 18th. 1917 to Nov. 30th. 1917 (Cont.)		Nearly all the houses occupied are badly damaged by shell fire and with one exception none are occupied by civilians although there are many civilians carrying on business in the town, Much debris and broken material was piled up and lying about the buildings on our arrival but after a days work they were cleaned up and made fairly comfortable. Much useful training was carried out during this period including classes in Map Reading, Rapid Wiring, Lewis Gun, German Light Gun, (Copy of Syllabus of Training is annexed.) On the 28th. Major F.L. DAWSON rejoined the Battalion and was appointed to command temporarily.	
	Nov. 30th. 1917.		Strength:-26 Off. 695 0/Rs. including effective but detached 8 Off. 111 0/Rs.	

APPENDIX.

25th. Australian Infantry Battalion.

2nd. Nov. 1917.

1st.

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE FROM 6am. ~~1st~~ NOV. to 2nd. NOV. 1917.

1. A patrol of 2 Officers and 20 O/Rs. left our trenches at D-23-c-9-3 proceeding in direction of D-24-c-2-5 along main road running E to MILITARY ROAD. At junction of these roads D-24-c-4-6 is a dump of about 80 coils of barbed wire.

The patrol then moved along MILITARY ROAD but were fired upon by M.G. from TABLE WOOD.

The patrol then moved southwards to N.W. corner of CHINA WOOD. An enemy listening post was encountered at D-24-c-1-0. Immediately they fired two red flares breaking into two and fell back into CHINA WOOD where the flare signal was repeated. It was again repeated from about D-24-c-8-0 and then a light barrage (enemy) fell on S.W. corner of CHINA WOOD. Several white flares were then fired from East of CHINA WOOD.

Machine Gun fire from ANVIL WOOD prevented any further reconnaissance through CHINA WOOD.

A further reconnaissance on return of country between CHINA WOOD and Pill Boxes at D-24-c-2-5 discovered about 100 German dead also an enemy aeroplane badly damaged still containing body of pilot.

Light guns were observed firing continuously from direction of EFFECT COPSE.

The patrol returned to D-29-a-8-6 at 1-30am.

2. A standing patrol of 9 O/Rs. was established at D-24-c-2-5.

Enemy machine gun fire was observed from direction of TABLE WOOD. No other enemy movement was seen. Patrol returned at 4am.

Hostile Shelling:-

6-15am. Enemy barrage fire D-29 and D-28-c & d consisting of 77s. and 5.9s. lasting for 20 minutes.

11am. Phosgene gas shells in D-29-c.

1-50pm. Enemy shelling D-29-a and D-22-a with 5.9s.

Aerial Activity:-

Enemy still active at times flying very low. Engaged by M.G. & L.G. fire.

Balloons were observed from D-29-d-8-8. 104, 160, 140, M.B. at ~~1-50pm~~ 12-40pm. at 71, 122, 126, M.B. at 1-50pm.

Enemy Movement:-

Small parties were observed about 3 pm. moving in and near PASSCHENDALE CHURCH. They were dispersed by our artillery.

Miscellaneous:-

Fires were observed at E-25-d-1-9 - evidently a dump.

Also another fire about 2 miles away M.B. 130.

Red Cross flags observed E-19-b-4-8 also over large building in MOORSLEDE.

(Sgd.) H.PAGE Major.

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Training Syllabus for week ending 10.11.17

Tuesday 6.11.17	9.30 am. to 11.30 am.	Cleaning & Fitting of Equipment Rifles etc.
	2 pm. to 3.30 pm.	Reorganisation. Section & Platoon Drill.
Wednesday 7.11.17	9.30 am. to 11.30 am.	Box Respirator Drill. & Rifle Exercises
	2 pm. to 3.30 pm.	Preliminary Musketry & Rapid Loading
Thursday 8.11.17	9.30 am. to 11.30 am.	Inspection of and Foot Washing & Powdering
	2 pm. to 3.30 pm.	Rifle Exercises and Preliminary Musketry.
Friday 9.11.17	9.30 am. to 11.30 am.	Box Respirator Drill & Squad Drill.
	2 pm. to 3.30 pm.	Rifle Exercises & Coy. Sports
Saturday 10.11.17	9.30 am. to 11.30 am.	Inspection of and Box Respirator Drill. Squad Drill and Rifle Exercises
	2 pm. to 3.30 pm.	Half Holiday.

Notes.

Special Training for Signallers and Runners
and Lewis Gunners.

Short lectures by Officers to Platoons.

Continued

for C. C. 25th A. I. Bn. Lieut.

96 *Training Programme for Week Ending 17th November 1917* APPENDIX.
25th A. I. Battalion.

Days	From	To	Syllabus of Training.
Monday	9.30am.	11.30am.	Re-organizing and Re-equipping.
12.11.17	2pm.	4pm.	Route March
Tuesday	9.30am.	10.30am.	Rapid Loading Practice and Preliminary Musketry.
	10.30am.	11.30am.	Section & Platoon Drill and Rifle Exercises
13.11.17	2pm.	3pm.	Saluting and Box Respirator Drill
	3pm.	4pm.	Short lectures by Coy. Officers
Wednesday	9.30am.	11.30am.	Route March
14.11.17	2pm.	4pm.	Company Sports
Thursday	9.30am.	10am.	Section and Platoon Drill.
	10am.	10.30am.	Rifle Exercises
15.11.17	10.30am.	11.30am.	Inspection of and Box Respirator Drill.
			Lecture on Prevention of Trench feet.
	2pm.	3pm.	Battalion Parade and Inspections by C.O.
	3pm.	4pm.	Company Sports
Friday	9.30am.	11.30am.	Route March
	2pm.	3pm.	Bombing Practice and Drill
16.11.17	3pm.	4pm.	Short lectures by Coy. Officers.
Saturday	9.30am.	11.30am.	Battalion Sports
17.11.17	afternoon		Half Holiday
NOTE.			Special Training for Lewis Gunners - Signallers and Stitcher Bearers. Lectures to all Officers and N.C.O.'s on Wednesday - Thursday and Friday Afternoons from 4.15pm. to 5pm.

Sgd.
E. W. Leahy. Lieut. -
Adjutant.
25th A. I. Bn.

Training Programme.

APPENDIX.

25th A. I. Bn. for Week Ending 25th Nov. 1917

PLACE	DAYS	FROM	TO	TRAINING SYLLABUS.
	Monday 19. 11. 17	9 am. 10 am. 11 am. Afternoon	10 am. 11 am. 12 noon	Setting up Drill & Rifle Exercises Rapid Loading practice & Preliminary Musketry Bombing Practice. Saluting. Company Sports (including Inter Coy. Football matches)
	Tuesday 20. 11. 17	9 am. 2 pm. 3 pm.	12 noon 3 pm. 4 pm.	Route March. Company Drill. Bomb Throwing & Setting up Drill. "B" and "D" Coy. to carry out "Attack Practice". Scheme to be submitted by Boys.
	Wednesday 21. 11. 17	9 am. 10 am. 11 am. Afternoon	10 am. 11 am. 12 noon	Inspection of and Box Respirator Drill. Sections and Platoons Drill. Rapid loading & Preliminary Musketry. Half Holiday
	Thursday 22. 11. 17	9 am. 2 pm. 3 pm. 3.30 pm.	12 noon 3 pm. 3.30 pm. 4 pm.	Route March Inspection of & Box Respirator Drill. Rapid Loading Short lectures by Coy. Officers on "Trench Duties".
	Friday 23. 11. 17	9 am. 10 am. 11 am. 11 am. 2 pm. 3 pm.	10 am. 11 am. 12 noon	Setting up Drill & Bayonet Fighting Short lectures by Coy. Officers on: (1) Enemy Aeroplanes (2) Duties etc. of carrying Parties. and Rapid loading Practice. Sections & Platoons Drill. "A" & "C" Coy. to carry out "Attack Practice" Scheme to be submitted by Boys. Company Drill Lectures on and Saluting. Bomb Throwing Practice.
	Saturday 24. 11. 17	9 am. Afternoon	12 noon	Route March. Half Holiday
	Sunday 25. 11. 17	Morning Afternoon		Church Parades Band Concert.

NOTE:- Special training for Lewis Gunners, Signallers, Runners and Stretcher Bearers.

Lectures to all Officers and senior N.C.O.'s on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Lectures to N.C.O.'s on Guard Duties from 4.15 pm to 4.45 pm. daily.

Sgt. E. W. Cleary Lieut.
Adjutant 25th A. I. Bn.

T. 14. d. Central

APPENDIX.

Days	From	To	"A" Company	"B" Company	"C" Company	"D" Company
Thursday 29.11.17.	9 am	9.30 am	Range as Below.	Rifle Exercises	Rifle Exercises	Rifle Exercises
	9.30 am	10 am		Bayonet Fighting	Bayonet Fighting	Bayonet Fighting
	10 am	10.30 am		Musketry - Trigger Pressing & Manual Exercises	Musketry - Trigger Pressing & Manual Exercises	Musketry - Trigger Pressing & Manual Exercises
	10.30 am	11.30 am		Company Drill	Company Drill	Company Drill
	11.30 am	12 noon		Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on Trench Duties	Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on Trench Duties	Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on Trench Duties
	2.30 pm	3.30 pm	Rifle Exercises	Range as Below.	Afternoon (1.30 pm to 3.30 pm)	Afternoon (1.30 pm to 3.30 pm)
	3.30 pm	4 pm	Bayonet Fighting		Attack Practice demonstrating	Attack Practice demonstrating
	4 pm	4.30 pm	Company Drill		Methods of Formation & Advance.	Methods of Formation & Advance.
	4.30 pm	5 pm	Short Lecture by Coy. Officers on Trench Duties		(Scheme to be submitted by Coy)	(Scheme to be submitted by Coy)
	5 pm	5.30 pm				
Friday 30.11.17.	9 am	9.30 am	Range as Below.	Range as Below.	Range as Below.	Range as Below.
	9.30 am	10 am				
	10 am	11 am				
	11 am	11.30 am				
	11.30 am	12 noon				
	1.30 pm	2 pm	Letting up Drill	Letting up Drill	Letting up Drill	Letting up Drill
	2 pm	2.30 pm	Musketry - Fire Control & Passing of Orders	Musketry - Fire Control & Passing of Orders	Musketry - Fire Control & Passing of Orders	Musketry - Fire Control & Passing of Orders
	2.30 pm	3.30 pm	Bayonet Fighting	Bayonet Fighting	Bayonet Fighting	Bayonet Fighting
	3.30 pm	4 pm	Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on "Evolution of Trench Feet"	Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on "Evolution of Trench Feet"	Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on "Evolution of Trench Feet"	Short Lectures by Coy. Officers on "Evolution of Trench Feet"
	4 pm	4.30 pm				
	4.30 pm	5 pm				
	5 pm	5.30 pm				
	5.30 pm	6 pm				
	6 pm	6.30 pm				
	6.30 pm	7 pm				
	7 pm	7.30 pm				
	7.30 pm	8 pm				
	8 pm	8.30 pm				
	8.30 pm	9 pm				
	9 pm	9.30 pm				
	9.30 pm	10 pm				
	10 pm	10.30 pm				
	10.30 pm	11 pm				
	11 pm	11.30 pm				
	11.30 pm	12 midnight				

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Days	From	To	"A" Company	"B" Company	"C" Company	"D" Company
Saturday 1-12-17.	9 am	9:30 am	Rifle Exercises	Rifle Exercises	Rifle Exercises	Rifle Exercises
	9:30 am	10 am	Marching: Fire Control & Passing of Orders	March: Fire Control & Passing of Orders	March: Fire Control & Passing of Orders	March: Fire Control & Passing of Orders
	10 am	11 am	Platoon & Co. Drill	Platoon and Co. Drill	Platoon and Co. Drill	Platoon and Co. Drill
	11 am	12 noon	Bayonet Fighting - Bomb Throwing Practice & Firing Rifle Grenades.	Bayonet Fighting - Bomb Throwing Practice & Firing Rifle Grenades.	Bayonet Fighting - Bomb Throwing Practice & Firing Rifle Grenades.	Bayonet Fighting - Bomb Throwing Practice & Firing Rifle Grenades.
	Afternoon		←————→ Company Sports			
Sunday	Morning		←————→ Church Parade.			
	Afternoon		←————→ Band Concert and Football Match			

Note. Special training for Lewis Gunners - Signallers and Stretcher Bearer.

Lectures by R. G. H. to A.B.O.'s on Guard Duties etc from 5 pm to 8:30 pm on Monday - Thursday & Friday

Lectures to all Officers on - Monday - Thursday and Friday Afternoon on subjects as under:-

- { Monday: Military Law, Crimes and Offences. - Lieut G. P. Cleary.
- { Thursday: Map Reading and Field Sketching - Capt Connor.
- { Friday: Discipline - Major Davis.

Special classes for Junior Officers & A.B.O.'s.

- { Map Reading
- { Map Reading & Field Sketching
- { Lewis Gun

50% of A.B.O.'s. to attend these classes all day for 1 week.

G. P. Cleary Lieut
for C.O. 28th B. I. B. Co. 10

20/11/17

APPENDIX.