

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

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/21/14

**Title:** 4th Infantry Battalion

April 1916



AWM4-23/21/14

WAR DIARY.

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of events and information.	Remarks and refer- ences to Appendices.
MARSEILLES on TRAIN.	31/3/16. to 1/4/16.		Nothing of import occurred.	
STAPLE	2/4/16		Detrained at STAENBECKE at 0400 & Bn marched to STAPLE into billets at 0800.	
"	3/4/16		Training proceed of companies under company commanders.	
"	to 6/4/16			
	7/4/16		Bn was lectured on gas & was marched in gas helmets through trench containing gas & trench in which lachrymatory shells had burst.	
	8/4/16		Route march to near CASSEL in full marching order. Major I.G.MACKAY returned to Bn and assumed Command.	

(Original of above written on same sheet as entries for previous month & filed with volume for that month).

or  
**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY**

(Erase heading not required.)

4<sup>th</sup> Bn. A.I.F.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
STAPLE	08.04.16	1700	Major I. G. MACKAY reported back to 4 <sup>th</sup> BN, from Advanced Party 1 <sup>st</sup> DIVISION A.I.F., move from EGYPT to FRANCE. Major MACKAY took over command of BN from Capt. B.V. STACY. The latter had dictated complete orders to Company Commanders for move on 10/04/1916. These orders were approved. effective strength <sup>Off.</sup> 29 <sup>Others</sup> 967 <sup>Others</sup> nil	
"	09.04.16	1700	Billeting documents for period 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> April 1916 were completed & signed by the Major & Major MACKAY. Number of separate billets 29 amount due 665.440 francs. During afternoon officers reconnoitred route & time from billets to Ben. Starting Point.	
"	10.04.16	0745	Left Ben. Starting Point at STAPLE reached BDE. Starting Point at WALLON CAP. ELLE at 0825. Marched via HAZEBROUCK - PRADELLES - STRAZEELE to billets between METEREN & OUTTERSTEENE. Between HAZEBROUCK & PRADELLES our BDE marched whole way alongside an A.F.A. BDE. Units became mixed & marching very tiresome. Halt of 45 mins. at PRADELLES. Reached our billets at 12.30. On way 45 men fell out & did not rejoin till evening. Blankets carried on transport wagons in rolls of 10. Total transport used 9 G.S. wagons, 1 motor lorry (30 cwt.), these all A.S.C. Marching out state <sup>Officers</sup> 30 <sup>Others</sup> 958 <sup>Total</sup> 988	30 officers includes R.M.O. & Chaplain.
OUTTERSTEENE	11-15	April	Company training at billets. Musketry on 30 yds. range about 4000 rounds Mark VI firing Lewis M. Guns practised also. Bombers practised in breastwork trenches. Bayonet fighting, route marching. Scouts trained by 2/Lieut. MCKENZIE. Officers specially trained at schools 2/Lieuts. V.V. BROWN & G.S. CHAMPION - trench mortars; 2/Lieut. D.B. GREY - bayonet fighting; 2/Lieut. PUGH - Vickers Machine Gun; 2/Lieut. SYMINGTON - physical training. Capt. W.J. STACK visited front trenches 11-13 April near HOUPHINES; 12-14 April CAPT. B.V. STACY & LIEUT. H.A. MANN visited PETILLON front; 15 <sup>th</sup> April Capt. C.H. FOSTER visited front near N. ARMENTIÈRES; 16 <sup>th</sup> April Major I. G. MACKAY visited PETILLON front. At 1000 Church parade near 2 <sup>nd</sup> BN. billets attended by Major-Gen. H.B. WALKER and Lieut-Gen. W.R. BIRDWOOD.	
	16.04.16			

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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OUTTERSTEENE	17.4.1916	1700	At 0900 BN paraded in mass for inspection by Maj. Gen. H.B. WALKER; state showed 25 officers, 818 others - total 843. Maj. Gen. WALKER detained & sent message, received 0820, to say could not attend. Parade then inspected by O.C. BN. In afternoon route march of 2 hours. Dress full marching order, 120 rounds S.A.A. & one blanked rolled round pack. No one fell out. At 1700 Maj. Gen. WALKER was unable to meet 4 <sup>th</sup> BN. Officers as arranged. Whole of BN. 1 <sup>st</sup> Line transport wagons, 17 vehicles, together with LIEUT. L.M. LANE and 21 other ranks & 54 horses rejoined BN. by march from THERVANNE (24 mls). Much rain & roads extremely muddy. Billetting papers signed by Mayor & C.O. Number of separate billets 12, total amount due to Commune 590.80 francs.	
"	18.04.16	1030	Certificate left with M. ROUSSELI stating his field with bomb trenches used by 4 <sup>th</sup> BN April 11-18. Companies marched from billets to BN. starting point with certificates that billets had been left clean & in good order. Reached BDE. starting point railway crossing 600' S. of OUTTERSTEENE at 1057. All 1 <sup>st</sup> Line transport together with 6 G.S. wagons, 1 G.S. lumbered wagon & 1 motor ambulance marched in rear. Marched to SAILLY via DOULIEU. 4 <sup>th</sup> BN. state 31 officers, others 969, horses 54, vehicles 17. Halts 1115-1130 & 1230-1315 (lunch & feed). After this halt companies marched with 5 minutes interval between & transport in 3 parties with 2 mins. intervals. Crossed LYS BRIDGE at 1358 & there met Lieut. H.A. MANN with his advanced party of 4. Led to billets in SAILLY. Men carried blanket & wore great coats on march also carried steel helmets (2 lbs.). Cold & rainy all way & roads very muddy. 4 men fell out on march & were brought on by motor ambulance. Number of billets 7; 64.55 francs total amount due to inhabitants.	
SAILLY	19.04.16	0430	Again on march & head of column passed starting point crossing RUE DU QUESNOY & road SAILLY-FRAMELLES at 04.30. Order of march & parade states same as yesterday. Marched by platoons with 2 min. intervals between. Reached LA CROIX LESCORNEX at 0510; met there by guides & took over billets & posts from 23 <sup>rd</sup> MANCHESTER (bantam) REGIMENT. Proceeding S.E. of CROIX LESCORNEX we marched at side of road, by sections in single file with 50 yards distance between. In daylight no vehicles are permitted to pass this point. Single vehicles, except motor lorries, can pass at night. For march this morning weather fine & cold, light good but hazy in distance.	

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PETILLON	19.04.16	0700	<p>Before 0700 took over from 23<sup>rd</sup> MANCHESTER RGT. of 104<sup>th</sup> BDE. Our BN. is BDE. RESERVE in LEFT SECTION of PETILLON BDE. section. 2<sup>nd</sup> BN. holds front line &amp; we furnish one company close support to act under orders of O.C. 2<sup>nd</sup> BN. Another company of 4<sup>th</sup> BN is garrison to 3 posts of line CROIX BLANCHE - CHARRED POST. 3 small caretaking posts are also furnished &amp; BN, less above, provides various fatigues &amp; trains in billets.</p> <p><u>Distribution</u>. Reference map</p> <p>CROIX BLANCHE — 2 platoons A Co. Lieut. O.F.J. WOLFF; 2 Lewis M. Guns, Lieut. W.L. COOKE                  JUNCTION POST — 1 " A " 2/Lieut. D.B. GREY; 1 Lewis M. Gun. No 720 Cpl. SCOTT G.L.                  WINTER'S NIGHT — 1 " A " 2/Lieut. G.H. PUGH; 1 " " " No 1447 L/Cpl. WOODFORD G.C.</p> <p>Co. in BDE. Close Support — C Co. { near CROIX BLANCHE — 3 platoons CAPT. C.W. FOSTER                  " Y.C. AVENUE — 1 " Lieut. H.H. MCCARTHY</p> <p>B. Company, Capt. W.T. McDONALD { RUE BIACHE billets — Co. H.Q. &amp; 4 platoons                  SAILLY CEMETERY — Cpl. COLLINS &amp; 3 men</p> <p>D " Capt. C.G.K. JUDGE { RUE du QUESNE billets — Co. H.Q. &amp; 4 platoons                  SAILLY FACTORY — L/Cpl. SCOTT &amp; 3 men                  FOURTEEN TREES — L/Cpl. THOMSON &amp; 3 men</p>	
		0730	<p>Telephonic communication from BN. H.Q. (JERRY VILLA, RUE DU QUESNE) to A, B, C &amp; D Co. H.Q.'s, to 1<sup>st</sup> INF. BDE. &amp; to 2<sup>nd</sup> BN. No telephone to Q.M. Store &amp; Transport Section in SAILLY.</p>	
	20.04.16		<p>Stores of S.A.A., bombs, tanks etc. found to be wet &amp; damaged in some cases.</p> <p>Today we commence our WIND REPORT &amp; TACTICAL REPORTS to BDE.</p> <p>For first time we have had Field Kitchens in use. Much appreciated by cooks &amp; companies.</p> <p>Pioneers are making wind gauges, stretchers to carry discols &amp; S.A.A. boxes.</p> <p>Officers &amp; n.c.o.'s sent to special schools of instruction are now instructing other officers &amp; n.c.o.'s under Capt. B.V. STACY'S supervision.</p>	

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PETILLON	20.04.16		Scout Platoon of 30 men billeted together under 2/Lieut. W. MCKENZIE Bombing " " 1 Sgt. 4 Cpls. & 28 men formed & billeted together - 2/Lieut. C. M. BOILEAU in command. Other officers to assist in bombing are - A Co. 2/Lieut. D. B. GREY; B Co. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut. M. R. DOWLING; C Co. 2/Lieut. W. P. CLEMENGER; D Co. 2/Lieut. R. G. HORN- IMAN.	
	21.04.16		Training & lectures continued.	
	22.04.16		Very cold wet day. Two scouts No 2143 Pte. LEASON W., No. 2174 Pte. MACKEAN W. found a dead BLUE HOMER pigeon about H 27 a 6.3 (reference Sheet 36, 140,000) with a white metal ring round one leg. Ring was marked ARMENTIERES, 12, 394, L.R. Ring sent to BDE. with report. BN. paid today. Conference of Co. Commanders 16.30 today.	
	23.04.16		Chaplain Capt. W. L. MCKENZIE visited billets & preached 9 times today. Promotions appeared in DIV. Orders today viz - To be MAJOR - Capt. B. V. STACY dated 22/3/1916. To be CAPTAINS - Lieut. H. A. MANN dated 23/3/1916 & Lieut. H. V. GOULD dated 1/4/1916. Intelligence & similar reports from BDE. & DIV. & marked secret or confidential handed to BN. Intelligence Officer 2/Lieut. W. MCKENZIE to be kept studied & indexed. Daily effective strength today is - officers 31, other ranks 968, total 999, horses 54, vehicles 17. Orders issued to Companies to prepare for trenches blank notice boards, Russian covers for steel helmets, telescopes, periscopes; covers for rifle muzzles; dummy figures etc.	
	24.04.16		Clear bright sunny day. At 09.35 C Co reports billets & RUE DE BASSIÈRES shelled by field guns. Men moved from billets to surrounding trenches. Today our Chaplain Capt. W. MCKENZIE drove in officer's mess cart to canteens at BAILLEUL & BAC ST. MAUR & purchased for £10 "10" - cake sufficient to provide 1/2 lb. per man to mark anniversary of landing at Gallipoli. Money to come from Regimental Funds (Divisional Order)	
	25.04.16		Early this morning No 2625 Pte. G. GIBB R, D Co., killed by rifle bullet while on fatigue duty. Later in day another casualty No 2014 Pte. SMITH, R, slightly wounded. Today is anniversary of ANZAC landing 1915 & special issue of cake made. Lieut. W. A. SYM-	
			INGTON returned to duty today from School for Bayonet Fighting & Physical Culture. Today we were BN. for BDE. duty	

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PETILLON	26.04.16		<p>Today about 0800 + 1700 A Co's H.Q. shelled by 5.9" gun 22 shells in all. Bullets + surroundings hit several times but no casualties.</p> <p>Today Lieut. L.M. LANE returned from D Co. to Transport Section. A young woman, daughter of a local farmer, arrested by guard at JUNCTION POST for cutting barbed wire. Case sent to Brigade for inquiry. Major B.V. STACY + No 9/6 Sgt. MITCHELL left for London on 8 days leave reckoned from time of leaving BOULOGNE. Tonight D Co. relieved C Co. + B Co. relieved A Co. Move completed by 2200. During day B + D Cos + portion A Co. went to Divisional Baths at BAC ST. MAUR + received clean underclothing etc.</p>	
	27.04.16		<p>Today we were BN. for BDE. duty + provided numerous working parties.</p> <p>Tonight about 2230 our artillery began to fire heavily + we then received a telephone message from Brigade that warning of gas attack had been given by Brigade on our left. Companies warned, all ranks awakened, donned helmets + were in readiness to move. About 2330 our Brigade sent message to say all clear.</p>	
	28.04.16		<p>Visited trenches today. Conference of Company Commanders at 1630 at which preliminary outline of relief 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. next week given. All companies <sup>commanders</sup> to visit trenches + submit in writing by 0900 on 1/5/1915 their dispositions in trenches.</p> <p>Tonight about midnight another warning to be prepared for gas attack.</p>	
	29.04.16		<p>Today 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. is for Brigade duty.</p>	
	30.04.16		<p>From about 0800 to 1500 B Co's billet opposite FME. BARLETTE in RUE BIACHE was shelled by 15 cm. gun. Platoon taken out of billet + did not return till night fall. One casualty No Pte. Piece of cloth hit CAPT. W.T. McDONALD on his recently wounded shoulder. At 1945 practised alarm assembly of Battalion in accordance with orders submitted to Brigade.</p>	