

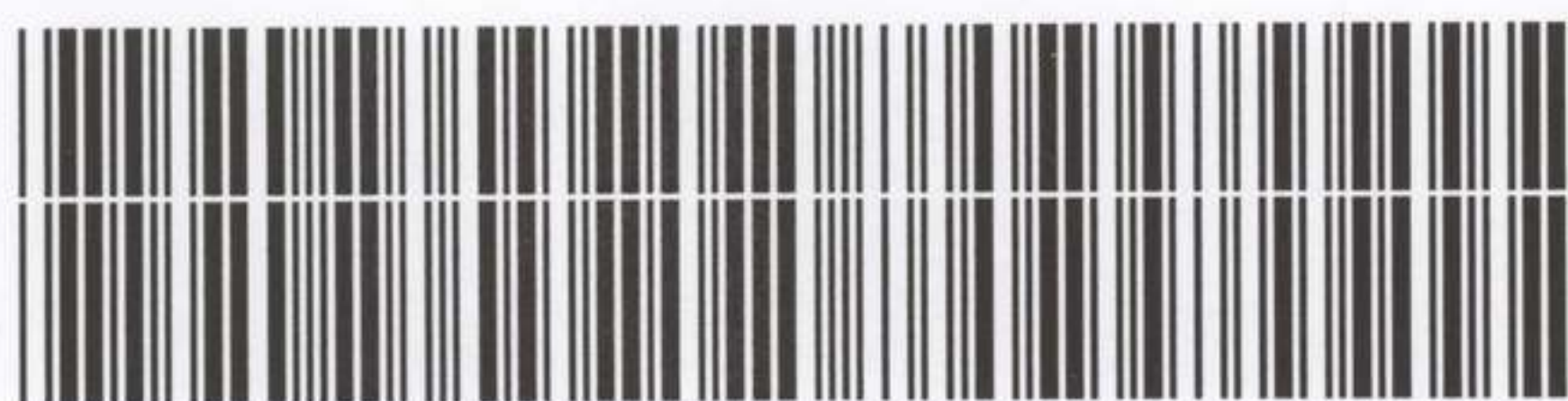
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/21/19

Title: 4th Infantry Battalion

September 1916



AWM4-23/21/19

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

493

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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4th Bn. A.I.F.

VOLUME VII

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BUSSEBOOM	1.9.16		<p>This morning Major D. R. Brown reports to Division for duty temporarily. Thus on the eve of going to the front as support battalion we have 17 officers & 444 other ranks. Of the officers all have less than 12 months service except C.O. Senior Major & Adjutant & Lieut. Pugh who has just 12 months. There are away in England & France at present 23 officers of this Battalion several of whom are fit to return immediately but from Pde. to Army Corps the fighting troops are unable to get them back. All is dependent on the "administrators" into whose methods of delaying & hampering the progress of the war it is high time inquiry be made. Either the policy or the personnel should be changed. This 4th Bn. in its attenuated condition, not to mention lack of experience in some officers & many men, is still probably regarded on paper as a Battalion in the full sense & as strong as heretofore. Today received 38 reinforcements bringing total other ranks to 482. Marched from camp 18.45, arrived Brandhoek 19.15. Commenced entraining 19.27 complete 19.35 arrived Ypres Asylum 20.10. Marched to billets in Ypres. H.Q. at Notre Dame about I 8 A 6.0. Transport remained at billets recently taken over viz H 13 D 8.3. Board of Inquiry which met on 30/8/16 decided that of 8 men posted missing 2 were wounded & 6 missing.</p>	
YPRES	2.9.16		<p>Reconnaissance of roads forward by Officers. Sent original copy war diary, period August 1-31 inclusive to Brigade.</p>	
	3-4/9/16		<p>Fatigue work for engineers; machine gun training. On 4th Capt. C. Y. K. Judge & batman reported for duty from England & were posted to A Co.</p>	
	5/9/16		<p>Lieut. Woodman & 11 other ranks reported for duty from England. Lieut. Woodman posted to D Co. & to command. 2/Lt. D. B. Grey & 6 other ranks returned from Lewis N. Y. School. Conference Coy. Commanders 1000 after which they proceeded to front line to take over orders with view to relief corresponding coys. 2nd Bn. During this operation a German Knechtwerfer fired into lines of B Co. buried & killed 5 officers & 4 other ranks including Lt. Pugh & Pte West 4th Bn.</p>	
	6/9/16		<p>Lt. Woodman transferred from D Co. to command B Co. Wet weather of yesterday has cleared & ground now drying. Last night Q. M. purchased at 29 francs each, 20 primus stoves for use in trenches; this amount of £20.15.8 is from Regimental fund.</p>	

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YPRES	6.9.16	(contin)	This morning at 0400 reported at 2 nd Bn. H.Q. our Bomb Platoon L.M.Y.S. 1 officer & 4 n.c.o.'s per company (B Coy details reported last night). Today Major Stacey president of a F.Y.C. visited 2 nd Bn. trenches in afternoon. 4 th Bn. moved from Ypres at 2030 relief complete at 2400. H.Q. at Valley Cottages. Transport Section moved lines to H20A8.6. Wagons come right to within 400 yds. of firing line.	
TRENCHES (MOUNT SORREL)	7/9/16		Trenches very sloppy & muddy up to knees but weather now fine. Our front line garrison only 310 men & so have asked for an additional 1 officer & 50 other ranks from 2 nd Bn. to hold trench 51. We also have 1 officer & 30 men attached to each of A, B & D Co (same as 2 nd Bn. had from us). Our front is trenches 47-55 inclusive & companies are in line B, C & D with A in rear to do fatigues & ration carrying. Best Lancaster Regt. on our left. Moved D Co's left flank up to St. Peter's St. Tonight Brigadier visited our lines. Front post in F sap surprised by German patrol & 1 man shot dead by revolver.	
	8/9/16		Quiet night trenches still very muddy but much improvement being done by garrison engineers & Pioneers. This afternoon Canadian Tunneling Co. blew gallery under C Sap. At night B Co occupied crater	
	9/9/16		Foggy morning, fine hot day moonlight night but misty in valleys. Collins (runner) shot by sniper. A few cards of mild trench foot amongst 2 nd Bn. men who have been in line some days. Tonight 4 officers & 140 other ranks were relieved by 2 nd Bn.	
	10/9/16		Quiet day & night. Much improvement noticeable in trenches. C & D Coys have reconnoitred along saps F, G, H & J to Stewart Street & we now hold portion between saps G & H.	
	11/9/16		This morning lines inspected by Lt. Colo. Bridges & Whitham of 2 nd Aust. Div. Preliminary orders received for relief on night 13/14 by 19 th Bn. A.I.F. Minenwerfers active on B Co front	
	12/9/16		C.O. Sen. Major & Coy. Commanders of 19 th Bn. visited lines. Early this morning minenwerfer buried & killed 5 men (4 of 2 nd Bn) in B Co lines (deep living trench which is now practically non-existent) Lt. Gen. Birdwood in lines this morning. Between 1300-1500 minenwerfer blew in B Co's front line in 7 places. Good retaliation by our artillery also again at 17.30. At 11.09 enemy blew a gallery under our crater at sap C. No damage to 4 th Bn. 1 Canadian buried.	
	13/9/16		Details of 19 th Bn. came into lines at dawn & took over. Brig. Gen. Holme visited lines. At 1500 we retaliated on enemy with field & heavy artillery, light & medium trench mortars. Later opposite B Co. we blew another gallery. 19 th Bn. left Ypres at 1945. Relief complete at 2300. Embarked about 0115 for Brandhoek, marched to Scottish Tents Boussemboom arriving about 0215. Lt. Col. J. G. Mackay went on 10 days leave to London.	

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BUSSEBOUM	1916 14 Sept.		Bn reached Scottish lines about 0230. Lt Col J. G. Mackay left for London on leave. Major B. Stacy left in command - The Bn rested all day.	
"	15 Sept.		Training started - 13 reinforcements arrived	
	16 Sept.		Usual training	
	17 Sept.		1/2 Bn went bathing parade. 7 reinforcements arrived	
	18 Sept.		Wet day - Bn in the huts - 29 reinforcements arrived - Capt. H. A. Mann adjt evacuated to Hoopl - Lt R. A. Macarpine appointed acting adjt	
	19 Sept.		Training - Advice received of Military Medals granted to 2468 Pte R Wilson 277 L/C F. L. Percy 280 Pte E South 45 Sgt G. H. Hill 2228 L/C J. P. Sives 3931 Pte C. R. Taylor 2593 Pte W. R. Flack - authy Divl Order.	
	20 Sept.		Training. Capt. C. G. K. Judge restored to establishment as from 3/9/16. Bn was	
	21 Sept.		inspected on 21/9/16 by Genl Sir H. P. Plumer at 15.30 in conjunction with 1 st Bn, M. G. Coy 1 st T. M. Batty	
	22 Sept.		2/11. R. J. G. Melville accidentally wounded by explosion of bomb which had failed to explode evacuated to which he was working - he was evacuated to hospital - Usual training	
	23 Sept.		Usual training	
	24 Sept.		Brigade Church parade - Lt Genl Sir W. B. Birdwood presented Military Medals to L/C J. P. Sives Ptes W. R. Flack R Wilson - Mr. Andrew Fisher also present at parade. 33 reinforcements arrived	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BUSSEBOOM	25.9.16 26.9.16		Last night Lt. Col. J. G. Mackay returned from 10 days leave in London. Training continued. During morning training continued. In afternoon details proceeded to 8 th Pn. lines to take over orders & stores. Left Scottish Lines by march at 18.30. Arrived at Café Belge via Dickerbusch about 20.10. Relief of 8 th Pn. complete by 22.00. Distribution H.Q., A, B, C Cos & Bomb Platoon near Café Belge, D Co in Canal dugouts about I 19 B 3.2. Transport section still at H 20 A 8.7 Battalion canteen conducted near Chateau Ségard.	
SUPPORT TRENCHES (CAFÉ BELGE)	27.9.16 28.9.16		Reconnaissance forward by officers, fatigue work by men. M ^{rs} Cope representative of Australian Comforts Fund on 1 st Div. visited this Battalion. Brigadier saw Serjt. Swils with view to supporting his recommendation for commission. Heard today from 10 th Casualty Clear. Stn. that 2/Lt. J. G. Melville died at 9.15 last night. Letter sent asking 10 th C.C.S. to enter him "died of wounds" if possible. Received from Comforts Fund 15 small cases containing cocoa & milk.	
	29.9.16		Fatigue work by men day & night. Weather a little showery. Lt. D. W. Isaacs returned from leave. Lt. Clemenger, 2/Lt. Horniman & 16 men returned to Pn. Only 1 man a reinforcement all others are returned from Casualties. Isaacs returns to D Co, Clemenger is posted to A & Horniman to C. 2/Lt. S. F. Freeman joined us from 8 th Pn. on 26/9/16 & is posted to D Co. Reported that Pte. Hawkins, who went with Cpl. Newsom to Divisional Training school to prepare for commissioned rank, had disappeared.	
	30.9.16		A Co. to move men for whom shelter exists forward to Wobbeke House & there to prepare cupola dug outs for remainder of Coy & move into them as soon as completed. Fighting strength today is - With the Pn. Officers 20, other ranks 506; Away from Pn. - Officers 3, other ranks 117. These latter include sick, schools of instruction on leave duties with Pde., No 1 M. G. C. L. T. M. B., Division Ordnance, Salvage Intelligence, 4 th Pioneer Pn., Veterinary Corps etc. etc. Grand total on so called fighting strength - Officers 23, other ranks 623. 2/Lt. A. J. Allen & 6 other ranks returned from L. M. G. School. Lt. G. R. McKeown on leave to London.	