

**AWM4**

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

Pay

**Item number:** 5/2/3

**Title:** Paymaster, Australian Corps

November 1917



AWM4-5/2/3



5/1/2.

2.12.17.

The Chief Paymaster, A.I.F.,  
London.  
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MONTHLY REPORT NO. 4.  
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1. I desire to submit my Monthly Report for November, 1917. Attached you will find a statement showing the aggregate transactions of Receipts and Expenditure for all Paymasters in France also extracts from the Reports received from different Paymasters.

2. Since my last report, 1st Anzac Corps have moved into another Area. This has not resulted in any material change in the number of Australian Units under my control but has resulted in an increase of advances of pay to Imperial Imprest Holders and Officers.

We are experiencing more difficulty in the matter of supervision in this area than the last on account of the scattered areas over which the units are distributed.

3. It has been necessary to make arrangements to visit the Forward Area once a week for the purpose of making advances to Units in that Area.

4. All Units without Pay Sergeants attached to 1st Anzac with the exception of one Railway Company, have been visited by a member of my staff, during the month for the purpose of attending to pay matters. The unit in question is some considerable distance away from Corps Area but will be visited at the first opportunity.

5. 39th GENERAL HOSPITAL.

During the month a Pay Sergeant was appointed at this Hospital to carry out our requirements. The Paymaster, Rouen, reports the wisdom of this has already proved itself as entries are now being made in Paybooks in accordance with your instructions No. 44688 dated 17.10.17, also the allotment question is being dealt with. The Paymaster states that the O.C. Hospital and staff are giving him every assistance to facilitate the work.

6. CONVALESCENT DEPOTS, TROUVILLE.

A Pay Sergeant has been appointed to carry out our requirements at these Depots. The Paymaster, Rouen, reports that O.C. give him every assistance and that he is arranging with the O.C., 14th Depot to build a room for the use of the Pay Sergeant.

Sergeant Fairnie, when he completes his instructions at Havre, will be placed at these Depots; in the meantime a Pay Sergeant from the 3rd A.D.B.D. is doing the work.



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# 7. OVERDRAWN ACCOUNTS.

Reports from Paymasters show that these have been reduced to a minimum. There is no doubt that the publication of A.I.F. Order 723 has been responsible for this and has been a deterrent as regards new overdrafts. The Paymaster, 3rd Division, reports that not one instance of an illegal payment was brought under his notice during the month.

# 8. DEBIT AND CREDIT ADVICES.

In some instances it is observed that two numbers are shown on these advices. If one is not necessary it should be deleted as the wrong number may be entered in paybook and subsequent reference may lead to some confusion.

In some cases of advices requesting entries to be made in Paybooks in respect of a debit against members on re-embarkation it would save disputes and much correspondence if, when forwarding the advice, full particulars as to how the debit came about were given. When in London I saw Lieut. Eyles who promised that this would be done. If this is given effect to it certainly will greatly assist your Paymaster in the Field.

# 9. REGIMENTAL TRUST ACCOUNTS.

The Paymaster, 5th Division reports that with the introduction of the new system, opportunity was taken to effect a reconciliation of the balances shown by Pass Books and the Units' Cash Books. The effect of the check was to clear up some long standing discrepancies and to outline to a representative of each Unit a simple system of keeping Regimental accounts and Cash Book.

# 10. CHECK AND CONTROL OF ALLOTMENTS.

The system, as outlined by you, was put into operation by all Paymasters at the earliest opportunity, and new or increased allotments are being obtained where necessary in accordance with instructions. All overdrafts of over 90 days at the net drawing rate are being reported and schedules of promotions and reversions and forfeitures 90 days and over, being prepared and necessary action taken re allotments.

The obtaining of Declarations of Dependency in respect of promotions up to the rank of Staff Sergeant is well in hand and I should be able in the next report to give you something definite regarding this work.

The Paymaster, 2nd Division, reports that it will be necessary to watch closely instances where a man is temporarily promoted, vice another evacuated etc., and on return of latter, he reverts to former rank but is the same day granted temporary rank vice another man evacuated. No fresh allotment would be forwarded on the second promotion.

The Paymaster, Rouen, reports that he is experiencing difficulty in obtaining allotments to cover separation allowance paid. The N.C.Os. maintain that as they signed their Attestation Papers and declared that they would allot 2/5ths or 3/5ths, as the case may be, they cannot now be called upon to increase same. The same difficulty is being



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# 10. CHECK AND CONTROL OF ALLOTMENTS. (Continued)

met with by all Paymasters, but where possible allotments are being obtained to cover Separation Allowance at Rates laid down in your Circular dated 19th September last, para 10.

The way to overcome the trouble, as pointed out by Paymaster, Rouen, would appear to have an A.I.F. Order issued authorising the Chief Paymaster to obtain allotments in accordance with the scale mentioned in your Circular quoted above in the case of promotion of Privates to higher substantive or temporary rank in all cases where the allottee is dependent.

## 11. REMITTANCES.

The Paymaster, 2nd Division, reports that he has not seen fit to rigidly enforce instructions contained in A.I.F. Order 849 and he has allowed a man to draw portion of his special credit, the balance remaining in the Paybook until the man is proceeding on leave. The Divisional and Unit Commanders are wholly in agreement with the course followed by the Paymaster.

The Paymaster, 4th Division, in his report, also comments on the advisability of allowing a soldier to draw a portion of the remittance and leave the balance in the paybook to be available when the man gets his leave.

This I think, is a good idea and would suggest that approval be given for general instructions on those lines to be issued to all Paymasters.

## 12. WAR SAVING CERTIFICATES.

I have, unfortunately, to report a falling off in the business done by Paymasters in this connection with the exception of the Paymaster, Rouen, whose figures show an increase over the figures of October. This no doubt can be accounted for by the staffs being busily engaged in connection with the new system for the check and control of allotments and in dealing with work that had accumulated while the Divisions were in Forward Areas or on the move.

The question is being kept well before all concerned and we hope to show improved figures in the next report.

## 13. ORDNANCE ISSUES ON REPAYMENT.

Consequently upon representations made to G.H.Q. by the G.O.C., A.I.F. instructions have now been issued in G.R.O. No. 2761 of 30.10.17 that Australian Officers receiving Ordnance Issues on repayment must produce their paybooks. The cost of the issues made will be entered therein by the Ordnance Officer making the issue, and the Paybook number and the Payment number will be entered on A.F. W 3225.

It has also been decided to introduce a Cash Payment System at the following Ordnance Depots on the L. of C.

Abbeville, Boulogne, Calais, Etaples, Havre, Rouen and St. Omer.

This system came into force as regards Abbeville from the 1st instant and will be put into operation at the other Depots when they are ready to adopt the Cash System. (G.R.O. 2876 dated 28.11.17).



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14. STAFF.

Warrant officer Sutton, from Cash Sub-Section, London reported for duty with the Paymaster, 2nd Division on the 3rd ulto. vice Staff Sergt. Fussell, evacuated sick to England.

Many transfers and appointments of Pay Sergeants have occurred during the month, through various reasons, especially in the Rouen Area.

The Paymaster, 3rd Division, reports that it was necessary for him to replace three of his Pay Sergeants during the month on account of their misconduct and unsatisfactory work. He also reports with pleasure that Pay Sergeant E. Woodhouse, who proceeded to the Corps School for preparatory training for an Infantry Commission, ~~has~~ passed the necessary qualifying examinations and has been sent to Oxford to complete his course and that he carries with him the best wishes of all the staff.

I regret to report that Sergt. R.A. Pasco attached to 1st Anzac Mounted Troops, met with an accident and had to be evacuated to Hospital. His place is being filled temporarily by Private Gearing who is carrying out the work very satisfactorily.

15. GENERAL

The idea of publishing a Booklet to Pay Representatives is welcomed by your representatives in the field and will be a decided improvement on the typed loose foolscap sheets now in use. Many suggested additions and amendments have been submitted by Paymasters and these will be forwarded by me to your Office at the earliest possible date.

The Paymaster, 2nd Division, reports in respect of the loss of 2,000 francs by the Imprest Holder, 11th Battery, 4th A.F.A. Brigade, particulars of which were reported to you last month, that the finding of the Board of Inquiry was, that Captain Rees was made responsible for repayment and that this officer is making necessary arrangements to adjust the Imprest Account.

I would like to draw your attention to the remarks of the Paymaster, 2nd Division with regard to the Acquittance Rolls compiled in connection with the A.I.F. X'mas Book. He states that in some instances the rolls were not compiled in Box Order owing to no instructions having been given in that respect, neither were they made out in duplicate and should the original be lost he doubts if it will be possible to get them replaced. He has altered any cases coming under his notice in accordance with the correct boxes. Should not the procedure be adopted regarding these as with the ordinary Acquittance Rolls? If so I think it would be advisable if instructions could be issued accordingly to those conducting the sale of such a book in the future. I might add that no instructions in connection with the Acquittance Rolls for this Xmas Book were issued to the Staff Paymaster, 1st Anzac.

The Paymaster, 2nd Division, points out in his report that advances are being made by Imperial, and particularly by Canadian Cashiers, to A.I.F. personnel on leave to Paris irrespective of the state of the credit shown in their paybooks.

As you are aware, arrangements have now been completed for the Canadian Paymaster in Paris to pay our men on leave and for one of our N.C.Os. to be attached to his office to check requirements. paybooks, make out acquittance rolls and attend to our pay requirements. He should take up his duties any day now and in future payments irrespective of the state of the Paybook as pointed out by the 2nd Divisional Paymaster, will not be made.



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15. GENERAL. (Continued)

As soon as Staff Sergeant Fussell reports at Paris instructions will be immediately issued to the British Cashier there to cease paying members of the A.I.F.

The Paymaster, 3rd Division states that the attachment of one of our representatives to the Canadian Pay Office for the *purpose* paying of all men on leave in that city will fill a long felt need.

The Paymaster, 3rd Division, reports that during the past month, much of the accumulation of work referred to in his previous reports has been disposed of but that unfortunately many of the men concerned were evacuated whilst the Division was engaged in active operations which naturally has necessitated correspondence being returned to London incomplete. He states that the volume of work passing through Divisional Paymaster's Office is rapidly increasing and he notices an appreciable difference in this respect compared to what it was in June last. This is attributable to several causes the principal of which are:-

- (1) The institution of the new system of Cash Remittances from Banks which are increasing daily.
- (2) The popularity of special and ordinary leave to Paris for which all advances are made at Divisional Office,
- (3) The work involved in dealing with debit and credit advices as a result of reconciling old Paybooks.
- (4) The effect of the new system of check and control of allotments recently instituted which entails a considerable amount of work in the Paymaster's Office and by individual Pay Sergeants.

The Paymaster, 4th Division reports:-

"A question was raised by me regarding the reinstatement of allotments to men dependents which have been cancelled to liquidate overdrafts. If an allotment of this sort is cancelled by us I do not consider that we can direct a soldier to reinstate it when his account is in credit. Would it not be better, if the reinstatement is considered necessary, to suspend payment for a period sufficient to cover the amount of overdraft? After all, a soldier is quite within his rights in refusing to sign an allotment to a non dependent."

In connection with this I would like to add that the matter was referred to me by the 4th Divisional Paymaster and I referred it on to your office some few days ago.

The Paymaster, Boulogne, reports that during the month the first consignment of Acquittance Rolls printed by the Army Stationery and Printing Depot came to hand. A regular monthly supply was ordered but it is the intention of the C.O. of the Depot to hand over a six months supply. We are endeavouring, as before reported, to obtain all classes of stationery used in France by the A.I.F. for which there is not suitable Imperial Forms.

During the early portion of last month all the Divisions were on the move and it was only near the end that they had settled down for any definite period.



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15. GENERAL. (Continued)

While at your Headquarters at the latter end of last month I took the opportunity of seeing the Officer i/c of Sub-Sections and discussed various matters with them with profitable results as many questions were dealt with of interest to the field and your Headquarters.

I consider that it would be a good idea for your Representative at 1st Anzac to visit your Headquarters about every two months with the purpose of keeping in touch with matters generally and especially with matters relative to the field. It would also be a good idea if you could arrange for some of your officers to visit France occasionally and have a look at what is going on in the Field. This would be the means of keeping the Field in touch with your Head Office.

In connection with the attached statement showing miscellaneous items for November it is noted that according to the 1st Divisional Paymaster's report he has 128 Sub-Imprest Accounts whereas the average for 1st Anzac and the other Divisions, is 59. It is not understood why the 1st Division should have so many. I am writing the Paymaster on the matter, maybe it is a clerical error.

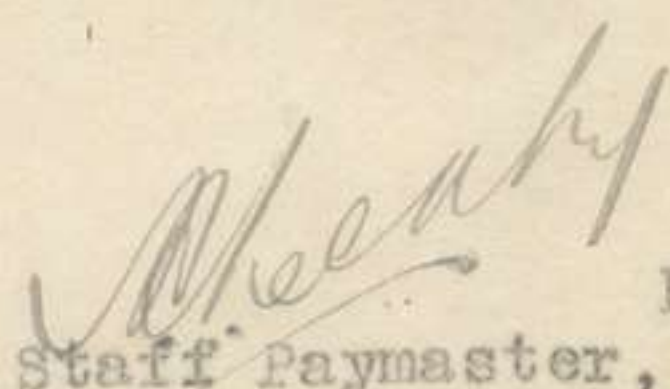
LETTERS RECEIVED.

It will be observed that the 2nd and 5th Divisions show 4550 and 4364 respectively and the 3rd Division 515. These figures are out of all proportion taking into consideration the totals shown by other Paymasters.

LETTERS DESPATCHED.

2nd Division, 5750, 5th Division 5273 and 3rd Division 707. Here again the figures are out of all proportion to those shown by other Paymasters. I have written to the Paymasters relative to these figures and will advise you on receipt of their replies.

The Return has been compiled from figures rendered by Paymasters.

  
Major,  
Staff Paymaster, A.I.F.,  
Attached 1st Anzac Headquarters.



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PAYMASTER 1st ANZAC.

DECEMBER 1917.

Diary not available for binding.