

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/25/37

Title: 8th Infantry Battalion

January 1918



AWM4-23/25/37

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

8th Bⁿ AIF

FOR

January 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling

R. P. [unclear] Capt. [unclear]

Signature of Officer Commanding

G. Mitchell M. 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.

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)



Army Form C. 2118.

31 JAN 1918

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
KEMMEL.	1-1-18		Working parties of B and C Coys cancelled. A + D Coys working on Reserve line. Troops very stale owing to coming out of the line after a 16 days tour, reaching billets very late, at night and having to turn out for working parties. March 5 and 6 Kilos to work before 8 a.m. following morning. Weather very wet and roads and tracks heavy. Effective strength 47 Off. 878. O.R. ^s . Ratee strength 37 Off. 704. O.R. ^s .	
IRISH HOUSE.	2-1-18.		Br. Hd. Qrs at KEMMEL and B + C Coys at LINDENHOEK Camp moved up to join remainder of Br. at IRISH HOUSE. Accommodation for half the troops good, remainder very poor. Raining very heavily. C.O., Adjutant and I.O. reconnoitred Support Brs. Battle position, in case of attack and routes to same. Parties of 4 Off + 200 O.R. ^s working on wire of Corps R Line in vicinity of PRINCE RUPPERTS Dugouts under supervision of 1 st Pioneer Br.	
	3-1-18.		Full working strength of Br. employed on Corps Reserve Line under Pioneer Br. Br. Hd. Qrs shifted to old Artillery Dugouts. Fort treatment carried out. Sick Parades fairly large owing to men getting very little rest. Two working parties shelled off jobs owing to day suddenly brightening. No casualties. Company guides & scouts reconnoitred Battle position in case of attack.	

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32

WAR DIARY

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IRISH HOUSE	7-1-18		Same works roster continued. Bn inspected by R.M.O. for Scabies. Lt-Col Mitchell returned from leave & resumed command of Bn. Two officers & 4 HCO's per Coy. reconnected battle position in case of attacks.	
	8-1-18		Works roster proceeded with. Foot treatment carried out. All light duty men employed improving accommodation.	
	6-1-18		All available men working on Corps Reserve Line. One party shelled off job, no casualties. A fairly large number of men suffering from minor complaints.	
	7-1-18		Work proceeded with. Area reconnected by 7 th Bn with a view to relief on following day.	
	8-1-18		Bn relieved by 7 th Bn A.I.F., relief complete without casualty by 2000. Bn proceeded to ROSSIGNOL CAMP (Nissen huts). Cold & very severe.	
	9-1-18		Three Coys supplied for work in forward area under RE & Pioneer Bn. Remaining Coy & Hds Bns put through LINDENHOEK baths, clothing changed, inspected for Scabies by R.M.O., feet treated, & all rifles examined by Armorer Sgt.	
	10-1-18		Same strength working parties supplied. A different Coy held off and put through baths inspected for scabies, feet treated & clothes changed & cleaned up. Rifles examined by Armorer Sgt.	
	11-1-18			

2

WAR DIARY

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ROSSIGNOL CAMP.	12-1-18		Work poster increased, necessitating full working strength of Bn being employed.	
	13-1-18		Work poster proceeded with. All men off duty in morning paraded at Cinema ^{Hall} for Remembrance for presentation of Medals & Ribbons by G.O.C., A.I.F. and Church Parade.	
	14-1-18		Lt Col Mitchell, DSO, Capt Wallis MC & Lieut Davidson reconnoitred 12 th Bn area in line with view of relief.	
	15-1-18		Advance parties proceeded to 12 th Bn area in line to take over stores etc & become familiar with disposition.	
	16-1-18		Weather dull. Bn moved from ROSSIGNOL CAMP at 0900 & relieved the 10 th Bn in Right Support at WOLVERGHEM. Relief was complete without casualty by 1100. At dusk the second stage of the relief was proceeded with & Bn moved forward by platoons at 1000 yards & relieved the 12 th Bn in the line. Relief was completed without casualty by 2100. Enemy shelling normal. Battalion in line. Disposition:- 'A' Coy. Front Line - Right 'B' " Close Support 'D' " Front Line - Left 'C' " in Reserve. 1 Platoon Bn H. Q. & 3 platoons Reserve S.P. Line	
			Bn H. Q. at U.4.C.4.2 Bn portage 0.11.36 to 0.35.38.0. River Douve running	Ref map.

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WAR DIARY

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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31 JAN 1918

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FRONT. LINE	16-1-18	2300	through U. 11. b. 3. 6. to U. 8. cent. Two men killed and 1 wounded in Reserve line by Shell fire.	
	17-1-18	1745.	Enemy quiet. Trenches very wet and swampy. Rations brought up & sent forward together with dry socks, Tommy cookers, & Foot Powder. 2 men wounded. ES. 47 of 879 OR RS 37 of 676 OR	
	18-1-18	1830.	Inter coy relief in progress. C coy relieving D coy & B relieving A coy. relief completed by 2000 without casualties. Rations gone forward without hitch. Day quiet. Artillery normal. Two Germans shot by our snipers during morning.	
	19-1-18	20 th	Day quiet. Situation normal. Artillery activity slightly increased. Our planes very active. Lt J. H. Wicks returned from School. Aircraft very active. Inter coy relief in progress, completed by 2030. One man	
	21-1-18	1830	wounded carrying rations forward. A few shells (5.9's) falling near Battalion HQs.	
	22-1-18	2000	Artillery active on both sides. Enemy planes hovering over our lines disappeared on approach of our planes. Enemy opened heavy 5.9. and 4.2 fire on left support coy & Battalion HQs.	
	23-1-18	1830	Enemy fire practically ceased. All communications untouched. Our snipers secured three victims at dusk. Day fine & quiet. Aircraft very active. Relieving coys of 12 th Bn. AIF. at BN HQs and relief of front line going on. completed by 2100 and Bn on march to WULVERGHEM. Lutments & camp.	
WULVERGHEM	24-1-18	6	All available men in Batt on working parties (day & night) in forward area. Work	
	26-1-18		continued throughout day and night. ES. 51 of 944 OR RS. 31 of 668 OR	
	27-1-18		Working Parties still being supplied. Camp visited by corps. commander.	
	28-1-18		Day working parties relieved by noon to prepare for move to LOCRE.	

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LOCRE	29.1.18		Battalion on move to DONCASTER HUTS LOCRE. March commenced at 0900 and men were comfortably billeted in huts by 1100 without incident. 4/10 men fell out on march.	
	30.1.18		Day spent in cleaning & re-organization. (11pm) "Alarm" sounded on 5 th Dn area where a fire had broken out. Guard turned out but Dn not needed so men "Stood Down".	
	31.1.18		Bathing parades carried out at LOCRE BATHS throughout day. ES. 52-931. RS. 50-922.	

W. Mitchell Lieut-Colonel
Commanding 8th Battalion. A. I. F.

app 1

Appendix 1.

Appendix 1

8th. Battalion, A. I. F.

War Diary, January 1918

Quarter Master's Report from 1st. to 29th. January.

Supplies. The quality and general condition of the rations has been up to the standard except in the case of bread.

31 JAN 1918

Bread. Advice was received early in the month that the issue would be cut down to 43%, this only lasted 3 days when it increased again to 66% and has remained so since. It often is delivered in a very broken condition which renders it very difficult to cut up and creates a shortage. This matter has been repeatedly reported to the S.S.O. Damage to bread occurs in transit.

Meat (Fresh). The average percentage for the month has been 55%, the balance has been made up in M & V and Bully Beef. On one occasion during the month 8 cases Pork and Beans was issued: 384 rations, the balance in fresh meat, it can hardly be said this is a meat issue.

Vegetables. There has been a very light issue during the past 4 weeks. The issue is chiefly composed of potatoes and onions and also the vegetables food contained in the M & V ration, the average issue has been 75%. I am assured by the S.S.O. that this shortage will be made up in carrots shortly.

Jam and Margarine. The issue has been up to the standard.

Groceries. Quite up to the scale laid down.

Tobacco and Cigarettes. Full issue is received every week.

Fuel. Occasionally a shortage occurs but this is usually made up.

Burning Oil. Of late there appears to be a difficulty in obtaining our requirements.

Ordnance Stores. The general equipment of the Battalion prior to entering the line in December was up to the establishment. Indents are now being submitted to complete shortages.

Transport Equipment. Is good, there are some articles demanded for and are not yet to hand. During the month all vehicles excepting Cookers have been painted over twice and also improvised dust wheel caps have been fitted in accordance with G.R.O. (M & V tins are cut and fitted for this purpose)

Cookers and Water Carts. Are in good condition with exception to VGV Coy, being second hand when issued in December, it has burned through, this will be sent to I.O.M. for inspection.



32

32



31 JAN 1918

Service Dress Clothing. Tunics are all of Australian pattern and supplies seem plentiful.

Australian Pattern Trousers and Puttees are not available, it is necessary, therefore, to accept English pattern.

Hats. English pattern hats are of a very poor quality, which is a green felt, the colour fades to a purple shade in many cases. A small percentage of Australian manufactured hats are coming to hand. The following shows the issue made to the Battalion during the period:-

	Issued.	On hand.
Tunics	61	60
Trousers	126	50
Puttees	100	-
Breeches M.S.	9	-

Underclothing. Is exchanged from Divisional Baths. No difficulty has been experienced in obtaining our requirements. I have always found same in a clean wearable condition.

Boots. Australian manufactured boots are mostly drawn, although all the same pattern the quality varies somewhat, some makes last longer and keep the water out better. A record is being kept of the brand and dates which all new boots are issued, so that the life of the first sole can be arrived at. A clump sole is now being fitted to all boots before leaving Ordnance.

I have to report there are many instances where boots are returned from Corps in a burnt condition rendering them useless for repairs.

The following shows the number of boots issued during the month:-

	Issued.	On hand.
New	301	62
Repaired & issued	198	Repaired 50
Total.	499	112

Lewis M. Guns. Are complete with exception to a few spare parts and magazines.

Signaller's Stores. Are complete except for few spare parts and cells.

Salvage Returns.

<u>Fat</u> returned during month	652 lbs.
<u>Paper</u>	9 bags
<u>Cardboard</u>	7
<u>Tunics</u>	56
<u>Breeches</u> D.S.	50
<u>Puttees</u>	40



Appendix 1.

-3-

Appendix
8th. Battalion, A.I. F.

Salvage Returns (contd.)

<u>Hats</u>	71
<u>Respirators P.H.</u>	419
<u>Respirators Box</u>	26
<u>Boots Ankle</u>	152 pairs.
<u>Boots F.S.</u>	2

We have a substantial credit with Divisional Baths of under-clothing:

31 JAN 1918

<u>Shirts</u>	487
<u>Socks</u>	25
<u>Vests Woollen</u>	38

C. Freeman
.....Captain.

Quarter Master, 8th. Battalion, A.I.F.

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31 JAN 1918

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			<p><u>APPENDIX N° 11</u></p> <p>Officers marched 17.</p> <p>Lieut. R. Woodhouse. from 2nd Tbn 12-1-18</p> <p>" H. Fenton " " " "</p> <p>2/Lieut. D. W. Kennedy from Cadet Dn "</p> <p>" J. G. Evans " " " "</p> <p>" T. Witherdore from Hospital.</p> <p>Proceeded on leave during month 5 off. 120 O'Ranks</p> <p>Reinforcements marched in 5 off. 165 O'Ranks</p> <p>Evacuations during month 4 off 136 O'Ranks.</p>	

Appendix 11
2