

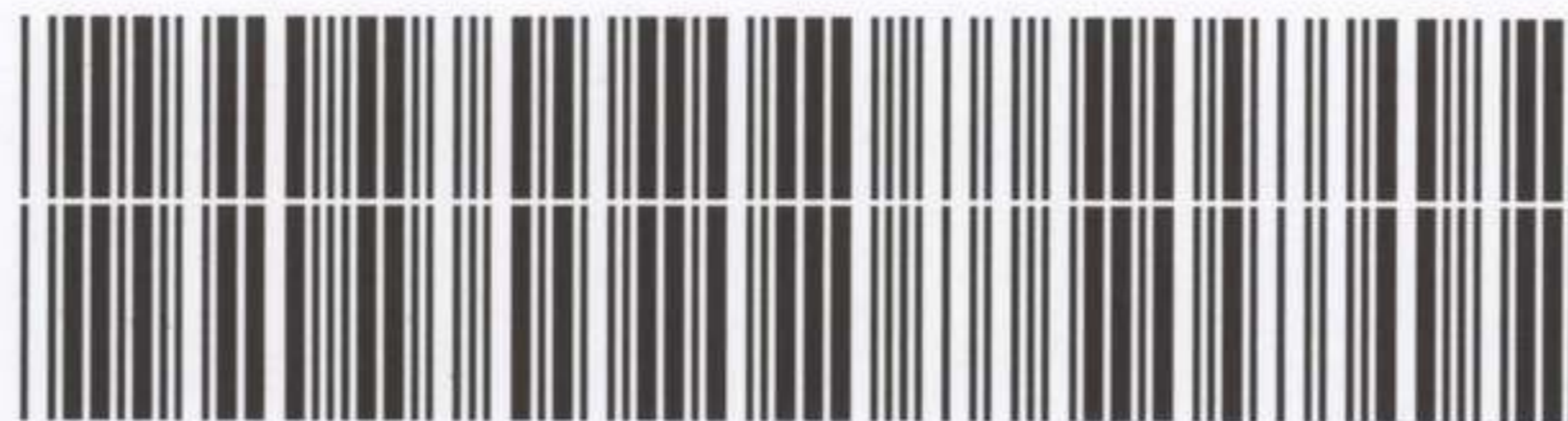
**AWM4**  
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
**1914-18 War**

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/72/6

**Title:** 55th Infantry Battalion

August 1916



AWM4-23/72/6

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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.

or  
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRANCE FRONT LINE TRENCHES	1916 Aug. 1.		<p>The enemy are again very active working on repairs etc. to their line. Engine again heard working by our patrol. Enemy searchlights well used by night. Considerable aircraft activity, and 2 enemy planes driven back from our lines. Intermittent artillery fire from both sides all day.</p> <p>Reinforced today by 1 Officer + 50 other Ranks of 53rd Battalion</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength: 20 officers 596 of Ranks Casualties: 1 man wounded -</p>	
	2		<p>Continued artillery activity. Reinforcements arrived today from 5th Div's Details Camp: 115 of Ranks.</p> <p>Our patrol out from 10.30 p.m. to 11.30 p.m., discovered enemy patrol cutting our wire at N. 6. d. 1/2. 9, and drove them off with bombs.</p> <p>Enemy planes more active today than usual, but were all driven off by our aircraft.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion strength before arrival of Reinforcements: 20 off. 595 of Ranks</p>	
	3		<p>Artillery on both sides again active and aircraft very active. Our artillery bombarded enemy trenches from 10.30 p.m. till 2.30 a.m. 4 1/2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength 20 off. 710 of Ranks Casualties: 1 man wounded</p>	
	4		<p>Our artillery caused a fair amount of damage to the enemy's parapets today. Enemy's retaliations caused to casualties amongst the units in our lines. Enemy discovered repairing his wire during the night 3/4 by our patrol. Enemy searchlight busy during night searching for aircraft.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength: - 20 off 702 of Ranks Casualties 1 other rank killed 3 " " wounded</p>	

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FRANCE	Aug 1916			
Front Line trenches	5		<p>Artillery and aircraft both active during the day - One of our aircraft had to descend in rear of our lines about 6 p.m., and consequently drew the enemy's fire.</p> <p>Orders received to move into billets at FLEURBAIX during the night of 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> August.</p> <p>Relieved by 53rd Bn. about midnight and moved back to billets in FLEURBAIX, excepting "D" Company, which proceeded to CROIX MARECHAL Post, and garrisoned same.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 20 officers 696 of Ranks</p>	
FLEURBAIX	6		<p>Battalion now in billets at FLEURBAIX. Battalion Headquarters at H. 21. a. 3. 6. "A" and "B" Companies and Lewis Gun Detachment at H. 27. a. 5. 9. "C" Company at Post à Clous (H. 21. a. 0. 10). Permanent Fatigue parties of about 160 men in all are being found daily for the Engineers. 1 other Rank marched in as Reinforcement.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 20 officers, 696 of Ranks</p>	
	7		<p>Fatigue parties for Engineers now increased to about 260 men daily. The enemy have been shelling the village in the vicinity of Battalion Billets but no Casualties have occurred.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 20 Officers, 697 of Ranks</p>	
	8		<p>Battalion still in billets and fatigues being supplied as usual. Occasional shelling of the outskirts of the village still goes on.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 20 officers 698 of Ranks</p>	
	9.		<p>No alteration in routine</p> <p>Casualties: 1 of Rank by shell.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 20 officers: 697 of Ranks</p>	

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FRANCE.	Aug. '16			
Billets, FLEURBAIX	10		Same Routine continues. The number of officers has been increased by 3 by appointment of R.S.M. and the P.O.M.S., and a C.S.M. to rank of 2/Lieut.	
	11		Battalion Strength: 23 Officers. 694 Other Ranks Arrangements made to relieve the Company at CROIX MARECHAL post. and during the early part of the night of 11 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup> August "C" Company proceeded to CROIX MARECHAL, relieved "D" Company, who returned to FLEURBAIX, and took over the Billets formerly occupied by "C" Company	
	12		Battalion Strength:- 23 Officers. 694 Other Ranks Routine as on previous days. 7 other Ranks taken on strength from Reinforcement Base.	
	13		Battalion Strength: 23 Off., 693 O/Ranks. Fatigues supplied as usual - "Gas Alert" received 12.30 a.m. night 13 <sup>th</sup> /14 <sup>th</sup> Aug. Notification received of the award of the Military Medal to No 3219 Private Chadwick L., and No 3150 Private Perkins J. A., both of "B" Coy	
	14		Battalion Strength 23 Off: 700/Ranks. 100 men previously employed on the Engineers Fatigues now working at the Divisional Fuel Dump. 1 man taken on strength from Reinforcements.	
	15		Battalion Strength: 23 Off. 701 O/Ranks. Routine continued. Men are being increased daily in bomb throwing. 56 Reinforcements taken on strength, 13 of these were previously in the Battalion, but were evacuated sick or wounded	
	16		Battalion Strength: 23 Officers 701 O/Ranks No alteration in routine.	
	17		Battalion Strength 23 Off: 754 O/R. Routine as usual.	

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FRANCE	1916. Aug.			
FLEURBAIX in billets	18 <sup>th</sup>		Routine as usual. <span style="float: right;">Battalion Strength: 23 officers - 750 Other Ranks</span>	
	19 <sup>th</sup>		Routine as usual. - Orders received to move out to front line on night of 20 <sup>th</sup> August.	
	20 <sup>th</sup>		Bay Sunday. Church parades were held during morning. Preparations made to relieve the 53 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion moved off in small parties and relief of 53 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion was completed by 11.30 p.m. The same positions as were held during the period 22.7.16 to 5.8.16 again occupied.	
Front line. Sections HQ, H1, H2 & Paul 43	21 <sup>st</sup>		Our artillery fired intermittently during the day. TURKS POINT (Map Ref. N.5.d.H.2) being well bombarded about 10 a.m. More accommodation has been provided at BOUTILLERIE POST on 300 yards line. The Garrison there now numbers 94.	
	22		Aircraft moderately active during the day. Enemy considerably damaged by our artillery fire at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. - Gas Alert given by Brigade at 11.35 p.m. - Two German aircraft up between out during the night but met with no enemy parties.	
	23		G.O.C. 5 <sup>th</sup> Aust. Division during morning. - Aircraft again active. Enemy artillery sent 40 shells on to CROIX MARECHAL at 6.15 p.m.	
	24		Enemy has been busy repairing parapets etc. during the last few days. Enemy sniping is now almost nil as we have gained the ascendancy. Two enemy planes driven off by our anti-aircraft guns at 5 p.m. - Since returning to the front	

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FRANCE	1916 - Aug.			
FRONT LINE SECS. 40, 41, 42 and para 43	24		<p>The Battalion has performed a great deal of work on the defences. The parapet has been strengthened in several places, the parapets improved - Several new dugouts have been constructed in the front line - 2 concrete dug-outs in the 300 yards line, and 2 at FORAY HOUSE are under construction. Throughout the front line, duck boards have been raised above the ground level.</p> <p>We bombarded enemy line with Stokes mortars about midnight. Enemy sent up an abnormal number of flares.</p> <p>2 Officers and 58 other Ranks left today to attend School of Instruction in raiding.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength: 23 off, 746 Other Ranks</p>	
	25		<p>The enemy are apparently carrying out extensive repairs etc. near TURKS POINT and CLAPHAM JUNCTION as a considerable amount of noise is heard there.</p> <p>The whole of "D" Company left at 4 a.m. for SAILLY where they are to undergo a special course of training for raiding parties.</p> <p>A fighting patrol of 1 Officer and 7 men operated from 9.30 p.m. to 12 midnight in front of enemy trenches, but no enemy patrols were encountered - At 12 midnight the L.T.M. Battery opened fire on enemy parapet - German retaliation did no harm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength: 23 off, 743 Other Ranks.</p>	(Map Ref. N.54.H.2) ( " " N.6.C.25,25)
	26		<p>More activity displayed today by Artillery and trench mortars on both sides. Our sappers were very busy watching working parties behind CLAPHAM JUNCTION, and the latter were obliged to cease work. The L.T.M.B. again bombarded enemy positions at 3.45 p.m., enemy's retaliation being silenced by our Artillery.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength: 23 off, 743 Other Ranks.</p>	
	27		<p>MAISNIL AVENUE (Map Ref. N.12.2.8.6) in the German lines is fired on nightly by our rifle battery, situated about 900 yards in rear of <sup>our</sup> front line. Our Artillery again active - TURKS POINT bombarded 12.30 p.m., and a suspected M.G. position to the rear of German lines considerably</p>	

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FRANCE	16 Aug.			
Front line Trenches.	27		<p>damaged - No enemy aircraft observed to-day. - An exceptionally quiet night and very few flares used by the enemy.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 23 Officers - 742 Other Ranks.</p>	
	28		<p>Everything quiet up to 4 p.m., when our Artillery and Trench Mortars commenced an intense bombardment which lasted till <del>4</del> 4.50 p.m. Considerable damage caused to enemy parapet near TURKS POINT, it being breached in one part. Enemy retaliation caused little damage with the exception of 2 men slightly wounded. - The Artillery and Trench Mortars again bombarded enemy positions from TURKS POINT to the NEEDLE <sup>(Map ref N.S. d. 81)</sup> from 11 to 11.45 p.m. - Retaliation caused 1 slight casualty only wounded.</p> <p>Enemy plane driven back from our lines at 7.15 p.m.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 26 off. 737 Other Ranks.</p> <p>The strength of Officers being increased to 26 by the appointment of 3 Sergeants to Commissioned Rank.</p> <p>Casualties: - 3 Wounded.</p>	
	29.		<p>Artillery on both sides moderately active during the day. Enemy working parties fired on by machine guns several times and had to cease work.</p> <p>20 Reinforcements marched in from Details Camp - 7 of them being original men of this Battalion - Heavy rain started during afternoon. -</p> <p>Honours list: received notifying the award of Military Cross to Lieut. W. DENOON and 2/Lieut. (now Lieut.) P. W. CHAPMAN; and D.C.M. to Sergt. (now 2/Lieut.) S. COLLESS, and Sergt. F. A. HOCKING.</p> <p>Battalion Strength: 26 Officers 734 Other Ranks.</p>	

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FRANCE FRONT LINE	1916, Aug.	30	<p>Weather conditions continue as yesterday. The heavy rain has flooded dug-outs and made the ground very slippery and treacherous.</p> <p>Aircraft inactive owing to adverse weather, and artillery a little quieter than previously. Machine gun fire more active than usual during the night. Our patrol operated from 9.30 p.m. to 11 p.m. but encountered no enemy parties.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Battalion Strength: 26 Off. 754 O/Ranks</p>	
		31	<p>Weather is now fine and ground drying fairly as same has been drained as well as possible. Everything is quieter than usual and very little activity has been displayed by the artillery.</p>	