

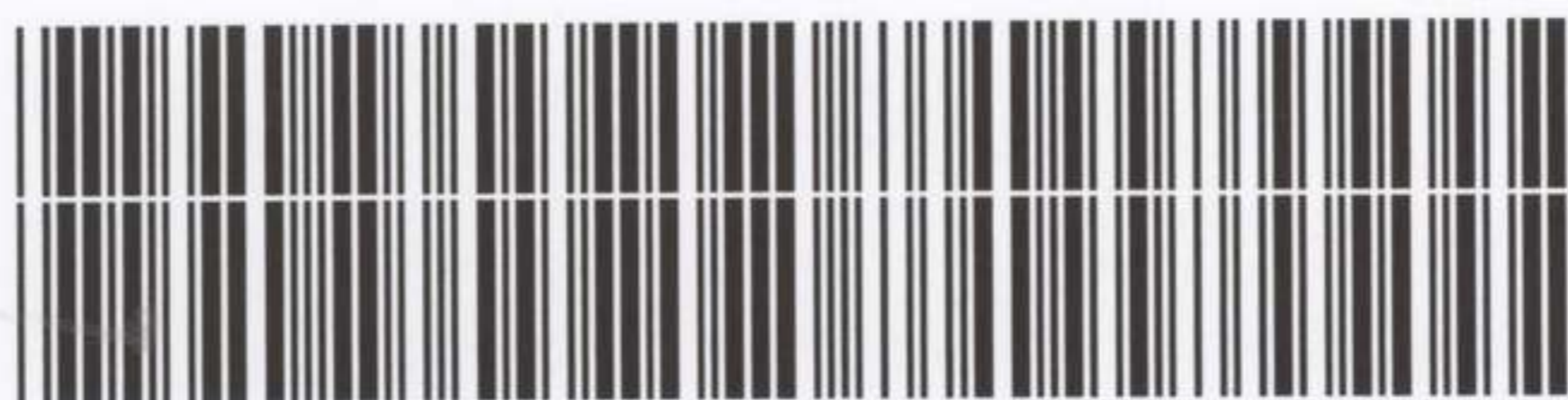
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/68/12

Title: 51st Infantry Battalion

February 1917



AWM4-23/68/12

Original

Vol. III

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

69

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

①

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FLEERS	Feb 1917	1 st	51 st Battalion. A.I.F. Working parties in HAY RESERVE & FORAGE AVENUE, SWITCH & GAP TRENCHES caving & wiring parties.	
"		2 nd	Usual working, caving & wiring parties	
"		3 rd		
"		4 th		
"		5 th		
"		6		Major C.C. Ridley from H.Q. 13 th Aus Inf Bde reported and took command of the Battalion
			Battalion relieved the 49 th Bn in Front Line side Bn Order N° 2 Relief was reported complete at 7.30 p.m. without casualties. Copy attached. marked <u>I</u>	<u>I</u>
			Copy of distribution in Front Line attached. marked <u>II</u>	<u>II</u>
			" " Trench Standing Orders " " marked <u>III</u>	<u>III</u>
		14	Minor operations carried out in accordance with instructions issued and contained in Bn Order N° 7 - Copy attached marked <u>IV</u>	<u>IV</u>



2353 Wt. W2544/1454 700,000 5/15 D. D. & L. A.D.S.S./Forms/C. 2118.

B. B. Ridley LIEUT. COL. COMMANDING 51st BATTALION

I

WAR DIARY

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

②

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
1914	Febry 15		<p>Report on minor operation carried out last night - attached marked <u>V</u></p> <p>It was subsequently learned that the main object of our assistance had been achieved. The operations on our RIGHT were carried out successfully and with but few casualties</p> <p>Copy of Daily Strength Return attached marked <u>VI</u></p>	<p><u>V</u></p> <p><u>VI</u></p>
	16		<p>Battalion relieved by 50th Bn and moves to PERTH Camp vide Bn order No 8 - Copy attached marked <u>VII</u></p> <p>Relief reported complete at 8.50 pm without casualties.</p>	<p><u>VII</u></p>
PERTH Camp.	17		<p>Battalion engaged ^{supplying} with working, carrying & wiring parties in Bde area</p> <p>Local improvements made to Camp, new shelter for Cookers erected, 9 NISSON Bow Huts for men's accommodation and minor imppts</p>	

2353 Wt. W2544/1454 700,000 5/15 D. D. & L. A.D.S.S./Forms/C. 2118.

B. Ridley
LIEUT. COL.
COMMANDING 51st BATTALION

WAR DIARY

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

3

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
1914	Febry	25	Battalion moves to BUIRE with remainder of B'de, vide Bn Order No 9 Copy attached marked <u>VIII</u>	<u>VIII</u>
		26 27 28	Training vide Syllabus - Copy attached marked <u>IX</u>	<u>IX</u>
		28	Copy of Daily Strength Return attached marked <u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
			Summary of Casualties for period 8-1-14 to 28-2-14:- Killed - 4 Other Ranks Died of Wounds - 1 " " " " Disease - 2 " " Wounded - ^x 23 " " x. of whom 3 remained on duty.	
			Bb. Ridley LEUT. COL. COMMANDING 51st BATTALION	

Battalion Order No. 2.

1. The relief of the 49th Battalion in the Front Line will be carried out on the night of the 6th/7th February, in accordance with the "Probable Table of Reliefs", already issued.
 2. Relief will be carried out as follows :-
Lewis Guns will be posted first under Lewis Gun Officer's arrangements.
"A" Company will move at 5 p.m.
"D" Company will move at 5:30 p.m.
"B" Company will move at 6:30 p.m.
"C" Company will remain in its present position.
 3. "B" Companies' Lewis Gunners with 2 guns and 1/2 "D" Company's Lewis Gunners with 2 guns will report to Lewis Gun Officer at Battalion Headquarters at 5 p.m.
 4. Completion of relief will be notified to Battalion Headquarters by code wire.
 5. One Officer and 4 N.C.O's of "A" Company will be sent on in advance to take over area stores.
 6. O.C. "C" Company, will arrange to hand over the Camp to 49th Battalion and obtain receipts for area stores and certificate that the camp was clean and tidy at the time of handing over.
 7. "B" and "D" Companies will leave an Officer behind to hand over area stores, and obtain receipts from incoming Companies.
 8. All receipts given and taken will be in duplicate and one copy will be forwarded to Battalion Headquarters by first runner.
 9. Attention is drawn to the table of working parties furnished while the Battalion is in the line, of which a copy is issued to each Company.
10. ACKNOWLEDGE.

5/2/14.

Shovel
Captain,
Adjutant 51st Battalion.

F L E R S Sector - DISTRIBUTION.

II

Right sub-sector.

	<u>N.C.Os.</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Standing Patrol (75 yards out).	3	11	14.
Listening Post, forward.	1	3	4
3. Posts.	3	18	21
3 L.G. Posts.	3	15	18
Bombing Posts. (Left of sector).	1	6	7
" " (Between Right and Left Sub-sectors).	1	6	7
<u>Company Headquarters.</u> - C.S.M.	1		1
Signallers.		3	3
Runners.		2	2
Stretcher bearers.		2	2
Batmen.		3	3
Sanitary Police.		2	2
Total excluding Officers.	13	72	84

Left Sub-sector.

3 Lewis Gun Teams.	3	9	12
5. Posts.	6	30	36
Listening post.	1	4	5
<u>Company Headquarters.</u> - C.S.M.	1		1
Signallers.		3	3
Runner.		1	1
Batmen.		2	2
Stretcher bearers.		4	4
Sanitary Police.		1	1
Total excluding Officers	10	53	63

Total Garrison. -

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>N.C.Os.</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Right sub-sector	3	13	72	87
Left " "	2	10	53	65
	5	23	125	153

bbk

TRENCH STANDING ORDERS.

III

1. The Senior Officer in the line will be responsible for both the Right and Left Sectors.
2. At least one Officer will always be on duty in each Sector.
3. The Garrison in the Front Line will always wear web equipment. All troops in the Support Line will always have their web equipment ready to put on at a moments notice. Bayonets will be fixed at "stand-to"
4. All ranks will "stand-to" at times which will be notified periodically. At "stand-to" every man must be standing up with his rifle in his hand.
5. Sentries must be regularly posted by an N.C.O.
6. Rifles, bombs, clips and ammunition will be cleaned daily. There will be a rifle inspection every evening at "stand-to"
7. Box respirators will always be worn in the "alert" position.
8. Every man must know :-
 - (1) The position of Company Headquarters.
 - (2) His fire position.
 - (3) Where extra ammunition and bombs ^{are} stored.
 - (4) The general position of the enemy's trenches and the range.
 - (5) The position of our trenches on the right and left.
9. A careful search will be made for spare rifles, equipment box respirators etc., and all surplus gear and salvage will be sent to Battalion Headquarters by returning working parties.
10. Men must never leave the trenches without permission.
11. Men will be given their issue of rum before "stand-to" in the morning, but breakfast must not be served out until after "stand-down".
12. Working parties, other than carrying parties in and forward of HAY RESERVE will carry rifles and wear web equipment. While working they will have their rifles and equipment handy.
13. Men must not be allowed to become dirty or slovenly while in the Front Line, and on no account must discipline be relaxed.
14. All men in the garrison except actual sentries are available for work in improving and extending the front line. They will be given a task near their position in the line.

8/2/17.

Shoult

 Captain,
 Adjutant 51st Battalion.

14/3/17.

61st BATTALION ORDER No. 7

Reference Map GUEUDECOURT 1/10,000.

1. In order to co-operate with operations on our Right a bombing attack will be delivered against portion of BAYONET TRENCH from N.20.a.32.87 to N.20.a.25.95., (Junction of BAYONET and SCABBARD Trenches), on the night of the 14th/15th February 1917. Zero time will be notified later.
2. The attacking party will consist of Lieut. J.J. McDERMOTT 2 H.C.O.'s., and 20 men of "C" Company.
3. Each member of the attacking party will carry :-
 - 4 Rifle Grenades.
 - 2 Mills hand grenades, (one in each pocket).
 - Rifle.
 - web equipment and ammunition.

A white distinguishing band will be worn on the right arm above the elbow.
No man will carry any papers or other articles likely to give information to the enemy, except his pay-book and identity disc.
4. O.C. Garrison will detail the following covering parties :-
 - (a) 1 Officer, 1 H.C.O. and 6 other ranks also 1 Lewis Gun and team to take up a position at about N.20.a.1.4 to protect Right Flank of attacking party.
 - (b) 1 H.C.O. and 4 men to report to Machine Gun Officer at Company Headquarters Left Sector, ~~30 minutes~~ ^{one hour} before zero for disposal as covering party to Vickers Machine Gun protecting attacker's Left Flank (see para 6).

These parties will occupy allotted positions at least twenty minutes before zero and return to the line at a signal of three red flares to be fired in quick succession from a position behind our line.
5. Artillery Barrage.

First Phase. From zero minus five minutes to zero minus three minutes along BAYONET and SCABBARD Trenches from N.20.a.50.70 to N.19.b.80.95. (two minutes).

Second Phase From zero minus 3 minutes to zero plus 5 minutes from N.19.b.80.95 to junction with BAYONET Trench thence to N.14.c.27.10 thence to N.20.a.45.95, thence to N.20.a.35.85 thence to N.20.a.50.70.

Third Phase. From zero plus 5 minutes ^{onwards} as in first phase.
6. Machine Guns.

(a) 1 Gun mounted in a shell hole at about N.19.b.65.76 to flank the attack by maintaining fire on SCABBARD Trench from N.20.a.05.95 to N.19.b.90.95.

6 other machine guns will use indirect fire on enemy support lines.

7. The party will leave our trenches at about N.19.b.85.05 and take up a position in "NO MAN'S LAND" about 200 yards from and parallel to the objective, 15 minutes before zero time. At zero time they will move forward until they are within 50 yards range of the enemy trench, when they will attack the object with rifle grenades.
- Listening posts or patrols that may be encountered will be mopped up and it is very important that prisoners should be made, as identifications are required on this part of the front.
- Party will withdraw in sufficient time to be clear of artillery barrage. (3rd phase).
8. After return of attacking party to our lines, the O.C. will report to O.C. Battalion at Company Headquarters in front line and party will return to Battalion Headquarters.
9. Medical Officer will arrange for two extra stretchers and bearers to be in readiness in front line.
10. ACKNOWLEDGE.

M. Anwar
Lieut.
A/Adjutant 51st. Battalion.

Issued at 3 p.m.

Copies to :- Lieut. J.J. McDermott.
15th Aust. Inf. Bde.
15th M.G. Coy.
Right Battalion.

51st Battalion,

13th Aus. Inf. Bde.,

15/2/17.

Headquarters,
13th Aus. Inf. Bde.

Reference operations ordered in your No. B.1/52 dated 14th instant and in confirmation of this office message No. K.C.X of date, I have to report that the attacking party left our trenches at 8.20 p.m. and arrived successfully in position at about N.20.a.1.8. without being observed by the enemy and ready at 8.53 p.m. to open fire with rifle grenades.

Our barrage opened punctually at 8.55 p.m. at which time a salvo of grenades was fired into listening post at N.20.a.29 where flares were being sent up.

When barrage lifted (2nd phase) objective was bombarded with grenades for about five (5) minutes, then party withdrew unmolested until nearing our own trenches at about N.19.b.8.5., when hostile shelling commenced and caused several casualties. Party returned to our trenches at about N.19.b.75.55., at 9.12 p.m.

Covering ~~patrols~~ patrols reported back to our own trenches without mishap at 9.25 p.m.

At 9.3 p.m. enemy barraged the whole of our sector with chiefly shrapnel along apparently their S.O.S. lines which are well placed if this is the case. This barrage effectively covered the front of our trenches and also extended some distance in rear of them special attention being given to the LEFT subsector, and gap between that and our RIGHT subsector. Practically no damage was done to our trenches. At 9.15 p.m. the hostile shelling decreased and finally ceased at about 9.25 p.m.

Practically no hostile Machine Gun or rifle fire was encountered by the party which points to the effectiveness of our artillery barrage about which there was a general feeling of satisfaction and confidence although it was considered to be light in volume especially on SCABBARD Trench.

Germans were seen in objective when barrage opened but no signs of any works outside their trenches in this locality were observed excepting the listening post previously mentioned. There were, however, many large shell holes in that vicinity.

The Right covering patrol which took up a position at about N.20.a.1.4., observed some movement in BAYONET Trench at about N.20.a.5.7., and flares were regularly sent up from this trench to the RIGHT of this point.

The Vickers Gun covering the LEFT Flank of attacking party fired constantly along SCABBARD Trench from its allotted position during the whole operation.

Total casualties eight (8) wounded including 4 only slightly and likely to remain with Unit.

The relief of the front line Companies was commenced at about 10 p.m. and completed without incident at 11 p.m. on 14th.

B. Ridley Lieutenant-Colonel,
O.C. 51st Battalion.

VI

51st Battalion.

DAILY STRENGTH RETURN.

U N I T	On estblt doing duty with	Unit including Chaplain & M.O.	:Attchd for:duty from:other:Units	:On detchd:duty	:Offs evac to Hospital within 30 days	:O/Ranks in Hospital in Div. area.
51st Battn	25	792	-	5	11	179
						6
						58

ARRIVALS.

- 1 O/Rank from detached duty.
- 1 " (Reinf't).

DEPARTURES.

- 6 O/Ranks "Wounded in Action" (off strength).
- 1 Officer (Lieut E. SMITH) and
- 2 O/Ranks to 13th Trg. Battn. (Supny List).
- 2 " to Hospital.
- 4 " to detached duty.

§ Includes 52 partially trained men.

15/2/17.

B. Ridley

Lieutenant-Colonel,
O.C. 51st Battalion.

51st Battalion,

13th Aus. Inf. Bde.,

15/2/17.

VIIBattalion Order No. 8.

1. On the night of the 16th/17th instant, the Battalion will be relieved by the 50th Battalion and will move into Reserve in PERTH Camp. Arrival of Units in PERTH Camp will be notified to Battalion Headquarters immediately.
2. 2/Lieut. E. SELKIRK and 4 men from "D" Company will report to the Adjutant 50th Battalion, PERTH Camp at 1 p.m., to take over Camp and check Area Stores.
3. Four Limbers will report to Captain COOKE at HOBART Camp at 10 a.m. to move stores and valises. "B" Company will supply a loading party of 1 N.C.O. and 6 men. Two Limbers will be on the FLERS Road opposite BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS at 3 p.m. The Cookers and two full water carts will be in position in PERTH Camp at 3 p.m. Rations for the 18th instant will be delivered to PERTH Camp.
4. One half "B" Company, the Sergeant Cook, the C.Q.M.S.'S, Company Cooks, Pioneers and Wipers will move at 1 p.m. and carry cooks dixies etc.
5. After relief "A", "C" and Half "D" Companies will move direct ~~to~~ to PERTH Camp. The Senior Officer in each Sector will be responsible that Lewis Guns and Magazines accompany their parties. Lewis Gun ammunition may be left in the line and handed over.
6. Lieut. J.J. McDERMOTT will hand over Area Stores.
7. All receipts for stores handed ~~over~~ or taken over must be in duplicate, and the greatest care must be taken in checking material.
8. A party under Sgt. Brooks will fatigue "C" ~~Company's~~ Company's extra blankets and Headquarter's Stores and material to the Limbers on FLERS Road.
9. Companies will collect and dump all shovels, picks etc at convenient places in their Areas ready to hand over.
10. Working parties will be as usual on the night of the 16th instant, returning to PERTH Camp on completion of work. The detachments now in HOBART Camp will supply all the parties for the night which are as follows :-
Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, and 9.
Work will not be commenced until 9 p.m. except by No. 2., which will be as usual.

H. Innes
Lieut.
A/Adjutant. 51st Battalion.

VIII

51st Battalion,

13th Aus. Inf. Bde.,

24/2/17.

Battalion Order No. 5.

1. The Battalion will move to BUIRE tomorrow 25/2/17 (about 5 miles).
2. At 8.5 a.m., the Battalion will form up in fours on the Road facing West in the following order :-
Hqrs. D. C. B. A.
Dress, as for today's inspection. No sandbags or other spare gear will be carried by the men.
3. Routine.

Reveille	-	6.0. a.m.
Breakfast	-	6.45 a.m.
Sick Parade	-	7.15 a.m.
4. One blanket per man will be rolled in Section bundles by 7.45 a.m.
Officers' valises will be ready to load by 7.0. a.m.
Cookers will pull out at 7.45 a.m.
5. Each Company will have a fatigue party of 1 N.C.O. and 10 men told off for loading blankets as soon as the G.S. Wagons arrive.
In addition to above "G" Company will detail 1 N.C.O. and 4 men to report to Lewis Gun Corporal at 7.15 a.m. to load Lewis Guns.

Shouch.

Captain,
Adjutant 51st Battalion,

469

Appendix N^o 93/3/17. ¹³
IX
Schedules of Training for week ending 9/3/17.

	9 a.m. to 9.45 a.m.	9.45 a.m. to 10 a.m.	10 a.m. to 10.45 a.m.	10.45 a.m. to 11 to 10.55	11 to 11.30 am	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
TUESDAY	Bayonet fighting	Section drill	Rifle exercises	Gas drill	Musketry	Medical inspection.
Wednesday	Physical training	Musketry	Platoon drill	Rifle exercises	Saluting	Route march
THURSDAY	Bayonet fighting	Guards & sentries	Piling arms and laying out kit	Rifle exercises	Gas drill	do.
FRIDAY	Physical training	Inspection of platoons (I.P. 72)	Musketry	Section drill	Extended order drill	do.
SATURDAY	Bayonet fighting	Saluting and Guards & sentries	Rifle exercises	Gas drill	Company drill	

Company and Battalion Signallers parade at Battalion Headquarters each morning at 9.0. a.m. for Signalling Class.

One team of Bombers per Company to parade at Battalion Headquarters at 9 a.m. for training under Lieut. J.J. McDERMOTT.

One additional team of Lewis Gunners per Company, to be trained.

All specialists will parade with their Companies for Route March each afternoon.

Half hour Lecture by Company Commanders to H.C.Os., daily.

At 7 p.m., each evening there will be a Lecture to officers at Battalion Headquarters.

M. H. H.
CAPT.
ADJUTANT 51st BATTALION

51st Battalion.

X

DAILY STRENGTH RETURN.

U N I T	On estblt doing duty with Unit including Chaplain & M.O.	:Attchd for: duty from other Units	:On detachd: duty :	:Offs evac to Hospital :within 30 days:	:O/Ranks in Hospital in Div. area.
	Offs O.R.	Offs O.R.	Offs O.R.		
51st Battn	27 847	-	5 10 144	5	36

ARRIVALS. 1 Officers (2/Lieut R.B. MITCHELL) and
 1 O/Rank from Hospital.
 1 Officer (Captain E.R. PINNELL) and
 4 O/Ranks from detached duty.

DEPARTURES. 1 O/Rank transferred.
 1 Officer (Lieut. A.L. REID) and
 43 O/Ranks to school.
 3 " to detached duty.
 8 " to Hospital.

§ Includes 52 partially trained men.

B. B. Hedley

Lieutenant-Colonel,
O.C. 51st Battalion.

28/2/17.