

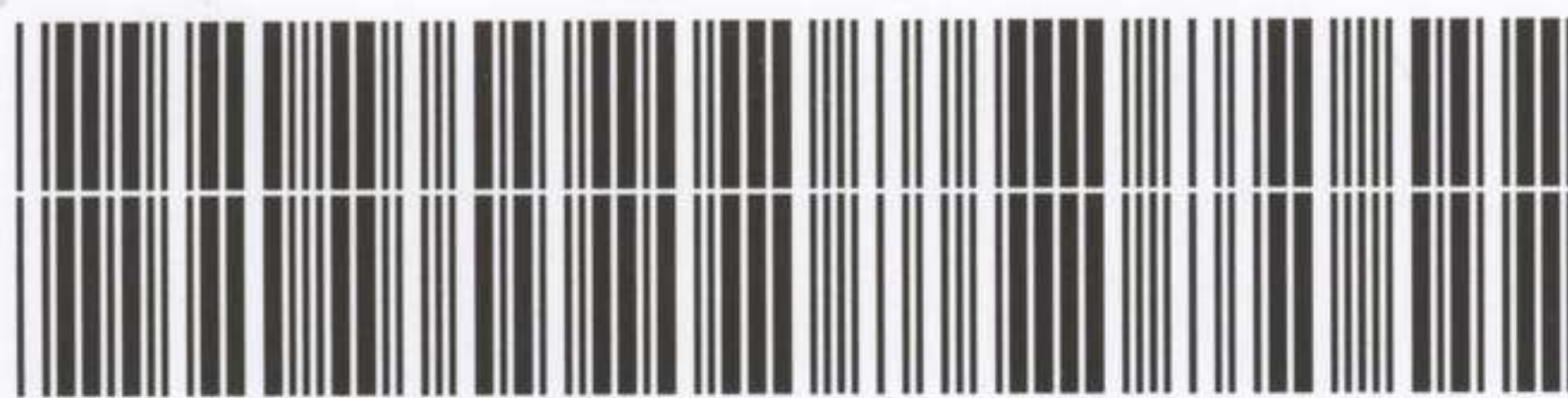
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/73/34

Title: 56th Infantry Battalion

November 1918



AWM4-23/73/34

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.

56TH BATTALION, A.I.F.	
No.	E 20/1150-1 284
Date

A U S T R A L I A N I M P E R I A L F O R C E .

W A R D I A R Y

of

56TH BATTALION, A.I.F.

for

NOVEMBER 1918.

=====

Signature of Officer compiling..... *John Bar*
Lieut.

Signature of Officer Commanding..... *A. J. Cameron* Major.

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices						
LE PLOUY	1918 November 1st		<p>A nice fine day. Training as per Syllabus was carried out during the morning and consisted of Company Parades, Musketry, Company in attack, Open Warfare and Company Drill. At 1 p.m. a Special Order was issued to Companies in connection with the Divisional Commander's inspection, taking place on the 55th Battalion Parade Ground, VISMES-au-VAL, tomorrow, 2nd inst. A copy is included in the appendices.</p> <p>5 p.m. A lecture was given by Captain Chaplain Gault, at TOURS, on "An hour of laughter and mirth." This was a voluntary parade and about 100 men from this Unit attended. The Battalion Band was also in attendance and provided music during the afternoon.</p> <p>5.30 p.m. The following wire was received from Divisional Headquarters:- "Following from G.H.Q. aaaa An armistice has been signed by Austria with Italy". This good news is very encouraging, to say the least, and should be a big factor in bringing the end much nearer and also to a successful issue for our side.</p>	See Appendix 791.						
	2nd		<p>The day was dull but no rain fell. This morning at 9.30 a.m. a Battalion Muster Parade was held with the idea of ascertaining if there were any absentees, or deserters, from other units roaming in the villages occupied by our troops. The search failed to discover any of these men.</p> <p>The Divisional Commander's inspection took place on the 55th Battalion Parade Ground at 11.15 a.m. this morning. In his address to the troops the Divisional Commander remarked that the turnout in most cases was excellent and gave special praise to the Transport Section. He also pointed out that we would probably be marching towards the line again within a fortnight. It all depends on the result of a big attack against the enemy on the whole front, taking place very shortly. He also mentioned that Austria as a fighting nation now ceases to exist, that Germany has still large numbers of men to put into the field, and that the British Fleet were probably now in the Bosphorous.</p> <p>This afternoon the Brigade Boxing Tournament took place at MARTAINVILLE. Following were the entries from this Battalion:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Feather Weight</td> <td>Middle Weight.</td> <td>Heavy Weight.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pte. Gunn, C.</td> <td>Pte. Storen, J.</td> <td>Pte. Warby, H.</td> </tr> </table> <p>The former was defeated on points and the other two men received forfeits. Lieut. J.J. Sowter and 2 other ranks rejoined from Australian Corps School.</p>	Feather Weight	Middle Weight.	Heavy Weight.	Pte. Gunn, C.	Pte. Storen, J.	Pte. Warby, H.	
Feather Weight	Middle Weight.	Heavy Weight.								
Pte. Gunn, C.	Pte. Storen, J.	Pte. Warby, H.								
	3rd.		<p>Light rain fell in the early hours of the morning and the remainder of the day was dull and rather cold.</p>							

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LE PLOUY	1918 November 3rd.		<p>Church Services were held for all Denominations during the morning.</p> <p>A football match took place in th afternoon between teams selected from the Officers and N.C.O's of the Battalion. The N.C.O's ran out the winners by 17 points to 5. The game, however, despite the scores, was well contested and at times some brilliant play was done by both sides.</p> <p>The Conference held at Divisional Headquarters at 2.30 p.m. today was attended by Captain G.H.Mann "MC". Various subjects were discussed amongst them being:- the proposed move at an early date to the forward area.</p> <p>Major H.A.Roberts returned from leave and took over temporary command of the Battalion. Lieut. H. Brewer and 1 N.C.O. left for a course of instructions at the Australian Corps Gas School.</p>	
	4th		<p>A perfect day with the sky quite clear and the sun shining brightly.</p> <p>Training as per syllabus, carried out during the morning, consisted of Physical Training, Bayonet Fighting, Company Drill, and with the exception of "C" Company, each Company carried out independent route marches. "C" Company carried out Range Practices. The shooting generally was good.</p>	See Appendix 702
	5th		<p>Shortly after midnight rain began to fall and continued throughout the whole day. This prevented the training laid down being carried out and the men were given lectures Rifle exercises, elementary musketry and physical training, in their billets.</p> <p>Major H.L.Cameron "MC" having rejoined took over temporary command of the Battalion. 4 men rejoined from leave and 2 men were sent to Hospital.</p>	
	6th		<p>Rain is still continuing to fall and with every sign of doing so for some time. The Brigade Sports were to take place today but owing to the unfavourable weather conditions they have been postponed indefinitely. This information was conveyed to Companies and they were also instructed to stand by in case the weather may improve, in which case the sports programme will be carried out.</p> <p>3 men proceeded to the 3rd Course at the Infantry Transport School and 3 men rejoined from the previous course. The men attending these courses have benefited greatly by the knowledge gained.</p> <p>3 men went on leave and 7 men rejoined.</p>	
	7th		<p>At midnight rain was still falling.</p> <p>Rain had ceased falling this morning but the weather still remains dull.</p> <p>Training as laid down in Syllabus was carried out in the morning and consisted of:-</p>	
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15th BATTALION,
A.I.F.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
LE PLOUY	1918 November 7th.		<p>Company Parades, P.T. and Bayonet Fighting, Lectures on "Attack formations for small units", Platoon Assault training in "Diamond" and "Square" formations, Platoon Route March.</p> <p>The C.O. and Adjutant visited the Companies during the day and found everything in order. Ration supplies are still plentiful and the health of the troops good. When we first came to this area there was an outbreak of boils amongst the troops but this form of sickness has almost disappeared, and only a few cases are receiving medical treatment.</p> <p>T/Sgt. C.M. Cryer, who has just completed a course at the Australian Corps P. and B.F. School, has been transferred to their staff as an instructor in this branch of training.</p> <p>1 man was transferred to Divisional Signalling Company and 1 man to the 14th Light Trench Mortar Battery.</p>	
	8th		<p>1 man was sent to hospital.</p> <p>Rain fell at intervals throughout the day and the night was rather cold.</p> <p>The training this morning consisted of Rifle and equipment inspections and each company carried out independent route marches.</p> <p>The afternoon was too wet to carry out sports or games of any kind.</p> <p>Lieut. V.U. Leeves left on special leave and 4 other ranks went on leave to U.K. 5 men rejoined from leave.</p> <p>4 men were sent to hospital.</p>	
	9th		<p>At 7 p.m. Training Memorandum No. 9 was issued to Companies, covering instructions for the Battalion Route March taking place tomorrow.</p> <p>There was a light frost on the ground this morning and the day turned out fine.</p> <p>The ground still being damp owing to the heavy rainfall yesterday, the tactical scheme to be carried out on the Battalion Route March was cancelled. The following training was substituted:- Physical Training and Bayonet Fighting, Company Route Marches, the latter to include "protection on the march" exercises.</p> <p>The afternoon was devoted to the Divisional Boxing Tournament which took place at MARTAINVILLE. Although there were no men from this Battalion left for the final bouts, still a large number of men spectators attended.</p> <p>Lieut-Colonel N. Marshall "DSO" "MC" rejoined from 14th Brigade Headquarters and resumed command of the Battalion.</p> <p>Lieut. M. F. Carrick left to attend the Company Commander's course at 4th Army Infantry School and 2 signallers were sent for a course of instructions at the Australian Corps Signal School.</p>	<p>See Appendix 1103</p> <p><i>[Signature]</i></p>

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LE PLOUY	1918 November	9th	<p>10 other ranks ex leave and ex sick rejoined Battalion. 1 man was sent to Hospital.</p>	
		10th	<p>A nice fine day with sunny weather conditions prevailing. A Church Parade for all protestant denominations was held this morning at 10 a.m. on the Battalion Parade Ground. R.C. Parade was held in the Churches at TOURS, GREBAULT-MESNIL and VISMES respectively. After the church parades the C.O. and Senior Major visited all the Companies and found everything in good order. Lieut. D.A.Mehan "MC" and 7 other ranks rejoined ex sick and ex wounded. Nothing of any interest took place this afternoon.</p>	
		11th	<p>A dull cold day with light showers in the early part of the evening. This morning the Staff Captain rang up and informed us that an Armistice had been signed by Germany and that hostilities were to cease from 11 a.m. today. This good news was instrumental for a good deal of elation amongst the troops but not so much as the occasion might demand. The men look upon it as a matter of course and now patiently await peace terms and the arrangements for return to their own country. Training carried out consisted of Company Ceremonial Parades, Bayonet Fighting, Physical Training, Company in Attack. In the inter-Battalion Football match this afternoon, between this Battalion and the 55th Battalion, the former was successful by 19 points to 5. Although our side won by a fairly large margin the game, however, was closely contested and throughout the match both sides gave fine displays of passing bouts. There was also a big gathering of supporters from both Battalions in attendance. Lieuts. J. Bull "MC", A.H.Grimley and 2/Lt. H.P.Christie and 8 other ranks rejoined from schools of instructions. 9 men rejoined from leave and 2 men went on leave.</p>	See Appendix 70-4
		12th	<p>The day was fine and rather cold. The day was given over to the Brigade Sports, which were held at St. MAXENT. The Battalion marched to the sports ground and our Cookers provided the men with a hot meal at midday. Although there were a fair number of entries from the Battalion we were, however, not very successful, but a good few managed to gain places in their events. The Assistant Adjutant, Lieut. K.N.Wark, "DCM" and the Orderly Room Sergeant left to check</p>	<i>John</i>

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LE PLOUY	1918 November 12th		check the Battalion Records at the Records Branch, ROUEN.	
	13th		There was a light frost this morning and the day was fine. Training consisted of Company Ceremonial Parades, Platoon and Assault Training, Company Outpost Schemes. "A" and "B" Company Lewis Gunners carried out range practices. The shooting throughout was very good.	
			Lieut. J.C.Watt, "MC" "DCM" and Lieut. L.Cosgrove, "MC" left for duty with Australian Flying Corps, England. These Officers are training for Pilots in the above service.	
			Lieut. W.H.Gilbey and 3 men from the Transport Section left to attend the 4th course at the Infantry Transport School. 3 men rejoined from the 3rd course.	
			3 men went on leave and 4 men rejoined from leave.	
	14th		Information was received from Brigade this evening to the effect that pending courses at the Australian Corps School were cancelled until further notice, also that no candidates would be sent to the Cadet Battalion. The day commenced with a light frost on the ground and fine weather conditions prevailed for the remainder.	
			As the Divisional Baths was available for this Battalion today the training laid down as per Syllabus was cancelled, and a bath parade held instead. Nearly every man was bathed and a clean change of underclothing received.	
			In the afternoon a football match took place between teams selected from this Battalion and the 55th Battalion Band sections. The game ended in a scoreless draw.	
			25 men who had been attached to the Divisional Train from the 54th Battalion Transport Section rejoined. 4 of the men attached to this Unit were transferred direct to the 10th	
			xxxx A.A.S.C. and 7 transferred to the 28th A.A.S.C.	
			4 men rejoined ex leave and 2 men went on leave.	
	15th		The day, although fine, was rather cold and a strong breeze prevailed. Training this morning consisted of a "Scheme without troops", which was attended by the Senior and Junior Majors, the Adjutant and Company Commanders. Companies carried on under their Second in Command with Physical training, Bayonet Fighting, Platoon and Company Drill, Musketry. There was no specialist training.	
			Lieut-Colonel N. Marshall "DSO" "MC" departed on leave to U.K. and during his absence Major Cameron "MC" will take over command.	
			Our Transport Officer, Lieut. V.U.Leeves, left on 75 day's furlough to England. This	

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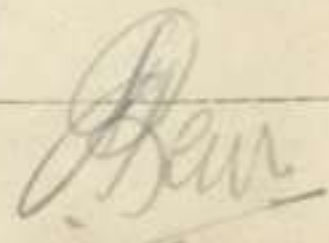
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
LE PLOUY	1918 November 15th		<p>This leave takes the place of 6 months leave of absence to Australia. Lieut. M.F. Carrick and 4 other ranks rejoined from schools of instruction and 1 man left for a course at the P.T. and B.F. School at the Australian Corps School. From now on, with the exception of Wireless and P.T. Courses all other courses at the various schools of instruction have been cancelled indefinitely.</p> <p>This afternoon a team selected from the Officers played a team of Officers from the 55th Battalion. A keen and exciting game was won by our Officers by 11 points to 8.</p> <p>The weather keeps fine although the days are rather cold and breezy, with light falls of frost to be seen each morning.</p> <p>The Battalion this morning marched to St. MAXENT to witness a practical demonstration with Gas projectors. The troops were shown the method in which the gas cylinders were fired from the projectors and the instructor informed them that by this method enormous casualties were inflicted on the enemy.</p> <p>The C.O. attended a conference at Mairie, OISEMONT. The subject discussed was the proposed early move towards German territory.</p>	
	16th		<p>There was a heavy frost this morning and the day was fine although rather cold.</p> <p>This morning Special Thanksgiving Services were held by the respective denominations. The Protestant Service was held on the 55th Battalion Parade Ground, VISMES-au-VAL, and was attended by the Divisional Commander. In his address to the troops the G.O.C. pointed out that within the next few days this division, together with three of the remaining Australian Divisions, would be marching into German territory, the route taking in the famous German town of Cologne. This is indeed a great honor. He also stated the censorship regulations had been relaxed in so far as we could mention where we were resting and that cameras may now be used.</p> <p>The R.C. Thanksgiving Service was held for the members from this Unit at MARTAINVILLE, St. MAXENT, and VISMES.</p> <p>After the above services were held the C.O. held a conference of all Officers of the Battalion and discussed matters relating to the early move.</p> <p>At 8.30 p.m. the C.O. and Adjutant attended a conference at Brigade Headquarters where the proposed move into German territory was discussed.</p> <p>Lieut J. Rew and 63 other ranks rejoined from the Brigade School. This course lasted over a period of 5 weeks and the men have benefited greatly from the knowledge gained.</p> <p>5 men went on leave and 8 men rejoined. The allotment of leave to this Battalion is</p>	
	17th			

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LE PLOUY	1918 November 17		<p>is still very liberal and on an average 5 men daily proceed on leave. The following figures show the strength and disposition of the members of this Battalion to date:-</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Off.</th> <th>O.R.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Actually with Unit</td> <td>35</td> <td>846</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In Hospital</td> <td>1</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Attending Schools</td> <td>4</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Detached for duty in Bde. Area</td> <td>-</td> <td>52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Detached for duty with 14th Brigade Light Trench Mortars</td> <td>-</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Detached for duty in Div. area</td> <td>6</td> <td>82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>On leave</td> <td>2</td> <td>88</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black;">48</td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 3px double black;">1105</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Off.	O.R.	Actually with Unit	35	846	In Hospital	1	8	Attending Schools	4	15	Detached for duty in Bde. Area	-	52	Detached for duty with 14th Brigade Light Trench Mortars	-	14	Detached for duty in Div. area	6	82	On leave	2	88		48	1105	
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	18th		<p>Similar weather conditions as to yesterday prevailed today. The morning was devoted to a thorough inspection of the mens' packs in order that all unauthorised articles could be discarded or packed under Brigade arrangements. In view of the long series of marches to take place shortly it is essential that the men should travel as light as possible. Sick inspections were also held by the R.M.O. to weed out men whose present state of health or physique would not warrant them carrying out these marches. All ranks are looking forward with interest to the march into Germany. In the afternoon a message was received from Brigade to be ready to move at 36 hours' notice.</p>																												
	19th		<p>The Divisional Sports were held at HUPPY a number of Officers and other ranks being present. It is not quite so cold as on previous mornings but still clear. At 10 a.m. the Battalion with Transport marched past the Divisional Commander at VISMES-au-VAL. The Divisional Commander expressed himself as being very pleased with the turnout and march past. It certainly was very creditable and the band played splendidly throughout the march. 2.50 p.m. The Battalion Football team played Brigade Headquarters team in the second round of the Brigade Competition. It was an excellent afternoon for football and some good football was witnessed, notwithstanding the onesidedness of the game. The Battalion team won by 55 points to 2 showing perfect combination and at times some very fine individual efforts.</p>	See Appendix 7/5																											
			<p>A6945 Wt. W11422/M1160 350,000 12/16 D. D. & L. Forms/C.2118/14.</p>																												

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LE PLOUJY	1918 Nov. 19 Nov. 20		<p>Lieut. T. Coulston went on leave to U.K. Weather is still very cold and frosty. A dense fog arose about 9 a.m. obscuring the whole country side and rain making everything very damp. These conditions lasted until late in the afternoon. C.O. and Adjutant inspected all Companies and Transport during the course of the morning. Lieut. R.G. Thompson returned from 5th Divisional Signalling School. The Battalion had the use of the Foden Fumigator today for the purpose of fumigating the mens' blankets. Companies carried out independent route marches and finished up the morning with Physical Training, Bayonet Fighting and Organised Games. 2/Lieut. H.P. Christie and 2 O.R. were sent to Hospital. 11 other ranks rejoined from schools of instruction, 7 men ex sick and wounded, 5 men ex leave and 1 man from detached duties with the 14th Light Trench Mortar Battery.</p>	
	Nov 21		<p>Weather still cold but very much clearer today and no mist. Today an order was received from Brigade in connection with the Divisional Commander's inspection on 23rd inst. and the Rehearsal of same to take place tomorrow. Both the Rehearsal and Inspection Parades were subsequently postponed for 24 hours. Training this morning consisted of Physical Training, Bayonet Fighting, Organised Games, Company Route Marches. 9 men rejoined from leave. Nothing of any consequence took place this afternoon.</p>	
	NOV 22		<p>It is not quite so cold today and still clear. During the morning The Brigade Commander paid a visit to Headquarters and discussed the probable move from this area with the Commanding Officer. Companies were at the disposal of Company Commanders and the morning was devoted to Rifle and Equipment inspections, Physical Training and Organised Games. The Battalion Rugby Football Team played the 53rd Battalion in the final for Brigade Competition on the latter's ground at St MAXENT. The ground was very treacherous and consequently the game was not as spectacular and the play not so brilliant as it might have been had the ground been dry. At half time the score was 5 points to nil in our favour. During the second half the 53rd Battalion scored 3 points and fought hard until the whistle blew leaving us winners.</p>	
			<p>In the evening a warning message per 'phone was received from Brigade that Battalion would be extraining on 25th inst. Also that an Officer to report to Brigade Headquarters at</p>	

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LE PLOUY	1918 Nov. 22.		<p>at 9.30 a.m. tomorrow as Billeting Officer for new area -48 hours rations to be carried. Lieut. L.K.Threlkeld (Intelligence Officer) was instructed to report as Billeting Officer. It was also arranged that the Battalion would have the use of the Divisional Baths tomorrow and instructions to this effect was at once issued to Companies.</p> <p>4 men were supplied as Guard at Ration Dump, HUPPY, 4 men went on leave and 3 rejoined. 1 man was sent to Hospital.</p>	
	Nov. 23.		<p>A beautiful day, very clear and quite cool. All Companies and Headquarters attended St MAXENT for a bath and received a clean change of underclothing. The men appreciated this very much indeed and were very pleased with the new underclothing issued. It was certainly very good quality material and should keep them very warm.</p> <p>During the course of the afternoon instructions per 'phone were received from Brigade for Brigade Church Parade tomorrow at 11 a.m. An Officer is to be detailed to form up the parade and with instructions to inform the Senior Major Officer on parade the Divisional Commander will probably be on the parade but not to wait for him.</p> <p>Lieut. J. Rew was detailed to form up the parade and instructed accordingly.</p> <p>Lieut. R.G.Courtney and 14 O.R. went on leave to U.K. and 1 man was sent to Hospital.</p> <p>2 men were transferred to 28th A.A.S.C., and 4 men were transferred back to the 14th Field Ambulance in accordance with instructions.</p>	
	Nov. 24.		<p>The day was rather dull but only moderately cold with steady rain towards the close of the evening.</p> <p>11 a.m. This Battalion attended the Brigade Church Parade near LONGUEMORT the Divisional and Brigade Commanders being present. After parade Battalions marched past Divisional Commander and thence independently to Billets Billets.</p> <p>3 p.m. Detailed Orders for move to BOHAIN-BUSIGNY area received from Brigade. The C.O. thereupon called a meeting of all Company Commanders, Adjutant, Assistant Adjutant, Transport Officer and Quartermaster. The orders for move into new area were gone into thoroughly and instructions issued. Move Order was then drawn up by the Adjutant and issued to all concerned.</p> <p>1 man was sent for duties at Divisional Headquarters and 1 man went to Hospital.</p> <p>6 men rejoined from leave and 2 from Australian Corps School.</p>	See Appendix 7/6
	Nov. 25.		<p>The day dawned somewhat dull with light showers of rain. Hot breakfast was served to the men and Companies reached Starting Point at appointed time. A short rest was ordered at 7.50 a.m. and Battalion then moved off headed by Band, followed by</p>	



150TH BATTALION
A.I.F.

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ONICOURT	1918 Nov. 25	m	by Headquarters, "D", "C", "B" and "A" Companies. At time of starting it rained slightly but after 10 minutes ceased. The road was excellent and the Battalion swung along in great style to the tune of the Band. We reached ABBEVILLE at 10.40 a.m. The Battalion was removed to the side of the road and there rested until 11.30 a.m. during which time final Entraining arrangements was being made. The Battalion now moved into Railway Yard and entrained less "A" Company who were to come by No.2 Train. The men were supplied with a hot meal on the train before starting starting and straw was also issued out to help make the journey as comfortable and as warm as possible. Accomodation for Officers was not too good. Some of the trucks were a little crowded but entraining was carried out without hitch and well ahead of starting time. At 12.50 p.m. train moved out from ABBEVILLE Station. We reached AMIENS two hours later and after short stay whilst one truck was being changed owing to hot axle, moved on reaching CHAULNES at about 5.30 p.m. Much ineterest was centred on VILLERS-BRETONNEUX during run through that place. The old line formerly occupied by the Brigade being clearly seen from the train and the events associated with the fighting around this spot were eagerly recounted by many who had taken part and were listened to with profound interest by those who did not hold that distinction. From CHAULNES on to BERTRY the journey became very tiresome and slow.	
BERTRY	Nov. 26.		The morning broke rather dull and misty the air being a little sharp. We reached BERTRY our Detraining Point at about 6 a.m. The Battalion detrained, breakfasted and were allowed to rest for an hour or so. The Guides had not arrived owing to unforeseen circumstances by 9 a.m. 9.30 a.m. Headquarters Coy, "D" and "B" Companies headed by Band moved off by march route for BUSIGNY via MARETZ. "C" Company remained behind as Detraining Party. BUSIGNY was reached about 12.30 p.m. where guides were picked up and Companies shown to their billets. On arrival men were supplied with hot tea and at 5 p.m. with substantial hot meal. The Billets are the best we have been in for some time past and all ranks are sorry they will only be able to enjoy them for a very brief period. The Bn. is to move on to REJET-au-BEAULIEU tomorrow.	
BUSIGNY			5 p.m. Move Order for tomorrow was drawn up and issued to all concerned. 7 p.m. "A" Company has not up to the present arrived. Some delay in train service must have occurred.	See Appendix 797
	Nov. 27.		Rain fell throughout the night and morning. 12.30 a.m. "A" Company reached BUSIGNY after a rather trying march along cobbled roads it raining throughout the whole journey. They were met by a guide on the route and comfortably fixed up in good billets. It transpired that delayed mines had blown up part of the Railway track near CAMBRAI causing a dislocation of the railway traffic.	

A6945 Wt. W11422/M1160 350,000 12/16 D. D. & L. Forms/C. 2118/14.

Ken

A.I.F.

264

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.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BUSIGNY	1918 Nov. 27		<p>Reveille was blown at 6.30 a.m. and a good hot breakfast served at 7 a.m. 9 a.m. Headquarters, "B" and "D" Companies and Transport headed by the Band moved off by March Route for REJET. "A" Company owing to their arrival at so late an hour are to follow in the afternoon and "C" Company are still unloading at BERTRY.</p> <p>Rain has ceased and sky cleared. The Battalion reached outskirts of REJET at 12.30 p.m. and there picked up guides. Companies and Transport were led to their billets and supplied with hot tea. Later in the afternoon a good hot meal was issued. The village has suffered somewhat from bombardment and consequently billets are not of the best but will be dry in the event of rain. Lieut. Threlkeld went forward to view the next area -LE GROISE. 4.45 p.m. "A" Company arrived and were met by a guide and shown to their billets. No orders for move yet received. 5 p.m. Brigade Commander arrived and spent the night at Headquarters. The inhabitants of the villages we have passed through since detraining have received us well. Most of them look very thin and pasty. From conversations with many of these people it would appear that they had been grossly illtreated by the Boche during his occupation of these villages and that they had almost been starved. Anything of any value had been taken away including clothing, bed linen, cattle, poultry etc. Women old and young were made to sleep on the floor whilst Boche soldiers slept in the beds, men were made to work under shell fire, some of them being wounded, and absurd fines were incurred for the slightest thing. Everything points to a "reign of terror" by a brutal and bestial enemy. Orders were issued to Company Commanders in the evening to be ready to move at 10 a.m. tomorrow.</p>	
	Nov. 28.		<p>Light rain commenced to fall in the early morning and continued throughout the whole day. 9 a.m. Orders to move have not yet come through and we will in all probability remain here until tomorrow. 12 noon. "C" Company arrived from BERTRY after unloading 7 trains. Their packs were carried by motor lorry. On arrival "C" Company was met by Lieut Threlkeld and guided to billets. 1 p.m. Lieut Woolwich, Brigade Billeting Officer, and Lieut. Threlkeld departed for LA GROISE area to arrange billets there for the Battalion. Move Order for tomorrow was issued at 6 p.m. and copies delivered to Companies by runner. We are to be billeted in LA GROISE and as it is only a distance of 8 kilos from REJET and blankets are being carried on Transport an easy and comfortable march is anticipated.</p>	<p>see Appendix no 8 New</p>

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

264

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.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
REJET	1918 Nov. 29		<p>It has been raining during the whole night and early morning but has now ceased.</p> <p>8 a.m. Hot breakfast was served to the men and Companies then prepared to move to the starting point.</p> <p>9 a.m. Transport now moved off independently to the new area.</p> <p>10 a.m. Battalion passed Starting Point -the church at 43 REJET- in following order:- Band, "D", "C", "B", "A" and Headquarters Companies. The march was negotiated with ease along good roads and to the tune of the band, which played frequently en route. We reached LA GROISE at noon where we met guides who showed Companies to Billets. The billets are scattered and not too good. The village has suffered a great amount from bombardment and any place that is at all decent has been occupied by civilians. There is an abundance of straw at our disposal and fires can be lit in practically every billet.</p> <p>9 men rejoined from leave and 1 man was sent to Hospital.</p>	
	Nov. 30.		<p>Very misty and cold. No rain fell however.</p> <p>10 a.m. Major H.A. Roberts and Adjutant visited all Companies. The morning was spent in settling down and making things as comfortable as possible.</p> <p>In the afternoon instructions were received from Brigade to the effect that the King would be passing through this area, and that Battalions were to make preparations for lining the route with troops to give His Majesty a hearty welcome. Later on, however, a message from Brigade informed us that these arrangements were cancelled.</p> <p>16 men went on leave, 4 rejoined, and 3 men went to Hospital.</p>	
			<p>A statement showing strength of battalion at commencement of month and the arrivals and and departures during the month of November is attached as an appendice.</p>	See Appendix 729

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

264

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.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GENERAL</u></p> <p>During the greater part of the month the Battalion has been fortunate enough to continue to enjoy a rest in the ST MAXENT Area. This period of rest lapsed on the 25th instant when the Battalion moved by rail to BERTRY, thence by march route in easy stages to the LA GROISE Area, ultimately reaching that place on the 29th. All ranks benefited enormously by the period of rest, and are very much the stronger and healthier thereby.</p> <p>The parades during the morning have not been of a very heavy nature, and during the afternoons good healthy sport has been freely indulged in. A considerable amount of money has been spent on vegetables and other supplementary rations and all ranks have been fitted out with serviceable good serviceable clothing and boots. The leather in the boots has not been of very good quality. Instances have come to notice of boots issued before the move to LA GROISE requiring repair after a week's wearing. Three times during the month the Battalion has been bathed and on each occasion received clean changes of clothing. The rations have been fairly liberal and of good quality: only on one occasion, and that during the recent move when we got far ahead of our source of supply, did we suffer from shortage. On that occasion emergency ration only was available. However, this was only for one day.</p> <p>All ranks are in a very healthy condition, the boils and influenza so prevalent last month being not nearly so noticeable this month. The spirit of the Battalion is excellent. Transport is in good working order and condition, and the animals strong, healthy well fed and well groomed. Owing to the strength of the Battalion the Transport were called upon to do some rather heavy work during the recent move. In future moves, extra transport will be necessary if blankets are to be transported.</p> <p>The Divisional Commander inspected this Battalion with the rest of the Brigade on two occasions during the month and expressed himself as well pleased with their turn-out, and work in general. A general all round improvement has been made on the previous month's results. The band has more than justified its existence. Both on the march and in billets it has rendered some very fine music. On one move recently the Band played no less than 9 different tunes en route.</p> <p>Once again we have been successful in winning the Brigade Rugby Football Competition. In the first round we defeated the 55th Battalion after a very solid game and in the second Brigade Headquarters met a similar fate. The final, against the 53rd Battalion was keenly contested right up to the final whistle, which left us the winners.</p>	

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

264

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>The Officers' team, too, must not be overlooked. They have a strong team and have so far succeeded in downing the 55th Battalion Officers' team after a strenuous game.</p>	

Handwritten signature

WAR DIARY APPENDIX

OF

56TH BATTALION, A.I.F.

FOR

NOVEMBER

1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1	Battalion Special Order.-re Div. Commander's Inspection.
2.	Training Syllabus for period 4th to 9th Nov '18.
3.	Battalion Field Exercise.
4.	Training Syllabus for period 11th to 16th Nov '18.
5.	Special Order re Div. Commander's inspection.
6.	Battalion Order re move to BOHAIN-BUSIGNY.
7.	Battalion Order re move to REJET.
8.	Battalion Move Order to LA GROISE.
9.	Statement showing strength of Battalion.
10.	Christmas Card: 56th Battalion
10.	Christmas Card: 56/54th Battalion

30/11/18.

A.H. Cameron Major,
T/Commanding 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

56/54TH BATTALION SPECIAL ORDER

56th BATTALION,
 A.I.F.
 No. /
 Date

Headquarters,
 1-11-1918.

1. The Divisional Commander will inspect the 14th Infantry Brigade on the 2nd November '18.
2. (a) The inspection of the 55th Bn. and the 56/54th Bn. will be carried out on the 55th Bn. parade ground at 1115. The C.O. 55th Bn. will be in command of the parade.
 (b) Two markers per Coy., carrying parade states in duplicate, will report to Intelligence Officer, at Battalion Headquarters, at 1000 punctually.
 (c) Companies will be on parade ground at 1030.
 (d) First Line Transport, as complete as possible (except rear portion of cookers), will parade with the Bn.
 (e) Dress: Drill Order with arms. Felt Hats. Great Coats and Box Respirators will not be worn. Further instructions will be issued later as to whether capes will be carried or not. Officers will wear felt hats and Sam Browne Belts.
 (f) Mounted Officers will be mounted for the parade.
3. (a) The movements on parade will be as for the parade held on 31st October '18 with the following addition:-
 (b) Transport will form up in line in rear of the "Parade in line" and remain in that position during the "Inspection" "March Past" and "Advance in Review Order."
 On the formation of "Hollow square" the transport will be arranged in "Close order" as close in rear or on the flank of the square as possible in order that the men may hear the Divisional Commander's address.
 (c) On completion of the "address" the parade (less Transport) will march off. When the Parade is clear the Transport will march past the Divisional Commander (on the Saluting Base) in Column of Route and thence to billets.
4. A proportion of Battalion Headquarters Company will be allotted to each Coy. on the parade ground where half companies will be formed and sized as for ceremonial.
5. Parades must be as strong as possible. All company duties must be cut down to the minimum and all Batmen, with exception of Company Commanders' batman, must be on parade.
6. The actual number of Officers and other ranks on parade will be wired to Battalion Headquarters by 0930.
7. Watches to be synchronised at Battalion Signalling Office at 0900.

Williamson
 Captain,
 Adjutant, 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued at 1300, 1st inst. to:-

1. O.C. "A" Coy.
 2. O.C. "B" Coy.
 3. O.C. "C" Coy.
 4. O.C. "D" Coy.
 5. O.C. H.Q. Coy.
 6. T.O.
 7. Q.M.
- Copies to:-
8. C.O.
 9. 14th A.I. Bde.
 10.)
 11.) War Diary.
 12.)

56/54TH BATTALION, A.I.F.

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR PERIOD 4-11-18 TO 9-11-18

APPENDIX 2

Date	Time	Nature of Training
4-11-18	0830-0930	P.T. and Bayonet Fighting
	0930-1030	Company Drill
	1030-1100	Musketry
	1100-1230	Company Route March
"C" Company will carry out Range practices		
5-11-18	0830-0900	Company Parade
	0900-1030	Company in Attack, in the "Diamond" and "Square" formations as laid down in Training leaflet No. 4.
	1030-1130	Bayonet Fighting
	1130-1230	Close Order Drill
"D" Company will carry out Range practices		
"C" Company will carry out a Route March from 1100 to 1230		
B R I G A D E S P O R T S		
6-11-18		
7-11-18	0830-0900	Company Parade
	0900-1000	P.T. and Bayonet Fighting
	1000-1030	Lectures on "Attack formations for small units" Training leaflet No. 4.
	1030-1130	Platoon Assault training in "Diamond" and "Square" formations
	1130-1230	Platoon Route March
"A" Company will carry out Range practices		
8-11-18	BATTALION ROUTE MARCH.	- DETAILS TO BE NOTIFIED LATER.
9-11-18	BATTALION EXERCISE.	- DETAILS TO BE NOTIFIED LATER.

SPECIALIST TRAINING

The Lewis Gun Officer and Signalling Officer will arrange for each Company to have three hours "special training" in above period. H.Q. Signallers, Lewis Gunners and Intelligence Staff will receive special training throughout the period.

R E M A R K S

In all Platoon and Company Schemes it is necessary that all details should be discussed before the exercises and that mistakes should be pointed out on the ground on completion of the exercise.

1-11-18

J. Williamson
 Captain,
 Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

264
 No. 3
 Date

56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.
Training Memo, No. 9.

APPENDIX 3

O's C. all Companies,
 H.Q.Coy. and R.S.M.

In the Field,
 8-11-18

Weather permitting the Battalion will carry out a Route march tomorrow, 9th inst., as per Exercise detailed below.

DRESS: Felt Hats, Drill Order with waterproof sheets rolled on back of the web belt. Lewis Guns will not be carried.

Companies will be notified by wire at 0800 as to whether the march will be carried out.

56/54th Battalion Exercise.
 =====

Reference Map: FRANCE, Sheet 57, 1/40,000

Date.	Battalion Headquarters	Nature of Exercise.	Remarks.
9-11-18	LE PLOUY	Tactical Route March. Advanced Guard Scheme. Starting Point: Crossroads V.6.a.1.7 at 0930 9-11-18.	<u>GENERAL IDEA</u> The enemy occupies GAMACHES with 2 Battalions of Infantry with supports on line - FLORIVILLE - HELICOURT <u>SPECIAL IDEA.</u> To push forward and occupy a position along approx. line on VISSE - HINFRAY with the object of attacking and capturing GAMACHES.

Issued at 1900.

(Sgd) G.A. Williamson, Captain,
 Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR PERIOD 11-11-18 TO 16-11-18.

No. 4
Date.....

Date.	Time.	Nature of Training.
11-11-18	0830-1000	Company Parade - Ceremonial.
	1000-1100	Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training.
	1100-1230	Company in Attack in the "Diamond" and "Square" Formations as laid down in Training Leaflet No.4
11-11-18	"C" and "D"	Company Lewis Gunners: Range Practices.
12-11-18	BRIGADE SPORTS:	Battalion Parade. Details to be notified later.
13-11-18	0830-0930	Company Parade - Ceremonial.
	0930-1030	Platoon Training - Close Order Drill - Rifle Exercises
	1030-1100	Assault Training.
	1100-1230	Company Outpost Scheme.
	"A" and "B"	Company Lewis Gunners: Range Practices.
14-11-18	0830-0930	Company Parade.
	0930-1030	Battalion Parade.
	BATTALION EXERCISE	- Details to be notified later.
15-11-18)) RESERVED FOR BRIGADE FIELD DAYS.	
16-11-18)		

REMARKS.

During this period special attention must be paid to Steadying and Smartening Up Drill, especially in the case of Batmen, Cooks and Sanitary Men, who must attend Company Parades each morning.

Williamson

Captain,
Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued at 1400 on 10-11-18.

56/54TH BATTALION.
A.I.F.
No. 5.
Date.....

56/54TH BATTALION SPECIAL ORDER.

Copy No. 8...
APPENDIX

Headquarters,
18-11-18

1. The Divisional Commander will inspect the 14th Brigade Group on the march at 1000, 19th inst.
2. This Battalion will follow the 53rd Battalion past the Saluting Base which will be at a point on the VISMES-ABBEVILLE Road about 100 yds East of the main crossroads in VISMES (V.10.c.3.9)
3. Starting Point: Crossroads, V.11.a.1.9. at 0945.
4. Order of March:
Band,
H.Q.
"A"
"B"
"C"
"D"
5. The Battalion will turn out complete with Transport. Companies will march with complete fours throughout the column.
6. (a) DRESS: Marching Order (no blankets). Hats to be worn turned up at side. S.B.R. to be worn. W.P. Sheets will be carried under the flap of pack with 4 inches showing under lower edge of pack flap. Steel Helmets (no camouflage) to be carried on back of pack.
(b) All Officers will wear Caps and Sam Browne Belts.
(c) Mounted Officers will parade mounted.
7. Companies will parade as strong as possible. Billet Guards will be cut down to a minimum. All Batmen and other details must be on parade.
Battalion H.Q. Company will include all available Signallers, Pioneers, Runners, Stretcher Bearers, etc.
A detailed parade state must be rendered to B.O.R. by 0900 punctually. The T.O. will include number of vehicles and animals, including officers chargers.
8. Transport: The fore parts of Cookers will be taken and all available vehicles. All drivers must be provided with whips.
9. Watches to be synchronised at Bn. Sig. Office at 0830.
10. Acknowledge.

Williamson
Captain,
Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

- Issued at 1900 to:-
- No.1. O.C."A" Coy.
 - No.2. O.C."B" Coy.
 - No.3. O.C."C" Coy.
 - No.4. O.C."D" Coy.
 - No.5. O.C.H.Q.Coy.
 - No.6. Transport Off.
 - No.7. C.O.
 - No.8,9,10, War Diary.
 - No.11.14th Bde.
 - No.12.File.

Headquarters,
24-11-18.

1. The 56/54th Battalion with Transport will move by march route and rail from present area to BOHAIN-BUSIGNY area on the 25th inst.
2. STARTING POINT: Crossroads - W.2.d.2.6. at 0730.
3. DRESS: Full Marching Order with one blanket. Hats to be worn and steel helmet to be carried on back of pack.
4. ORDER OF MARCH:
 - Headquarters,
 - "D" Coy.
 - "C" Coy.
 - "B" Coy.
 - "A" Coy.

Distance of 10 yds. between each Company. Strict March discipline must be observed and each Company will have an Officer in front and rear.

"A" Coy. will provide a rearguard of 1 Officer, 1 N.C.O. and 6 other ranks to march in rear of column.

No man will be allowed to fall out without a chit signed by the R.M.O.
5. The Transport will proceed independently leaving at 0640.
6. The Battalion, less "A" Coy., will travel by No.1 Train from ABBEVILLE. "A" Company with cooker and team will travel by No.2 Train.
7. Entraining Officer: Lieut. A.H.Grimley will act as Entraining Officer and will report to R.T.O. ABBEVILLE at 0940. He will travel by No.1 Train and will act as Brigade Detraining Officer at BERTRY.
8. Unloading Parties: "C" Company will act as unloading party for No.1 Group (trains 1 to 7) at Detraining Station and will come under the orders of Divisional Entraining Officer there.
9. Advanced Party: Each Company will detail 1 N.C.O. with the Company bicycle, to report to Lieut. W.E.Nancarrow at Entraining Station to act as advanced billeting party and to travel by No.1 train.
10. Complete Entraining State will be taken to the train by Transport Officer showing Officers, Other Ranks, Horses D. and Horses L.D., two and four wheeled vehicles, so that train accomodation may be checked.
11. Miscellaneous:
 - (a) O.C."B" Company will detail a Picquet of 1 N.C.O. and 5 men to prevent troops leaving train at stops.
 - (b) Trains will consist of 1 Officers' carriage, 17 flat trucks and 30 covered trucks. Each flat truck will take on an average 4 axles. Each covered truck will take 6 H.D. or 8 L.D. horses or 40 men.
 - (c) No personnel or stores will be allowed in the brake vans or on the roofs of the trucks.
 - (d) All doors of covered trucks and carriages on the right hand side of the train when on the main line will be closed.
 - (e) Companies will take all available fuel for Cookers etc. Straw will be issued to Entraining Officers at each Entraining Station for the men travelling in trucks.
 - (f) Breast Ropes for horse trucks will be provided by Transport Officer. Vehicle lash lines will be supplied on the train.

(P.T.O.)

APPENDIX (2)

6

- 12. (a) All Palliasses will be collected and stacked at Q.M.Stores by 2000 today.
 - (b) The second blanket will be rolled in bundles of 10 and stacked at Q.M.Stores by 1900 today.
 - (c) Officers Valises will be stacked at respective Company H.Q. by 1900 today.
 - (d) Company Mess Gear will be taken to Transport Lines by 2000 today.
 - (e) No dumps are to be left in this area.
 - (f) At Detraining Station all surplus kit and baggage will be dumped on a Brigade Dump near the Station. O.C."B" Company will detail 1 N.C.O. and 2 O.R. to guard the dump. These stores are later to be placed in a Divisional Dump at BOHAIN and will possibly be moved by rail at a later date.
 - (g) Mobile Reserve of Grenades will be left at this dump to provide room for extra transport.
13. Billets must be left in a clean and sanitary condition and Company Commanders will hand in certificates to this effect at Starting Point.
14. Marching Out States will be handed in at Starting Point.

(sgd) G.A.Williamson, Captain,
Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued at 1800 to:-

- O.C."A" Coy.
- O.C."B" Coy.
- O.C."C" Coy.
- O.C."D" Coy.
- O.C.H.Q.Coy.
- Q.M.
- T.O.
- Copies to:-
- C.O.
- War Diary.
- File.

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APPENDIX 7

56TH BATTALION, A.I.F.	
No. 7	
Date	

56/54TH BATTALION WARNING ORDER.

BUSIGNY,
26-11-18.

1. The Battalion will move to a new area tomorrow, 27th inst.
2. STARTING POINT: Battalion Orderly Room at 0900.
3. ORDER OF MARCH: Headquarters,
"D" Coy.
"A" Coy.
"B" Coy.
4. DRESS: Full Marching Order with blanket.
5. Officers' Valises and all gear to be stacked at Q.M.Stores by 0800.
6. Transport will accompany Battalion.
7. Officers will considerably reduce the weight of valises tonight as it has been found impossible to transport them as at present.

(sgd) G.A.Williamson, Captain,
Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued at 1615~~h~~ to:-
O.C."A" Coy.
O.C."B" Coy.
O.C."C" Coy.
O.C."D" Coy.
Transport Officer,
Quartermaster,
C.O.
War Diary,
File.

56TH BATTALION,
A.I.F.

56/54TH BATTALION MOVE ORDER No. 52.

No. 8
Date.....

Headquarters,
28-11-18.

1. The Battalion with Transport will move by march route from present billets to LA GROISE on 29th inst.
2. Starting Point: Church at REJET de BEAULIEU at 1000
3. Dress: Full Marching Order less blanket. Steel Helmet on back of pack.
4. Order of March: "C", "D", "A" and "B" Companies, Headquarters.
5. Transport will move independently at 0900.
6. Each Company and Headquarters will detail 1 N.C.O. with bicycle to report to Lieut. L.K. Threlkeld at Battalion Headquarters at 0730 to act as Advanced Party. L/Cpl. Wharrie will represent Battalion Headquarters.
7. Miscellaneous:
 - (a) Blankets will be rolled in bundles of 10 and stacked at R.Q.M. Store by 0900.
 - (b) Officers' valises will be stacked at ~~XXX~~ Coy. Headquarters by 0830. Transport Officer will arrange to collect.
 - (c) Coy. Mess Gear will be stacked with valises and collected by Transport Officer for loading on Mess Cart.
 - (d) Sick Parade. At Battalion A.M.C. at 0830.
8. All men unable to carry pack and marked as such by R.M.O. will stack their packs with blankets. Q.M. will arrange to transport same with blankets.
9. Billets must be left in a clean and sanitary condition and Coy. Commanders will hand in certificates to this effect at Starting Point.
10. Marching Out States to be handed in at Starting Point.

Issued at 1930 to:-
Company Commanders,
Q.M. and T.O.
War Diary,
File.

(sgd) H.N. Wark, Lieut.,
A/Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

50th BATTALION,
A.I.F.
No. 9
Date

APPENDIX TO WAR DIARY: NOVEMBER 1918

Strength of Battalion on 1/11/18 (including detached:
In Hospital, At Schools, On Command etc. 19 Off. 410 O.R.)

Drafts etc. received during the month including:
Officers and Other Ranks ex sick and ex wounded.

<u>Officers.</u>	<u>Other Ranks.</u>
47	1122
2	32
49	1154

Strength of Battalion on 30/11/18 (including detached:
In Hospital, At Schools, On Command etc. 12 Off. 237 O.R.)

Transfers, Evacuations, out of Div. Area, Secondings, etc.

<u>Officers.</u>	<u>Other Ranks.</u>
47	1090
2	64
49	1154

30/11/18.

Williamson
Captain,
Adjutant 56/54th Battalion, A.I.F.

264

APPENDIX
9

264

APPENDIX / 10



264

APPENDIX 10

*Christmas
Greetings.*

From.....

To.....

Through—
 FROMELLES.
 SOMME, 1916—1917.
 LOUVERVAL.
 BULLECOURT.
 POLYGON WOOD.
 BROODSÉNDE RIDGE.
 VILLERS BRETONNEUX.
 MORLANCOURT.
 PERONNE.
 HINDENBURG LINE.

And
 "Still Smiling."

