

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

Engineers

Item number: 14/11/3

Title: Headquarters 5th Australian
Divisional Engineers

August 1916



AWM4-14/11/3

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.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the Field	Aug. 1 to 31		<p><i>on Aug 1st</i> The strength of the Divl. Engineers was;- 22 Off. 543 O.R. The following reinforcements were received during the month;- = 160 <i>Other Ranks</i> On August^{31st} the Strength of the Div. Engineers was;- 22 Off. 659 O.R. The Unit was with the 5th. Division with Headquarters at SAILLY during the whole of the Month, all three Field Coys., being with the Brigades which were holding the line. In addition to special work undertaken, they were constantly engaged in repairing trenches, saps, tramways etc. The 5th. Pioneers, who were also under the orders of the C.R.E. were engaged mostly in Drainage work and in making the "BOIS GRENIER" Line. The Month on the whole was dry and fine so that a considerable amount of work was done. Water supply was a problem which had to be dealt with. Arrangements had to be made for watering all horses at the river LYS. Several Wells were cleaned out, deepened fitted with pumps, tanks etc. and arrangements were made for chlorinating water from the mines as this was proved by bacteriological tests to be impure. Some Norton Tube wells were also sunk in the front line. These struck water in the green sand at at a depth of abt. 61', but the strainer could not be cleaned properly and the pumping proved unsatisfactory. Arrangements were taken in hand for using and storing water obtained from all the deep wells in the district. It was decided to adopt the different system of housing in the trenches for the winter, the principle laid down being to house 300 men per 1000 yds. in the front line (machine gunners, snipers and bombers) 340 men per 100 yds. in deep dugouts behind the 300 yd. line and 100 men per 1000 yds. in reinforced concrete dugouts. It was decided later by the Army that there should only be 260 men per 1000 yds. in deep dugouts which involved accommodating 240 per 100 yds. in concrete dug-outs. ARRANGEMENT OF DEEP DUGOUTS. Shafts sunk through the surface loam and not less than 13' into the blue clay underneath; from these horizontal drives connected up by a long gallery 6'6" x 6' in the clear; two tiers of bunks along each side. Arrangements were made with Forset Control, La Motte for 2" horn-beam planking to act as lagging. Very valuable advise on the geological situation was received from Major DAVID and much assistance from the 2nd. Australian Tunnelling Coy.</p>	

WAR DIARY

or

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Place	Date	Hour	Continuation 2.	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Aug.	1st. to 31st.			<p>The concrete dugouts 6'6" x 6' made proof against a direct hit from a 5.9" and fitted with 4 bunks each. The timber forms left in to act as a lining.</p> <p>Soon after starting each company was able to complete the concrete work of one dug-out per diem and this would have been considerably increased if the supply of material would have admitted of it. Iron for reinforcing proved the greatest difficulty.</p> <p>It was also decided to thicken both the front parapet and the 300 yd. parapet up to 12' and considerable progress had already been made in this.</p> <p>Several O.P.s were taken in hand. Some of these involved a very large amount of work and are still far from complete.</p> <p>Provision is being attempted for roofed standings for all the horses in the division. These will require about 1 million bricks, of which about 100,000 are expected monthly. Some substitute will therefore have to be found to supplement the supply.</p> <p>On August 19th a raid was carried out on the German trenches, in which two sappers of the 15th. Field Coy. took part for the purpose of doing demolition in the enemy xxxxxxx lines, of these one was killed and the other died of wounds shortly afterwards.</p> <p>The following honours were received by the Engineers in connection with the operations of 19/20 July.:-</p> <p>Military Cross - Lieut. Noedl and Lieut. Fry, D.C.M. L/Cpl. Whitcombe.</p> <p>Military Medal Cpl. Bowman & Sapper Blows.</p> <p>Attached appendices may be worthy of note.</p>	

*RPT Butler Capt & Adj
5th Aust Engs*

for

Lieut. - Lieut.

C. R. E., 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.
No.
Date

Headquarters, 5th. Australian Divisional Engineers.

Chief Engineer,
Engd. ANZAC.

Deep Dugouts.

In view of the Geologists report on the Clay-bed I strongly recommend that the deep dug-outs should be proceeded with without delay, and on a sufficiently large scale to ensure accommodation being ready for the winter.

It is proposed to have one deep dug-out to hold 300 men for each 1000 yds. of our line - say 6 dug-outs altogether. Each Dug-out to have four shafts averaging 30' deep (not including sump) and to be as plan attached (also a spare blue print for you to send to Controller of Mines should you so desire).

In order to push this work properly it will be necessary to drive 4 shafts simultaneously. It is estimated that the rate of sinking will be four shafts in 8 days, I shall therefore require material at the following rates:-

140 ft., of tubing and 4 cutting edges to be sent forthwith. A similar quantity to be sent each week for the next six weeks.

16 - 5 ton Jacks will also be required.

40 ft. run of 6 x 4 mining frames will be required at the end of the first week and each succeeding week.

A separate letter will be sent as regards the frames & legging for the gallery.

The plan has been drawn out under consultation with the O.C. 2nd. Aus. ^{Tunnelling} Coy. who fully concurs in the above proposals.

14/8/16.

Lt-Col.,
G.R.E. 5th. Aus. Division.