

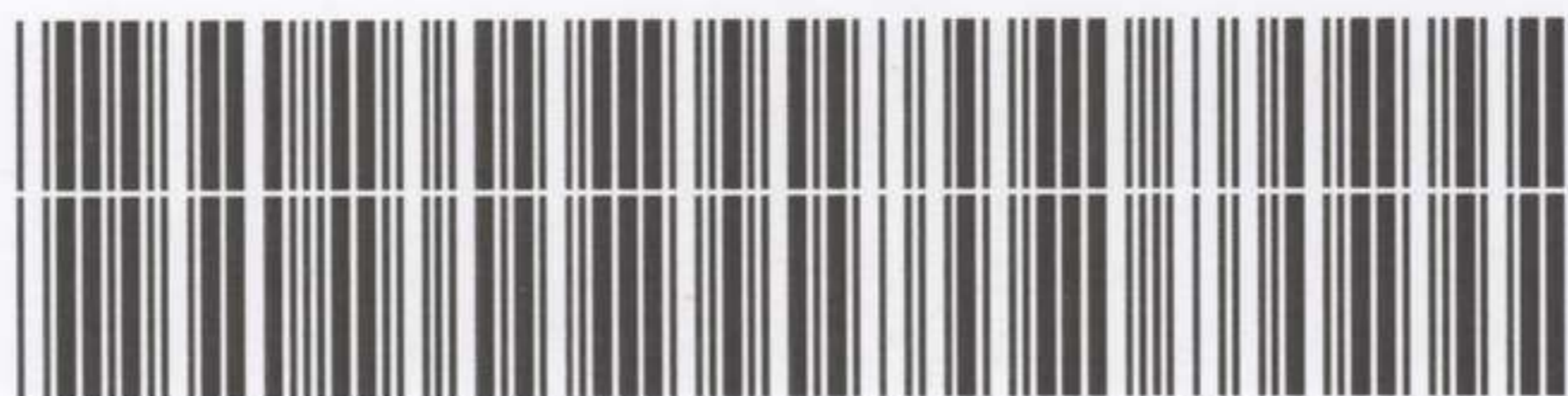
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Engineers

Item number: 14/13/21

Title: 1st Australian Pioneer Battalion

November 1917



AWM4-14/13/21

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

1st Pioneer Bn 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.

Confidential Original

185

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Ypres H23 B6.7	NOV 1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 5 th 1917		A Company. Maintenance of Ypres-Zonnebeke road B Company. Maintenance of Kit-Kat track C Company Maintenance of Smith road. D. Company. Maintenance of Zonnebeke duck-walk track	
Ypres H23 B6.7	NOV 6 th 7 th 8 th 9 th 1917		A. Company Maintenance of Ypres-Zonnebeke road. B Company Maintenance of Kit-Kat track and Zonnebeke track C. Company Maintenance of Smith road D. Company. Construction of artillery dugouts	
Ypres H23 B6.7	Nov 10 th 1917		Battalion moved to Montreal Camp. Ouderdom Area.	
Montreal Camp	NOV 11 th		Battalion resting Montreal Camp at 11pm Battalion transport moved off Enroute for Renesue area and lulliting party proceeded by Motor Lorry. Weather Conditions:- Raining at intervals roads in bad condition	
Renesue	12 th NOV.		Battalion moved from Ouderdom railway siding at 1510 for Arques arrived 2245 Marched to Renesue Map Hazdrouck 5a HE 2 1/2 8 1/2 to a tent. Camp, which advanced lulliting party had erected arriving there at 2410 where transport were awaiting weather dull	

[Signature]

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

185

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
Renesve	Nov 13 th		Battalion moved into adjacent billets vacated by 9 th Aust Mt Bn. Billeting party of 1 Officer + 4 other ranks left by Motor Lorry for NAVRANS Weather dull	
Navrans	Nov 14 th		Battalion route march from Renesve to Navrans Hazelbrouck map 5 A. H. B. 2.6 1/2 distance 13 1/2 miles weather Cloudy	
Navrans	Nov 15 th		Battalion resting feet rifle & seabies inspection carried out. 25% leave granted to Lumbrés. Weather fine	
Navrans	Nov 16 th		Advanced billeting party left for Desvres area Batta resting	
Desvres	Nov 17 th		Battalion moved off at 8 am for Desvres a distance of 15 1/2 miles in full marching order, minus blankets. A halt of ten minutes in every hour was made & at 11.30 the whole Batta rested for one hour for lunch arrived at Desvres at 3 pm. On the march 2 men dropped to the rear with blistered feet but managed to catch up & march on with Battalion. Weather fine. Billeting on the whole was very unsatisfactory. And only after a house to house search picking up one or two men in each house was the Battalion fixed	

W. S. Hall Captain

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

185

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
Hesdin L'Abbe	Nov 18 th		<p>Battalion route marched to Hesdin L'Abbe a distance of 6 miles on arrival Battalion was distributed to villages as follows.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">"A" Coy Brucquedal "B" Coy Isques "C" Coy Hesdin L'Abbe "D" Coy Hedigneuil H.Qrs. Hedigneuil</p> <p>Weather drizzling rain</p>	
Hedigneuil	Nov 19 th		Mornings paradis checking equipment etc. Weather dull	
Hedigneuil	Nov 20 th	21 st	Battalion training as per attached syllabus	
	22 nd	23 rd	5% granted leave to Bologne daily. Weather dull.	
	24 th	25 th		
Hedigneuil	Nov 26 th		Battalion training as per attached syllabus	
	27 th	28 th	5% granted leave to Bologne daily	
	29 th	30 th	Weather Showery	

G. Suddall Captain ^{CO} ~~Adj.~~

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.)

185

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Hesdignuel	Nov 21 st		<u>Training Syllabus</u> For Period 21/11/17 to 25/11/17	
		0900 - 0930	Company Parade	
		0930 - 1000	Squad drill with arms under platoon Officers	
		1000 - 1030	Lecture by platoon Commanders "March discipline"	
		1030 - 1100	Physical training + bayonet fighting	
	1100 - 1200	Recreational training under supervision of Coy Games officer		
	Nov 22 nd	0930 - 1500	Battalion route march	
Nov 23 rd		0900 - 0930	Company parade	
		0930 - 1000	platoon drill under platoon officers	
		1000 - 1030	Lecture on divisional standing orders by platoon Commanders	
		1030 - 1100	Bayonet fighting	
		1100 - 1200	Company drill under Company Commanders	
		1200 - 1300	Lecture on Care of arms & equipment by platoon Commanders	
Nov 24 th		0900 - 1000	Company parade & Company drill under Coy Commanders	
		1000 - 1030	Gas Helmet inspection.	
		1030 - 1100	Physical training	
		1100 - 1200	Recreational training	
	Nov 25 th		Church Parade.	
			<p style="font-size: 1.5em;">W. Seddall</p> <p>Captain Adj.</p>	

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

185

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
Hesdignul	Nov 26 th		Syllabus of Training for period 26/11/17 30/11/17	
	Nov 27 th		<p>Battalion Route march</p> <p>0900-0930 Company parade + inspection</p> <p>1930-1000 platoon drill</p> <p>1000-1030 Lecture by platoon Commanders, aiming + trigger pressing</p> <p>1030-1130 Gas helmet inspection + drill</p> <p>1130-1230 Ceremonial drill</p> <p>1400-1600 Recreational training under Company games officer</p> <p>1600-1700 Lecture to junior officers by C.O.</p>	
	Nov 28 th		<p>0900-0930 Coy parade + inspection</p> <p>0930-1000 Lecture by platoon Commanders</p> <p>1000-1030 Physical training</p> <p>1030-1130 Musketry - Rapid loading + both manipulation</p> <p>1130-1230 Company drill under Company Commanders</p> <p>1400-1600 Recreational training under Battalion games officer</p>	
	Nov 29 th		Battalion route march	
	Nov 30 th		<p>0900-0930 Company parade + inspection</p> <p>0930-1030 Gas helmet inspection + drill</p> <p>1030-1130 Rifle exercises</p> <p>1130-1230 Musketry - visual training + judging distance</p> <p>1400-1600 Recreational training under Coy games officer</p> <p>1600-1700 Lecture to C.S.M.s + platoon Sergeants by C.O.</p>	

R. S. Hall Captain + Adj.

✓
185

1. Aust. Pioneer Battalion

APPENDIX

6

Belgian Chateau

9. 11. 17

Handing over Report

1. Works The Battalion has been engaged on works in the area bounded on North by the Ypres - Roulers railway and on the South by Westhoek - Zonnebeke Road. These works consisted of Duckwalk Tracks, Road maintenance and Deep Dugouts

2. Duckwalk Tracks. There are two of these for which the Battalion is responsible. The left track known as Kit & Kat extends from the point ~~where~~ ^{on} Cambridge Road ~~crosses~~ the Ypres Roulers railway at J 10 d 8.64 running parallel with the ~~the~~ railway parallel Westhoek Ridge at Sexton House. J 1 a 2.9 North of Sans-Souci J 2 a thence to St. Josephs D. 27 a 93 The Battalion is responsible for that portion forward of Westhoek Ridge.

The Right Track extends from the Bellawade Westhoek plank road at J 7 a 93 forward to where it crosses the Westhoek-Zonnebeke Rd near Carter Point. J 3 a 77 The Battalion is responsible for the whole of this length, and also for the Loop piece extending from D 26 c 93 to J 2 b 51 (approx).

The portions of these tracks that require the most maintenance are - On the Left Track, the portions running around Sans Souci Wood and 300 yds forward of the Hanebeek. also the

1815
forward portion from St Josephs. back to D27C19

The Loop Track is continually blown out in front of Sans Souci Wood.

The Right track where it crosses the Hanebeck and forward to ANZAC Ridge will require continual maintenance.

Material for these tracks is carried up on the Canadian. Deauville to a dump at J2C73 arrangements being made with the Light railway people.

3 Plank Road The Westhoek-Zonnebeke Road known as Smiths road is under the Wallonia for maintenance from J3C39 forward to the Buck Keln at D27b92. It is a single way track but passing places are being formed at intervals of every 150 yds. The planking for this road was arranged for this Corps and sent in Motor Lorries to Bri x roads loaded into G.S Waggon and then up by the Bellawade ~~can~~ Westhoek Road to job.

4 Metal Road The section of the Ypres-Zonnebeke road from the Railway crossing ~~to~~ at D26b94 to Zonnebeke Church at D281a949 and the connecting piece of Road from the Chateau to Buck Keln (D27b86 to D27b92) will have to be maintained.

The section between Railway crossing and St Josephs. is very heavily shelled during periods of the night and requires constant attention to keep it open for G.S Waggon traffic. Motor traffic can now get up to the Railway crossing and arrangements had

181

been made to get metal up to this 8
point and the Battalion ~~carried~~ to cart
it along the road where required.

C.E. Army has decided that this road
be made suitable for Motor traffic as
soon as possible. This has
The present method of dealing with the
road has been to fill shell holes with
brick and top off with ~~stones~~ metal.

5 Deep Dugouts There have been commenced
on the left right of Smith road on
Amzac Ridge at about J 3 C 77
Two shafts have been put down and 22
sets in each shaft have been put in
There is difficulty with water & loose sandy
formation of the ground.
This work has been under the Canadian
Tunnellers supervision.

185

185
Wm

C O P Y.

APPENDIX

9

FIRST AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS.

Headquarters,

10th November, 1917.

My Dear Henderson;

Now that we are leaving this sector I cannot let you go without expressing to you, and your splendid Battalion, the 1st Pioneers, my gratitude, and admiration for the way in which you have carried out the important work of building our forward roads right up to the front.

It is needless for me to tell you of what vital importance to the success of the Army these roads were; your Officers and men shewed that they recognised this by the way in which they carried their work through in the face of the most deadly artillery fire, day after day. Alas! many of your splendid fellows, both Officers and men, have laid down their lives, but not uselessly, as the success of the Army in Flanders has demonstrated.

I wish to thank you, your Officers, N.C.O.'s and men for the splendid example of courage, and devotion to duty you have shewn through all these strenuous weeks.

I shall always remember with pride that I have been associated with the 1st Australian Pioneer Battalion.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) A.G. deLOTBINIERE,

Brig. General.

Ch. Engr. 1st Anzac.

1st Anzac Corps,

12th NOVEMBER, 1917.

Now that our Corps is being withdrawn from that part of the front in which we have seen so much hard fighting during the last two months, I wish to convey to all ranks my very heartiest congratulations upon the real good work which has been put in, and my deep feeling of gratitude to officers, non-commissioned officers and men for the magnificent spirit and self-sacrifice which has been shown by all. All I think must realise that the fighting we have been through has been of an entirely satisfactory nature in that we were able to attain our objective in every one of the many attacks which we have put in, and that without a single hitch of any sort. The Army Commander has testified to this after each attack made, and we know with what appreciation the Commander-in-Chief wired to Australia regarding the results of the fighting done by her troops.

In a great deal of our previous fighting, the brunt has fallen to a large extent on the Infantry. In all these recent attacks the infantry have again naturally come in for the giant's share of the fighting, but they will I know be the first to acknowledge how their success has so much depended upon the magnificent work done by the Artillery. Their comrades in the Artillery, too, have not been able to obtain the same long spell as the Infantry have had, and I am sure the whole Infantry will wish to join in unstinted praise and feelings of gratitude for the unflinching and devoted work of all the Artillery day and night without respite. They have been subjected to continuous heavy shelling, while gas shells were often poured over them for hours without cessation. During the whole of this time we have all realized what it has meant to them, and we know that nothing has ever deterred them from sacrificing themselves for the benefit of the Infantry. Not only to the gunners, but to the drivers also we owe our gratitude. With them, too, I would associate the Engineers, Pioneers, Medical Services, and Army Service Corps, who vied with each other in striving to ensure everything possible being done which would conduce to victory, and to the well being of Officers and Men throughout the Corps. All alike have taken their share in casualties, but, much as we must regret the fallen, we realise they have given their lives to ensure victory.

I am sure that whatever fighting may yet be before us, the A.I.F. will on all occasions fight just as well as it has done in the past but the successful fighting these last two months through Glencorse and Polygon Woods terminating in the capture of the Broodseinde Ridge will be difficult to beat, and I would again express my most grateful thanks to all who have taken part in it.

W. R. BIRDWOOD.

A.P.—349 —cc—11-17