

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

Engineers

Item number: 14/10/34

Title: Headquarters 4th Australian
Divisional Engineers

November 1918



AWM4-14/10/34

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

HEADQUARTERS
4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS

FOR

NOVEMBER. 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling

J. D. ...

Lieut. & Adjt.
4th. Aust. Div. Engrs.

Signature of Officer Commanding

W. Jolly

Major.
Acting C.R.E. 4th AUST. DIVISION.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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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~~

NOVEMBER, 1918.

(Erase heading not required.) 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
SAISSEVAL &	1.		<p><u>Reference Maps. 1/100,000, AMIENS, ST.QUENTIN, VALENCIENNES, NAMUR.</u></p> <p>Field Companies and Headquarter personnel paraded between the hours of 09.00 and 13.00 and guards posted at governing points of village routes to round up any troops A.W.L. (all troops in area similarly instructed) No arrests were made. Sports and football matches in afternoon.</p>	
	2.		<p>12th Field Coy. at work on rifle ranges near BOUGAINVILLE and miscellaneous area works. 13th Field Coy. on training. Football matches in afternoon.</p>	
	3.		<p>Church of England Church Parade in the morning. "Smart Set" 4th Aust. Div. Concert Party give a much appreciated concert in Engineer Theatre Hall, SAISSEVAL in evening.</p>	
	4.		<p>Divisional Boxing Tournament - first day. 13th Field Coy. take over work from 12th Field Coy. who spend whole time in training in morning and football and sports in afternoon. Rifle ranges at BOUGAINVILLE are chief works and remainder miscellaneous jobs improving billeting, training, and recreation arrangements in area.</p>	
	5.		<p>Divisional Boxing Tournament - second day. 12th and 13th Field Coy's. employed as on 4th instant.</p>	
	6.		<p>4th Field Coy. arrived at SAISSEVAL after three days march from ST.FIRMIN (work on Aust. Corps School) 12th and 13th Field Coy's employed as on 4th instant.</p>	
	7.		<p>Preliminary instructions received for proposed move to forward area commencing on 9th instant. 12th and 13th Field Coy's employed as on 4th instant.</p>	
	8.		<p>Orders received by Div. Engineers H.Q. and 3 Brigade H.Qrs cancelling move for 24 hours. All work on rifle ranges and area works stopped.</p>	

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A5001) Wt. W1771/M2031 750,000 5/17 Sch. 52 Forms/C2118/14

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
SAISSEVAL.	9.		C.R.E. Southern Training Area called on C.R.E. and discussed generally work in area and situation of same for new troops. C.R.E. Dump, SAISSEVAL, handed over to guard from 550th (Glam) Field Coy. R.E.	
	10.		4th and 12th Field Coy's have Church of England Church Parade in morning. 13th Field Coy. marched out and entrained. 4th and 12th Field Coy's and Div. Engineers H.Q. received orders postponing move for 24 hours.	
	11.		Messages received from Division and Corps stating "Hostilities cease at 11 a.m. to-day". First message received over phone at 10.10 a.m. The French Mission gave out the news to the civilians at 1.30 p.m. and the villagers hung out flags, rang the Church Bells and put up extra lights for night time. Message received postponing move for 12 hours.	
	12.		Message received postponing move further 24 hours. 12th Field Coy. twice marched six kilometres to railhead and received messages on route to return to SAISSEVAL. C.R.E. left SAISSEVAL for forward area in O.C. Sigs' Car at 11.30 a.m.	
	13.		12th Field Coy. marched out of SAISSEVAL at 10 a.m. minus their transport which had not returned the previous day and had waited at Railhead, HANGEST. Div. Engineers H.Q., and 4th Field Coy. received message postponing their move a further 7 hours. The reason given by R.T.O's for frequent postponements was blowouts on Railway system caused by delay action mines.	
	14.		4th Field Coy. marched out of SAISSEVAL at 2 a.m. Headquarters marched out at 5 a.m. Train left SALEUX at 11 a.m. and arrived at EPEHY at 10 p.m. Personnel slept in Railway trucks at EPEHY.	
EPEHY.	15.		Lieut. KEESING cycled to FRESNOY-le-GRAND in advance of personnel and fixed details with Lieut-Colonel DYER re' new Headquarters at BUSIGNY. Personnel marched from EPEHY to TEMPLEUX-le-GERARD and entrained in light railway. Detrained at BRANCOURT, marched to FRESNOY-le-GRAND and finished journey to BUSIGNY in 13th Field Coy. Pontoon Waggon. Transport travelled by road. Move completed at 6.30 p.m. 4th Field Coy. at MERICOURT; 12th and 13th Field Coy's at FRESNOY-le-GRAND.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BUSIGNY.	16		Lieutenant G.F.S.DONALDSON (Adjutant) returned from U.K. Furlough. C.R.E. attended Conference at 13th A.I. Brigade at FRESNOY-le-GRAND with reference to proposed move to GERMANY and preparatory measures for demobilisation.	
	19		Major S.B.COX arrived from 3rd Aust. Div. Engineers and was posted to command 12th Field Coy.	
	21		Moves commenced; Companies travelling with respective Brigade Groups (Appendix 1)	
PRISCHES.	23		Engineer Headquarters moved to PRISCHES.	
SAINS.	25.		Engineer Headquarters moved to SAINS du NORD. 4th Field Coy. located at SAINS du NORD. 12th Field Coy. situated at FLAUMONT. 13th Field Coy. situated at SIVRY.	
			Field Companies employed on various works such as repairs of roads, bridges and billets, Recreation Halls, and improvements of sanitary conditions.	
			The month ended quietly.	

G.F.S. Donaldson

Lieut. & Adjt.
for C.R.E. 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

WAR DIARY

OF

HEADQUARTERS, 4th AUSTRALIAN DIV. ENGINEERS.

FOR

NOVEMBER. 1918.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1.	R.M. O's Report.
2.	Div. Engr. Order No. 13. -----

I. D. O. Marshall

Lieut. & Adjt.
for C.R.E. 4th AUST. DIVISION.

MEDICAL WAR DIARY.4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS.NOVEMBER, 1918.

For the first week of this month all the three Field Coy's of the 4th Aust. Divisional Engineers were billeted together at SAISSEVAL and SAISSEMONT near the SOMME; two very small and low lying villages, very dirty and badly drained; consequently much attention was needed to keep them in a fit and sanitary state. The billets there were not very good, consisting for the most part of mud and lathe barns which had to undergo a certain amount of repair to make them rain proof at least.

About this time the troops were warned that an early move would probably take place, in order to follow closely the retreating Germans; subsequently on the 10th, the 13th Field Coy. marched out, the 12th and 4th Companies following at intervals of several days.

As the different brigades of the Division were moving independently it was impossible for the M.O. to attend to the three Companies constantly, so he attached himself to the leading Company, the 13th and made arrangements for the 12th and 4th Field Ambulances to attend to the sick of their respective Companies.

However, after a very miserable and cold train trip, the three Companies were brought together again for about a week at PRESNOY-le-GRAND where instructions were issued to weed out all men medically unfit and those not likely to last out a long march with a view to leaving them behind. This was done and some 30 or 50 men were so marked. At the last moment these instructions were cancelled, and all men fit and unfit were brought along. In spite of this however, after five days continual marching no men fell out, although a fair number suffered from blistered and sore feet. Sick wastage from this source has so far been nil, a condition entirely due to the close attention paid to washing and powdering of the feet and the daily changing of socks.

In fact, the amount of sickness taking into consideration the conditions under which the troops lived and the weather, has been very small, the chief complaints being colds, coughs and sore feet.

The influenza epidemic which threatened at one time to become very serious has practically ceased, about 10 cases only have been evacuated, nearly all being of the mild type.

The total number of evacuations has been 15, a fair proportion of these occurring during the last couple of days of the march when the necessary energy began to fail.

There has only been 2 cases of venereal disease (contracted while on leave) and nobody has patronised the prophylactic Room.

Billets at the beginning of the journey were not very good but are getting much better as we progress, partly because the towns are bigger, but especially because the houses are much less knocked about. In fact in BELGIUM the wholesale destruction of property was evidently not the policy of the enemy.

On the 26th of the month the Division came to a stop which shall probably last for a couple of weeks and everybody has taken the advantage to wash clothing, pay attention to the feet and health generally. Owing to the prevalence of typhoid fever among the civil populations of the areas through which the troops are passing special efforts are being made to inoculate all men needing the same.

I. P. J. Swallow
for.

R. M. O.
4th AUST. DIVISIONAL ENGRS.

DIVISIONAL ENGINEER ORDER No. 13.

by

Lieut-Colonel R.J.DYER, D.S.O.C.R.E. 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

In the Field

9th November, 1918.

1. PRELIMINARY MOVE INSTRUCTIONS. The Division (less Artillery) will move into the forward area by train and bus commencing on 10th instant.

2. For the purposes of the move Groups will be composed as follows :-

(a) Brigade Groups.

"A" Bde. Group.

Commander. Brig-Gen. S.H. HERRING, D.S.O.

13th A.I. Bde.

13th A.M.G. Coy.

13th A.Fld. Coy.

13th A.Fld. Ambulance.

27th A.S.C. Coy.

"B" Bde. Group.

Commander. Brig-Gen. R.L. LEANE, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C.

12th A.I. Bde.

12th A.M.G. Coy.

12th A.Fld. Coy.

12th A.Fld. Ambulance.

28th A.S.C. Coy.

"C" Bde. Group.

Commander. Brig-Gen. E. DRAKE-BROCKMAN, C.M.G., D.S.O.

4th A.I. Bde.

4th A.M.G. Coy.

4th A.Fld. Coy.

4th A.Fld. Ambulance.

7th A.S.C. Coy.

(b) Divisional Troops Group.

4th Divisional Headquarters.

H.Q. 4th M.G. Battalion.

H.Q. 4th Aust. Divl. Engineers.

H.Q. 4th Aust. Divl. Train.

24th A.M.G. Coy.

4th Aust. Pioneer Bn.

4th Aust. Mob. Vet. Section.

4th Aust. Div. Sanitary Section.

4th Aust. Div. Salvage Coy.

3. Each Group will entrain simultaneously at the three entraining stations in order as far as possible to synchronise its arrival complete at detraining stations.

The entrainment and detrainment, and embussing and debussing, of Brigade Groups will be superintended by Brigade Group Commanders. That of troops of the Divisional Troops Group will be superintended by the senior officer travelling in the respective trains.

4. Field Companies will move as follows :-

P.T.O.

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APPENDIX 2

Train No.	From.	Unit.	Date.	Time.	Detraining Station.
1.	SALEUX.	3 Sapper Cyclists, 13th Field Coy.	10/11/18.	14.35.	EPEHY.
2.	AILLY-sur-SOMME.	do	do	15.47.	ROISEL.
3.	HANGEST.	do	do	16.27.	TINCOURT.
6.	HANGEST.	13th Field Coy.	do	20.27.	TINCOURT.
12.	HANGEST.	12th Field Coy.	11/11/18	04.27.	TINCOURT.
18.	HANGEST.	4th Field Coy.	11/11/18.	12.27.	TINCOURT.

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Under instructions from D.H.Q., 3 sapper cyclists of 13th Field Coy. will move by each of the first three trains for the purpose of dealing with mines and any such contingencies that may arise.

5. Attention is drawn to 4th Aust. Div. Administrative Instructions No.97 dated 7/11/18.
6. Div. Engineer Headquarters will move by train 19 from SALEUX on 11th instant at 14.35 detraining at EPEHY.
7. Acknowledge (Field Coy's).


 Lieut-Colonel.
 C.R.E. 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Distribution.

1. 4th Field Coy.
2. 12th Field Coy.
3. 13th Field Coy.
4. H.Q. 4th Aust. Div.
5. Entraining Officer, 4th Aust. Div.
6. C.E. Aust. Corps.
7. 13th A.I. Bde.
8. War Diary.
9. File.