

AWM4

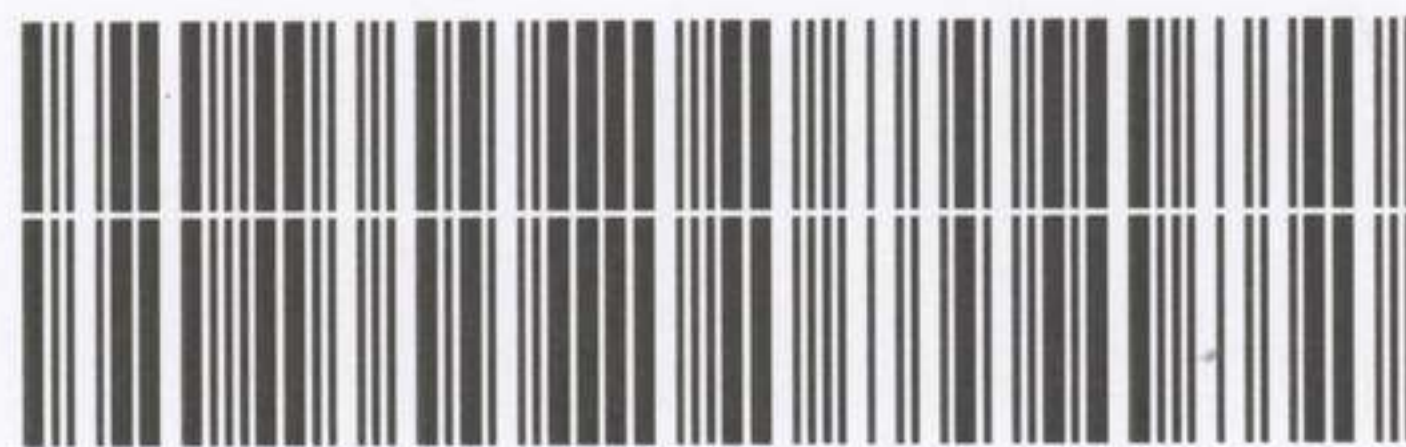
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Bases & Depots

Item number: 33/16/3

Title: No 1 Australian Command Depot

May 1917



AWM4-33/16/3

469



1
Petnam Down,
TIDWORTH 7th June, 1917.

To:- Headquarters,
A.I.F. Depots in U.K.,
T I D W O R T H.



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buc
K*

Herewith report for month of May, 1917:-

	<u>Offrs.</u>	<u>O/Ranks.</u>
Strength of Depot 30/4/17...	62	2555
Total arrivals at Depot.....	196	2969
<u>Departures:-</u>		
Overseas.....	-	-
Other Depots.....	194	2616
London for duty....	-	20

DEATHS: There was one death reported during the month:- No. 578

C.Q.M.S. Menzies, E. - 30th. Battalion, A.I.F., died in Delhi Hospital from pneumonia, and was buried at Penings Cemetery with the usual Military Honours.

DISCIPLINE: The internal discipline is very good. The report from the Provost Officer is attached which again shows a large number of cases disposed of.

The majority of the offences were again committed away from the Depot, i.e., while in Hospitals or on furlough, and are sent to this Depot to be dealt with. Apart from that the internal discipline is very good. Only one case of falsified passes occurred during the month. The big decrease in this charge is no doubt due to the most vigorous manner in which all such cases have been dealt with. 31 Cases were remanded for D.C.M. for the month, which shows a decrease of 10 on last month's return. The majority of the cases remanded for D.C.M. were illegal absentees. Several night raids were carried out during the month, which proved successful. Several captures were made in each case in the trenches, dug-outs, haystacks, and woods in the vicinity of the Camp, of absentees from both this and other Depots and Camps..

The new detention compound which was established at the close of last month, for the purpose of centralising the Provost work and a more efficient safeguard for accused soldiers has served its purpose well. The discipline of the accused soldiers whilst in the Detention Compound has been very good.

Over

469
DISCIPLINE: (Continued) Since the Provost work has been centralised it has been the means of reducing the Guard Strength by 45 and Provost Staff by 20.

ADMINISTRATION:- The administration is carried on with the minimum of economy to maintain the required efficiency. When men who are employed become "A" Class, they are eliminated from the Staff, as far as possible only men of low category are employed on duties in the Depot.

In several instances it is most essential to employ men of Bla category, as it is found that Home Service men cannot carry out the required duties in all cases, but immediately such cases become "A" class, they are marched out. A squad of about 20 N.C.O's and men of low category, and have seen long service are in constant training each day in Guard duties. As soon as the N.C.O's and men become thoroughly conversant with the required duties, they relieve other men of a higher category who are employed on such duties.

TRAINING:- The present system of training carried out is a hardening process, most particular attention is given to this work.

The average number of N.C.O's and men under training for the month was approximately 500 daily. The N.C.O's and men undergoing training are segregated into platoons according to their medical classification and fitness, and exercises are regulated accordingly. The following syllabus of the training is carried out:-

No.2 Platoon - made up of B.la2 men: Light elementary movements, marching exercises and games which stimulate increased circulation of the whole body.

No.3 Platoon - made up of B.la3 men: Medium exercises, marching, running and jumping exercises, and games for stimulating the respiration and circulation.

No.4 Platoon - made up of B.la4 men: Advances exercises. Marching, running and jumping (varied and strenuous) and games. The weather conditions for the past month being more suited for training, men become physically fit much more quickly and pass through the Depot more expeditiously.

TRAINING (Continued) All N.C.O's and men of the category B.1a are medically classified once a week, and undergo the more advanced stages of training according to their classification .

3

Approximately 50 N.C.O's and men are paraded daily to the Senior Dental Officer for dental treatment.

The training is carried on under the supervision of a Physical Training Staff, two of whom are Imperial Gymnastic Instructors. The remaining Instructors have all attended Courses of Instruction in Physical training and Bayonet exercises etc., at Aldershot and other Training Schools.

SANITATION: Thirty tents have been pitched within the Camp Boundary. A certain number of men vacate their huts for a period of 10 days to enable the huts to be thoroughly cleansed.

All blankets and equipment are ranged between huts and tents each morning (weather permitting) for the purpose of airing.

15 tents have been erected about 500 yards from the Camp. This is used for an isolation Camp for all contacts. A picquet is posted round this camp to prevent the men who are contacts, from leaving the precincts of Camp, and mixing with other men in the Depot. A canteen has also been provided to enable the men who are isolated to purchase any necessaries which they may require without having to leave the precincts of their quarters.

A separate cook-house has also been erected in the Camp. Everything possible is done to prevent the men who are contacts from suffering any inconveniences.

ABSENTEES: The absentee company, as set out in last month's report, still continue to carry out most excellent work. A considerable number of absentees are apprehended every month, by Army Form W3111 being posted to the Civil Police in the District in which the man gave his address when proceeding on furlough. A number of men who have been posted as absentees are traced and often found to be in hospitals or transferred to other Depots without this Depot being notified, by a letter being posted to the man in question at the last address which he had left when on furlough.

469
ABSENTEES (Continued)

Every effort possible is instituted to locate all absentees who are apprehended in all parts of Great Britian and Ireland by the Civil Police, on the receipt of Army Form W3111 which is posted to them.

MESSING: The messing for all troops receives very close attention. Everything possible is done to have the men provided with good food and sufficient to meet all their requirements. I may state that very few, if any complaints, are ever made by the men. Every precaution possible is taken to prevent waste of food. Attached is the report from the Messing Officer giving full details for the month.

AMUSEMENTS: A concert is now held each Friday night. A concert party is engaged from London or some other town to enable a good show to be given. Boxing Tournaments are arranged every Monday and Wednesday nights. It is found that this sport is greatly appreciated by the troops, especially when tournaments are arranged for between this Depot and other Depots and units.

Cricket matches are also arranged, and several matches have been played between the Depot teams and other units. The troops appear to take a very keen interest in both boxing and cricket.

Both the Billiard, Reading and Writing rooms are well patronised by the men. Arrangements are in hand to have two more billiard tables erected. Billiard tournaments are arranged from time to time. This game appears to be greatly appreciated by the majority of the troops. The Reading and Writing Room has been extended, and everying possible is done by the Sports and Entertainments Committee to provide amusements for the men, and to prevent a number of men wandering about neighbouring villages, and breaking camp.

BAND: The band still continues to show great improvement and is doing good work. A programme is played from 6.30.p.m. to 8.p.m. each evening. This is found to have a very inspiring effect on the troops, and assists in keeping the general conduct and discipline of the Depot good, it also helps to keep the men

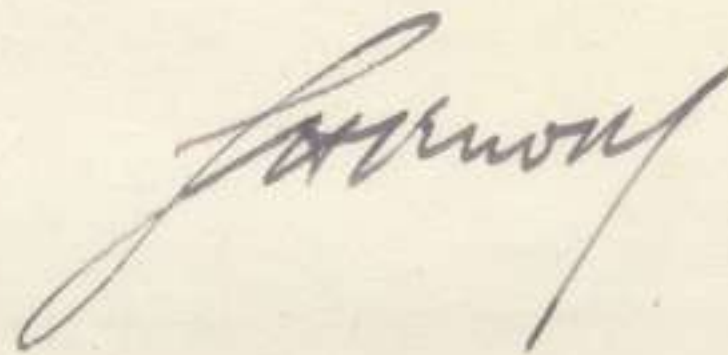
BAND (Continued) in the Depot on the evenings when sports and concerts are not arranged for.

5

DRAFTS: N.C.O's and men are continually drafted to their Training Units and Drafting Depot when they become fit.

N.C.O's and men who are not likely to become fit within six weeks are still drafted to No.3 Command Depot, and over six weeks to Weymouth, when the last named Depot can accommodate them.

POSTAL SERVICE: The work carried out in the Depot for the month was very satisfactory. All re-direction receives very close attention, to ensure troops who have been drafted from the Depot receiving their mail with the least possible delay. Approximately 45,000 letters, packets, and newspapers, and 1449 parcels were handled for the month.



(AT).

Lieut-Colonel,
Commandant, NO.1 COMMAND DEPOT. A.I.F.

469

SUMMARY OF CHARGES FOR THE MONTH OF MAY, 1917.

6

A.W.I. accompanied with:-

Breaking Camp	49
Drunk	2
Neglect of duty	7
Irregular conduct	2
Breaking hospital	4
False pass	1
Out of Bounds	2
False address	1
Escaping confinement	2

A.W.I.	391
Irregular Conduct	19
Neglect of duty	19
Drunk	13
Breaking Hospital	5
Attempting suicide	1
Out of bounds	19
Absent from Parades	21
Failing to salute	6
Neglecting to obey orders	19
No identity	2
Making false statement	2

517

D. C. Ms.

31

Total

548

Leutnant
Post Office

469
REPORT ON WORKING OF PROVOST STAFF DURING MAY, 1917.

From:- O.C., Provost,
To:- Adjutant,
No. 1 Command Depot.

Herewith report of working of the Department under my Command during the past month:-

General Discipline. The discipline of the camp outside of parade hours depending very largely on the effectiveness of the police control, it is satisfactory to be able to say that discipline in this Command Depot compares favourably with that of any of the A.I.F. Depots in the U.K.. A return of the charges dealt with during the month is attached, and by comparison with the figures for the previous month an idea may be obtained as to whether discipline is improving or deteriorating. It is improving; for, whilst the total number of charges dealt with shows an increase of about 10 per cent, there is a decrease in the number of serious charges of no less than 25 per cent, as compared with the figures for the previous month- serious charges being taken as those which led to the accused being remanded for trial by District Court Martial. Absence without leave was the offence in the great majority of cases; such cases, indeed, forming 75 per cent of the whole. It must be taken into account, too, that in the great majority of these A.W.L. cases, the offence is not actually committed from this Depot; but soldiers, having been through hospital and proceeding on furlough, feel inclined to make the best of the respite from rigid military discipline, and to take a short holiday over and above what has been officially sanctioned. The discipline maintained in the Depot itself is good, and there have been no serious disturbances.

Detention Compound. The new detention compound, opened towards the close of last month, for the purpose of centralising the work and of providing a more efficient safeguard for accused soldiers, has served its purposes. When first opened, two senior Non-commissioned Officers from the Anzac Provost Corps were attached to my staff for duty, with a view to demonstrating practically how it was to be conducted. After carrying on with this work for about a month, these N.C.Os. returned to their unit, and the management of the compound is now being conducted entirely by the Depot Staff. The work is being carried on smoothly and efficiently, the present staff being thoroughly conversant with their respective duties. Thanks to their vigilance and to that of the guard who patrol the compound outside the barbed wire, no prisoner has as yet effected an escape; and it is in the nature of a compliment to the Detention Staff that prisoners have been sent from other camps to be held "for safe custody" by us. The prisoners are treated in strict accordance with regulations, and the discipline preserved has been on the whole very good.

Camp Police. I have no hesitation in saying that these men are carrying out their duties in a manner that is a credit to the Depot and to themselves. They are undoubtedly a strong influence in the preservation of order, their work being none the less effective because it is done quietly. Their rule is to nip trouble in the bud - not to watch it grow in the hope of effecting an arrest. They are vigilant and tactful, knowing their work and doing it well. They are very efficiently supervised by Sergeant Lovett and his second-in-charge, Sergeant Davis, and it is to the training in their duties by these two Non-commissioned Officers that the smooth working of the force is due. Apart from the routine work of the Depot, several raids were made at night during the month, wherein several captures were made of soldiers who had installed themselves in trenches, dug-outs and haystacks in the vicinity of the camp, with a view to an unfettered enjoyment of the English summer. A word should be said of the work of the Canteen Police, to whose credit it is to be said that, in places where disturbances may not unreasonably be expected from time to time, they have so managed that no disturbance whatever has had to be reported.

469
Office Staff. The amount of work requiring to be done in the office nowadays is fourfold that of December last. Much able assistance has been given me by Lieut. Bickford, and, after his departure, by Lieut. Rouse, with the result that I am able to give more time to the effective supervision of the whole working of the Provost Staff. It is to be pointed out that, not only is the work of the office plentiful, but also that it necessitates remaining on duty for long hours, since one never knows at what time some business requiring urgent attention-e.g., the fixing up of an escort-may arise. Sergt.-Major Steriker, in charge of the office, has his work at his fingertips, and, under his guidance things run smoothly. The duty of arranging escorts falls on Corporal Higgs, and to him also is allotted the making up of the weekly return, B.2069. In connection with this return, it has been learned (though not officially), that that from this Depot, whilst one of the largest sent in to Headquarters, also gives the least trouble in the way of requiring amendment. I may claim that the remainder of the office work is attended to with equal care and efficiency. Corporal Cromwell, as N.C.O. in charge of defaulters' parades, and in carrying out the duties of Orderly Corporal to the Provost Staff, is keenly alive to his duties; and the remainder of the Office Staff know their work and get through it expeditiously. The work is kept right up-to-date; in evidence of which I may state that at the present moment there is no man remanded for D.C.M. whose summary of evidence in whose case has not been taken.

General. The Staff throughout knows its work and does it quietly. It is work that requires sound men to carry on, for the hours are long, and there is always the possibility of trouble arising unexpectedly. There have been a number of changes on the staff during the month, the policy pursued being to gradually train the new men taken on, that they may take the places of the trained men who, from one cause or another, march out of the Company. I would respectfully request that the Provost Staff be kept up to its present strength, as any curtailing would cause an unnecessary amount of duty to be placed on those already doing a full day's work. The distribution of the Camp Police and Detention Staff is shown on the duty roster attached hereto.

Perham Down,
 1st. June, 1917.

Lieut. & O.C., Provost,
 No. 1 Command Depot.

469

CAMP POLICE AND DETENTION STAFF DUTY ROSTER;

9

CAMP POLICE

		N.C.Os.	Men.
1 N.C.O. In Charge.		1	
No. 1, 2 & 3 Camps Patrol.			
1 N.C.O. & 9 men	9 a.m.--4.30 p.m.	1	9
1 N.C.O. & 9 men	4.30 p.m.--11 p.m.	1	9
Duty during Canteen Hours and Escort to Coy.Ord.Room.			
No. 1 Canteen	1 N.C.O. & 2 men	1	2
No. 2 Canteen	1 N.C.O. & 2 men	1	2
No. 3 Canteen	1 N.C.O. & 2 men	1	2
Post Office	9 a.m. 7 p.m.		1
Pay Office	9.30 a.m. 5 p.m.	1	1

DETENTION STAFF;

1 N.C.O. In Charge.		1	
8 a.m.--4 p.m.		1	3
4 p.m.--12 m/n.		1	3
m/n.--- 8 a.m.		1	3
Escort Staff for Detention & C.O.'s Orderly Room		1	8
Barber			1
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	Total strength	12	44
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NO.1 COMMAND DEPOT,
Perham Down,
30th. May, 1917.

10

469
From:- Officer i/c Messing,
No.1 Command Depot.

To:- Adjutant,
No.1 Command Depot.

Monthly Report of Officer i/c Messing for period 28th. April,
to 25th. May, 1917.

Messing. 166,512 meals.

These have been served punctually and well, and appear to have given satisfaction to the men. I personally visit the Mess Huts and kitchens during the meal hours, and make a practice of asking the men if they are satisfied. I have received no complaints. I consider the small amount of waste in this Depot viz., $3\frac{3}{4}$ oz. per man per day, representing swill, although capable of reduction is fairly satisfactory. A very considerable quantity of bread was overdrawn 8,900 rations, and flour drawn in lieu.

Scones, pastry, and duff of various kinds have been substituted and much appreciated.

On several occasions instead of serving the dinner hot, I have put on cold meats with beetroot, potatoes, and onion salad, this has been very successful, no waste occurring as the men eat the cold fat on the meat more readily than when hot.

Canteens. The subject of Canteen suppers came to my notice when the A.C.S. sent a Miss Norfolk to the Depot with instructions amongst other duties to supervise the preparation of suppers for the men. After carefully considering the matter and making enquiries, I found that only 4% of the men were buying suppers in the Canteens, and about 5% were buying tea and biscuits in the Church and Y.M.C.A. Huts, so I came to the conclusion that suppers were an unnecessary luxury, and that if a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits were available if required by the men about 8-30 or 9.p.m. the expense of supper and the inducement to the men to be absent from dinner which has to be provided for them and consequent waste if not eaten, and irregular control of the food, would cease to exist. I accordingly recommended to the Commandant that the services of Miss Norfolk be made available for improving my own staff in the art of cooking. I might say that when the matter was placed before Mr. Gardner of the A.C.C. Ludger shall, he kindly placed her services at my disposal, and I obtained considerable assistance from her.

Staff. I have again to report with great satisfaction on the work of my Staff, and I should like to here mention that I consider the majority of the kitchen staff, such men as head cooks, pastry cooks, tea makers, vegetable cooks, stokers, and swill workers should be fit and able men as any in the Depot, because they not only have long hours and arduous work, but they are working on the clock also, and it will be understood that in order to keep the Department up to a high standard these men are working at high pressure 7 days in each week. I therefore, to ensure the efficiency of my Department, must protest against such "A" Class as I have, being marched out until I am absolutely sure that I am suited by lower category men to replace them. This I am constantly trying to do, but have found great difficulty up to the present. During the hot weather men are not anxious for cooking jobs. It is cooler outside.

By Products. The return for By-products has been satisfactory. A considerable increase in the consumption of dripping has been caused by scones, pastry, and duff being put on the menu, and also I have reduced the consumption of margarine to 26lbs per 1,000 men, instead of 36 lbs last period.

A small experiment in soap making was successful, in which I used 75 lbs of dripping recovered in the By-product, and produced 100 lbs of soap.

By Products (continued).

The quantity of dripping used per 1000 men is apparently excessive, 77 lbs, but it has not been wasted, and the men greatly appreciate it.

Altogether I recovered, used and sold 6,941 lbs of dripping, worth at current price £175-0-8, 14.4% of total weight of meat issued, and 4457 lbs, 9.2% of meat issued worth £15-11-10.

Prices. There is a matter of prices of food stuffs ordered from Canteens, I take this opportunity of mentioning. In the case of fish, I had an offer of smoked kippers at 4/5d. each from a Fish Salesman in London delivered to rail head; for similar fish bought in the Canteen I had to pay 2³/₄d each. Again I have had several offers from the same salesman of Codling and Haddock at 6d. per lb. delivered to rail head, but have had to pay 11d. per lb in Canteens. I recognise it is desirable to deal with Canteens, but cannot help thinking such wide discrepancy in prices might be adjusted.

W. Andrewes

Officer i/c Messing.