

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

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/43/25

Title: Administrative Staff, Headquarters
1st Australian Division

February 1917



AWM4-1/43/25

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.

Vol. 4 page 27

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	1 st Feb 1917		<p>The Division is now concentrated in this area, with the exception of 1106 Vet. Sect. (at VIGNACOURT) and 3rd Fd. Amb. (at WARLOY)</p> <p>Strength of Division as shown in Appx A</p> <p>Wanting to complete as shown in Appx B</p> <p>Weather intensely cold. Night Temp. from 8° to 10° Fah.</p> <p>Health of troops good except for Respiratory troubles</p> <p>Trench Foot very slight, owing to dry weather</p> <p>Major Genl WALTER CB DSO on leave. B. Genl LESSLIE also Commanding Div. Temp.</p> <p>All units hard at work improving Camps etc.</p> <p>Horse Standings still deficient, but being improved</p>	<p>Appx A</p> <p>" B</p>

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	3	2.17	<p>Divl Commander with AA Section round camps. The area is well supplied with hutments, but sanitation requires attention. Thaw rations are now correct, except fuel of which there is none. These are a Corps responsibility and Corps advised accordingly.</p>	
	4	2.17	<p>^{from Corps} Instructions to submit certain records for Italian decorations. Cold continues intense. Health of men still good. Prophylactic treatment of Trench feet inaugurated. One officer from each Brigade instructed in method and arrangements made for working the baths &c</p>	
	5	2.17	<p>Divl Commander visited front-line camps at Bazentin le Petit. Artillery horse lines visited in pm.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	5. 2. 17	Cont'd	<p>Mob. Vet. Sect. brought up from VIGNACOURT to a Camp near D.H.Q. temp. while BECOURT Camp is being built.</p> <p>3rd Amb. still at WARLOY.</p> <p>Italian honours and awards submitted to Corps</p>	
	6. 2. 17		<p>Engineer horse standings visited by AA & Genl</p> <p>weather continues very cold. Health of troops still good except for respiratory.</p>	
	7. 2. 17		<p>The weather continues very cold, but the health of the troops continues remarkably good. Trench Foot practically non-existent</p> <p>A great amount of work is being done in the area</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	8.2.17		<p>Particularly in regard to Salvage, of which an enormous quantity requires to be collected. Units are improving in this respect, and are salvaging round their own camps.</p> <p>Cold weather continues. Troops told by DHO to make every effort to cut firewood in order to save out the coal supply.</p>	
	9.2.17		<p>AA & units to BAZENTIN Petit, to Camps &c. Camps are being put in order by units.</p> <p>350 Rpts and 47 PB men arrived. To Fricourt A.</p> <p>DAA & Co. re-allocating and rearranging Camp sites.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	10. 2. 17		<p>Senior Chaplain with A.C. to Bazentin Camps, re Baths, Church Army Hut &c. The old Div! Canteen at Bazentin is in a tent, and useless, it should be rebuilt in huts. The baths are in a bad state, the previous (50") Div having left all pipes &c full - the post has done extensive damage.</p> <p>The Main Dressing Station is in good order, but liable to be badly shelled.</p> <p>Dumps &c all in good order.</p>	
	11. 2. 17		<p>GOC inspected 350 yds for 1st Bde. work in dumps &c progressing. H.Q. (Fricourt) Shelled</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Fricourt	11.2.17	Conis	with 5.9 H.E. at 3.30 p.m. 3 casualties weather intensely cold.	
			The raids carried out on the night 11/12 did not attain both objectives. All the casualties were quickly dealt with	
12	2	17	works progressing. 1 st and 3 rd Aus Inf Bde changing round.	
13	2	17	Great difficulty is being experienced in bathing the men, owing to the freezing and consequent bursting of the mains as at Bazentin Baths. Arrangements and A.O.M.S. to 4 th Div Baths Fricourt, to ensure water	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	13.2.17	cont'd	<p>there was any chance of badging men there, but these bates are fully employed.</p> <p>Major General Walker, returned and resumed Command of Division</p> <p>Assemble to HQ 2nd Inf Bde, where he stayed the night, visiting Bn and Coy HQ</p>	
	14.2.17		<p>All ranks well satisfied with rations and supplies</p> <p>Dumps working well</p> <p>Slight thaw began.</p>	
	15.2.17		<p>warning received re Aerial activity against Dumps</p> <p>Big explosion 5 pm 3 miles NNW.</p> <p>Precautions taken</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Fricourt	16. 2. 17		Aerial Attack 5 Am. Very big explosion 5.15 am in direction of Quarry Rail Head (4 th Aus Div) Planes using bombs & m.c. till 6.30 am.	
17	2	17	AA & MG on leave to England. All comes to be off roads. Horse transport to move lightly loaded. all new rations dumps. OK. all leave stopped Port of Boulogne closed. Daily issue of 3 tons chaff commenced from Albert. chaff cutting machine	Thaw precautions
18	2	7	Reinforcement draft 4 officers 270 other ranks arrived	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Fricourt				
	18-2	17	800 boots gun thigh 300 trays ready for distribution	
	19-2	17	appearing to Bazentin le Petit. Baths expected to be ready to work, but water main hit with enemy shell 1 officer ^{requests} car interpreter to DDS-T for duty with frag purchase board.	
	20-2	17	Chaff ration increased to 4 tons per day. Port of Boulogne reopened 14 officers 12 other ranks reinforcement arrived officers comprising October draft from Cadet training Bn England.	
	21-2	17	appearing to High Wood West & East inspecting dumps and camps DAA-OWG returned from leave	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT	22/2/17		D.A.A. + Q.M.G. visited 3 rd + 2 nd Bde Headquarters (at COUGH DROP and NORTH ROAD respectively) re drying rooms for gum boots, and also re men drinking water from shell holes.	
	23/2/17		G.O.C. visited Coops School to attend a demonstration at LA HAUSSOYE. G.O.C. 1 st Inf. Bde (Bde Gen. Leslie) accompanied him. 1 st Bn. 54 other ranks 1 st Bn. 1 st Bn. 55 other ranks 4 th Bn reinforcements arrived.	
	25/2/17		German commenced falling back. Our line advanced to BAYONET TRENCH. difficulties of getting supplies forward acute. Tramway being pushed on from vicinity of FACTORY CORNER to LUISEN HOF FARM.	
	26/2/17		D.A.A. + Q.M.G. visited camps at BAZENTIN-le-PETIT, also camps taken over from 4 th Aust. Division, viz. Hobart, Launceston, Coolgardie and Bendigo. First two camps (Hobart and Launceston) in very dirty condition. Show precautions ceased.	
	27/2/17		D.A.A. + Q.M.G. visited LUISEN HOF FARM, with C.R.E. with reference to laying trench tramways from that point forward, when present Decanville line reaches here. Permanent way for Decanville line completed to FACTORY CORNER. (N.13.d.79)*	<p style="text-align: right;">FRANCE *Sheet 57 C.S.N. 1/20.000.</p>

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FLCS/NM.

EXTRACT

FROM

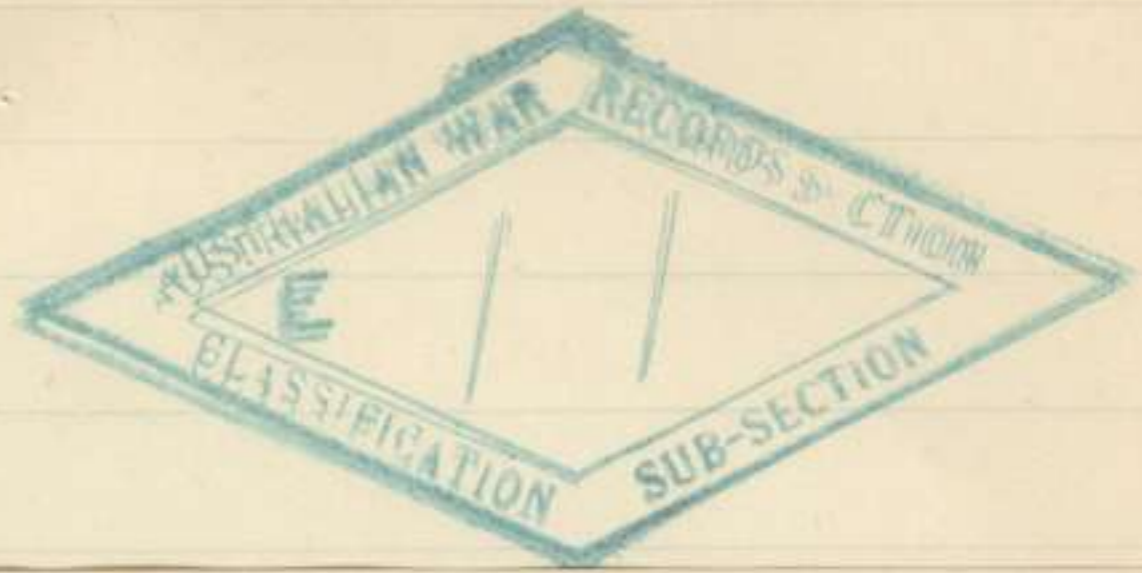
Admins. Staff.
 WAR DIARY OF 1st Aust. Div. FOR February/1917. PAGE 5.

B A T H S.

10-2-17. FRICOURT. The baths were in a bad state, the previous (50th) Division having left all the pipes etc. full, and the frost had done extensive damage.

13-2-17. Great difficulty was experienced in bathing the men owing to the freezing and consequent bursting of the mains etc. in BAZENTIN Baths.
 A.A.&.Q.M.G. and A.D.M.S. went to 4th Div. Baths FRICOURT to enquire whether there was any chance of bathing the men there, but these baths were fully employed.

19-2-17. Baths were expected to be ready to work, but water main was hit with enemy shell.



FIRST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Strength of Division as at 1st. February, 1917.

Unit.	Officers.	Other Ranks	Total.
Div. Headquarters.	17	57	74
Div. Artillery.	82	2196	2278
Div. Engineers.	26	632	658
Div. Signal Coy.	8	195	203
Pioneer Battalion.	32	931	963
1st. Inf. Bde. Hqrs.	6	19	25
1st. Battalion.	25	752	777
2nd. Battalion.	29	762	791
3rd. Battalion.	30	855	885
4th. Battalion.	25	692	717
1st. A.L.T.M.Bty.	3	35	38
1st. A.M.G. Coy.	8	144	152
2nd. inf. Bde. Hqrs.	7	19	26
5th. Battalion.	37	937	974
6th. Battalion.	40	1919	1059
7th. Battalion.	40	897	937
8th. Battalion.	45	1016	1061
2nd. A.L.T.M.Bty.	4	50	54
2nd. A.M.G. Coy.	12	189	201
3rd. Inf. Bde. Hqrs.	3	9	12
9th. Battalion.	40	1083	1123
10th. Battalion.	40	873	913
11th. Battalion.	39	1089	1128
12th. Battalion.	41	882	923
3rd. A.L.T.M.Bty.	4	46	50
3rd. A.M.G. Coy.	7	161	168
Divisional Train.	24	414	438
1st. Field Ambulance	12	257	269
2nd. Field Ambulance	12	225	237
3rd. Field Ambulance	11	256	267
Sanitary Section.	1	25	26
Mob. Vet. Sect.	1	26	27
Div. Salvage Coy.	1	49	50
Totals	712	16792	17504

EXTRACT FROM A. F. B. 213.

SHOWING "WANTING TO COMPLETE" AS AT 1/2/17.

	Officers	Other Ranks.
P. B. Men attached D.H.Q.		50
<u>DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS</u>	3	18
<u>DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY</u>	3	167
<u>DIV. ENGINEERS HQRS.</u>		1
1st. Field Coy.		9
2nd. Field Coy.		50
3rd. Field Coy.		-
Div. Sig. Coy.	1	7
<u>PIONEER BATTALION</u>	5	62
<u>1ST. INF. BRIGADE HQRS.</u>		-
1st. Battalion	* 6	133
2nd. Battalion.		-
3rd. Battalion		-
4th. Battalion		142
1st. A.L.T.M.Bty.		6
1st. M. G. Coy.	1	-
<u>2ND. INF. BRIGADE HQRS.</u>		1
5th. Battalion		25
6th. Battalion		-
7th. Battalion		60
8th. Battalion		-
2nd. A.L.T.M.Bty.		-
2nd. M. G. Coy.		-
<u>3RD. INF. BRIGADE HQRS.</u>		-
9th. Battalion		5
10th. Battalion		95
11th. Battalion		-
12th. Battalion		74
3rd. A.L.T.M.Bty.		-
3rd. M. G. Coy.		-
<u>DIVISIONAL TRAIN</u>	2	10
1st. Field. Amb.		10
2nd. Field. Amb.		4
3rd. Field. Amb.		18
Sanitary Section.		-
Mob. Vet. Section.		6
Div. Salvage Coy.		11
		<hr/>
TOTAL	21	964
		<hr/> <hr/>

* Included 1 Officer & 16 O.R.
A.L.T.M.Bty. personnel.

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MONTHLY SANITARY REPORT

by

A.D.M.S., 1st. Australian Division.

for Month ending 25th. February, 1917.
-----PHYSIQUE.

No deterioration observed.

New drafts from Base appear to have introduced Mumps and by their arrival at frequent intervals keep up the incidence of that disease in the Division. Otherwise new drafts are fit though not so hardened to climatic conditions, and consequently more prone than the older man to minor illnesses. Especially among these men has the effect of heavy fatigue and necessary exposure to severe weather been noticeable of late. The percentage of inoculated men in new drafts is high.

BILLETTS
& CAMPS.

No billets occupied, except for a few days by one Battalion in BRESLE. all

Camps are practically of Nissen or Amiens huts in good repair, well ventilated and well drained.

Stoves are installed, though there has been considerable shortage of fuel.

Energetic measures have been taken to reduce the lice infestation with good results.

CLOTHING.

Is suitable with the exception of breeches and puttees, which are not as suitable as slack trousers would be under the same conditions. Complaints of poor material in boots have been received. Late issues have not been watertight. During the frosty weather boots have been found to be frozen in the morning, and in this condition have added to and in many cases caused abrasions of the feet.

FOOD &
COOKING.

Hot food and drinks supplied as a routine by all Battalions to their men in the trenches; carried up in specially constructed 4-gallon containers. Food is sufficient in quality and quantity. Monotony in diet has been complained of by some units - mainly caused by deficiency in fresh vegetables and potatoes. Substitution of chestnuts for potatoes was not appreciated by the men.

WATER
SUPPLY

Chlorination of water is being carried out by permanent men at water points under constant supervision of sanitary officer and his inspectors.

During the recent cold weather water froze in the carts, and considerable damage resulted.

Protection of water at water points is under the control of Corps Officer.

CONSERVANCY
SYSTEM.

Faeces are buried.

Latrines are of flyproof deep pit type and in front trenches, of the oil drum and flyproof cover type.

Urine pits are distributed throughout standing camps.

BATHS

Divisional Baths at BAZENTIN LE PETIT.

Daily capacity 1 Battalion. These baths have only been working for five days, delay resulting from frozen pipes, etc.

LAUNDRY.

Dirty clothing from Baths exchanged at Corps Laundry, HEILLY.

Disinfection by:-

1. Foden Disinfector.
2. Decauville Disinfector.
3. Sulphur chamber at Scabies Station (BUIRE).

HEALTH OF
TROOPS.

Generally, is good. Increase in sick wastage is mainly due to Scabies and Mumps. Beyond Mumps there has been very little infectious disease this month.

GENERAL
REMARKS.Improvements.

- (1) Establishment of permanent water duty men at all water points.
- (2) Erection of flyproof latrines, both public and for camp use, throughout the area where not already in existence.
- (3) General cleaning up of camps and their surroundings.

Defects.

- (1) Now that the frozen conditions have apparently ceased, Division has been asked to have all water carts thoroughly overhauled.
- (2) The blankets of the Division have been disinfected as rapidly as possible since the above means have been at our disposal.

26th. February, 1917.

(Sgd) R.B.HUXTABLE, Colonel,
A. D. M. S.,
1st. Australian Division.