

**AWM4**

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

Supplies & Transport

**Item number:** 25/15/21

**Title:** 2nd Australian Divisional Train

April 1917



AWM4-25/15/21



WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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2<sup>nd</sup> Aust Div Train

Army Form C. 2118.

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APRIL 1917

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Albert	4/4/17		<p>Major A.E. Harte proceeded on 10 days leave to H.R., arrived by a.d.g. other views. Pestalozzi is placed on Superannuation list. Also Capt J. Shearer had been found unfit for G.S. 4 weeks but fit for Home service. Applied to have this officer placed on Superannuation list. Corps sent in Requisition for 40 G.S. mares which we could not supply owing to H.R. Company being away from here. Artillery move postponed for a further 24 hours. Conference a loading of 1st Line transport to take place at D.H.R. at 2 pm on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> Inst.</p>	
	4/4/17		<p>German planes dropped about 6 Bombs near us early this morning. Good moon coming on. Brigade Company, Commanders reports on condition of first line transport satisfactory. Heavy fall of snow today, cold wind blowing. Train transport working to its full capacity.</p>	
	4/4/17		<p>Conference at D.H.R. re loading of 1st line transport vehicles + baggage. Suffe mares. Demonstration given of the loaded vehicles. It is insisted on with necessity discarding of a quantity of practically indispensable articles. Ammunition which should be retained, 9 motor horses and 2 Bapannas with Divisional Artillery Supplies. About 50 ton of coal arrived today at Albert for us. Lieut. R.G. Bosanquet promoted Captain dated 1<sup>st</sup> March 1917.</p>	



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Alber-	4/4/17 5/4/17 4/4/17 7/4/17		<p>Every thing quiet. Artillery move cancelled indefinitely. A.A.G. notified that King's Horse was approved for his substitution wagon.</p> <p>Proceeded to H.Q. arranged for 100 line transport to draw from Refilling points and thus relieve train wagons for Engineers work.</p> <p>After went up to Bapaume. Saw H.Q. Company. Found all going well. Broad gauge line now into Bapaume, but not yet available for supplies. A few shells dropping near railhead there. Instructed King of Hankin to inspect the horses of the Horse Companies at Alber and furnish report on their condition. D.S. + J. requires particulars as to the history of this train for A.S.G. Records.</p> <p>Saw H.Q. obtained leave to proceed to Rouen on Monday the 8th in connection with Records. Leave allotment received today. 12 horses of 175 Coy. ordered to be relieved from work by Capt. Dowling V.O. owing to a species of fever. Saw H.Q. complained that train was being overworked to the serious detriment of the horses.</p> <p>Railhead change + Bapaume tomorrow arrangements made for 100 line transport to draw. This frees 24 wagons in the 3 Brigades. Cap enables a rest to be given daily to 30% of the horses.</p> <p>H.Q. + his section of D.S. moved forward today, weather cold miserable. Capt. Walker proceed on leave tomorrow.</p>	



WAR DIARY

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Albert	8/4/17		Capt. Walker proceeded on 10 days leave to U.K. I proceeded to Rouen on Dug.	
	9/4/17		Arrived at Rouen reported to 3rd Echelon. Office closed owing to holiday.	
	10/4/17		had through records + could not find War diary. Inquiries being made.	
	11/4/17		found War diaries + at same time determined to bring them back with me + return them when done with	
	17/4/17		Arrived at Albert found our Division beginning to move up to the front owing to cutting up of 4th Division. Major Marté reported back from leave.	
	18/4/17		Proceeded to Bapaume. Saw G.P.O. 4th Div. Train + agreed re taking over his quarters he taking over our Albert lines. Packed out site for Train line opposite to Train H.Q.	
Bapaume	14/4/17		In afternoon went to H.Q. found every thing in order. Motivated H.Q. Company to move from Le Barque to Bapaume.	
			Train moved up. Railway line between Bapaume + Achiet le Grand blown up also an engine, communication broken. Corps issued instructions to day today from Achiet le Grand. Divisional troops of 4th Division attached to us for rationing.	
			Proceeded to Achiet le Grand + found considerable congestion, but made them off it. Sent our Transport in 4 relays to save waiting. Informing that would have to draw at Poggieres tomorrow + was to see Corps re the matter. Informing by Beta Seal. Learn then that rail communication reestablished with Bapaume.	
			R.T.O. later advised that Bapaume would be railhead tomorrow. Weather bright + fine.	



WAR DIARY

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Bapaume	13/4/17		Heavy firing by our guns early this morning. A few German shells came over. weather drizzly rain. Established Coal dumps opposite train H.Q. drawing 70 tons from Corps troops for the purpose. All transport fully engaged. Saw A.D.V.S. re horses the promised to afford every assistance in obtaining recruits.	
	16/4/17		Saw A.A.S. re A.A.S. Company being formed in England. Lieut. Barrett is not being transferred. Co 16 <sup>th</sup> Company complained re M.O. C.W. Turner being negligent & lacking interest. Will parade him before Col. Shells dropping on Bapaume - Arras Road near train H.Q. mostly duds. Firing all day & night by our guns.	
	17/4/17		Weather abominable, strong wind, snow & rain. Ill kind of day. went to bed.	
	18/4/17		Got up. Snow during night, wet & cold. Had to go to bed & stopped there. Everything going well.	
	19/4/17		Remained in bed. Got better during evening. Everything normal. Transport working to full. D.A.M.S. sent for me but hospital went instead. Arras Light Railway will send up supplies for all troops in forward area. Decauville laid to Valenciennes, great saving to Home transport. Three H.D. horses made available to us by Corps from tomorrow. Capt. Walker returned from leave.	
	20/4/17		Felt better & got up. Saw D.A.M.S. re Railways scheme & approved his draft. S.D. to make arrangements with Arras Rly. A.A.S. Corps advise that Lt Barrett may be sent to 6 <sup>th</sup> Divisional Train. Advise Lt Barrett accordingly. D.A.M.S. advised probable more horses are to be horse deficient. Cannot move all train at present. Asked for recruits to be expedited. All detached transport to be returned.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Boforum	21/4/17		<p>Lt Major D.W. Clark wounded in leg by shell fire whilst on transport dug-out - received last night. Bad wound in calf of leg. Saw G.O.C. as M.D. C. Turner of 16<sup>th</sup> Coy &amp; he directed that I should inform him that unless a change for the better took place within a month he would relieve him to Australia. Received instructions to nominate an officer for the 6<sup>th</sup> Divisional Liaison. Lieut. F.W. Barrett to be sent. Received wire from D.D.S. to attend conference at 10.30 am. Tomorrow re home deficiencies. Weather fine cold wind. Little enemy shelling here. Received Balance Sheet for Ammunition at Albert for 14 days conducted by the 3 Brigade Companies. Profits about £70. Most satisfactory. Capt. Blackman proceeded on leave today to U.K. for 10 days. Major Nairn given substantive majority. Capt. Fowler-Paonsworth promoted Major second ad. Dated 24/3/17</p> <p>Driver P.R. White wounded by shrapnel last night on convoy. Not serious. Attended conference at D.D.S. at 10.30 am at Albert re home casualties. Very hope of deficiencies being replaced. Deal with M.D. Turner gave him a month to amend his report. Am informed by 16<sup>th</sup> Coy Company Commander that he intends to do so. Lieut. H.G. McAlea &amp; Superannuery, had dated 25/3/17</p> <p>Lieut. F.W. Barrett substantive left for London via Liverpool to 6<sup>th</sup> Division. Received notification that Sgt. Frauncet &amp; Lieut. Pemberton had qualified for Commission &amp; were to be held as superannuery establishments. Commission to be published in next Gazette. Attached Frauncet to No. 1 Coy &amp; Pemberton to No. 3 Coy. Received Secret Order notifying that we would be going back for a short rest again over to Reserve Area.</p> <p>Capt. J. Shearer second ad. Dated 1/4/17</p> <p>Recommended the following for promotion - Lieut. Coleman &amp; Berryman vice Nairn &amp; Robinson the Captains to remain second ad. Also Lieut. Gibbin &amp; Medlyn the Captains vice Coleman &amp; Berryman.</p>	
	22/4/17			
	23/4/17			



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Bapaume	24/4/17		<p>Inoculation for Para Typhoid practically complete. It places a great many men hors de combat for 4 days. Must be an entire string inoculation this time. Weather beautiful. Ground quite hard now and horse lines improved consequently. Instructed all Companies to graze every horse daily as long as possible. Economy &amp; the reduction in work all horses are improving but it takes a long time to pick up. Train H.Q. is going to Acheux. Instructed to observe 25th April as a holiday as far as possible. Light Railway system to front-line a great success. It is unquestionably the best thing to an economy in every possible way.</p>	
	25/4/17		<p>Quiescent Day. Orders issued for a holiday to be observed as far as possible. Proceeded to Acheux and arranged re Billets for Train H.Q. Headquarters Co. D.S. Co. promised that the covered sleeping should be available for the H.Q. Company. Everything quiet. Received to send party of 1 Officer + 12 men to proceed to Acheux + entrain for Abbeville to draw 20 Remounts on the 27th Inst. Detailed Lieut. McCook to take charge. German plane flew down very low over our line tonight and surveyed the country for about 2 miles despite A.A. fire + machine guns. He got away safely.</p>	
	26/4/17		<p>Indicated that Lieut. H. J. McCrea had been boarded 19/4/17 + passed as fit for G. Service. Received letter from Major H. L. Lando stating he was ordered to proceed overseas. Weather cold + fine. Very little firing today. Frozen Australian Rabbit issued as meat ration today, 1 lb for the less 10% for skin which Lando to be returned after drying. Saw Engineer Adjutant + delays to Wagon detailed for duty with them. Promised no recurrence. Two men of 20th Company, Donnie + Messinger returned to Australia for medical reasons. Recommendation</p>	



WAR DIARY

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Rapaunui	27/4/17		<p>Proceeded to D.H.Q. as instructed by A.D. + D. and perused confidential letter sent by Army to Corps regarding the necessity for strict economy in the use of foodstuffs. In afternoon held a conference of Supply Officers and discussed the ration scale and the possibility of any curtailments. Decided to recommend to Division that total meat be cut from 16oz to 14oz preserved 9oz to 8oz. Bread 16oz to 14oz, Cheese 1 1/2oz to 1oz. Austrians are not cheese eaters but are great meat and sugar consumers. It would appear that plenty of oatmeal exists in U.K. but the suggestion that a certain quantity be issued in lieu of bread and made into porridge is not a sound policy. Porridge would mean additional milk + sugar added to the fact that owing to conditions porridge would not be an acceptable substitute. I would prefer to see more oatmeal incorporated in the Army biscuit which should achieve the purpose sought, that is the reduction in the use of flour. Flour + Rice + dried fruits are not appreciated by the men. All proceeded to D.H.Q. subsequently + placed our recommendations before the A.D. + D. Heavy firing at night on our left. Otherwise things as usual. Proceeded to Badela + inspected the Refilling point on the Deconville line and subsequently the one midway between Baulx + Freinpoint. Both admirable in every respect and quite convince one that the High Railway system should be pushed forward and exploited to the utmost possible limit, more especially in view of the difficulty in obtaining reinforcements. Inspected all train line and found them in excellent order and all horse improving rapidly. Consequent on the advent of milder weather and reduction of transport work caused use of High-Railways.</p>	

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WAR DIARY

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Bapuanne	29/4/17		<p>A fire broke out in the Armory Hut occupied by the Lt. Col. Major Inquest &amp; Co. at 3-45 am this morning. The whole structure burnt fiercely and contents quite destroyed. The sparks &amp; heat caused an adjacent Bell Tent occupied by the Battalion to be burned also &amp; the remaining huts were saved with difficulty. Scarcely 2 gallons would have made it difficult to save them had they caught. Col. Board of Inquiry into the circumstances for 3 pm today. Received order that the 5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup> Divisions were moving into Bapuanne Area today &amp; were to be fed by Jan Transport. Serjt. Hay, and Corporal Currier transferred to the R.H.B. as mechanics in today's order. Captain Stabler reported back from base. Election for Australian Federal Parliament began today.</p> <p>Voting for Federal Elections finished today. Lieut. H.A. Cook reported back from Abbeville with 24 Remounts, Heavy Drums. Inspected them, all horses previous evacuated by huts, but in view of the great scarcity of animals, not a bad lot. Instructed by Lt. Col. that Mobile Veterinary Section will hand over &amp; Riding horses. Board of Inquiry held on fire in Lt. Col's Hut stated cause of fire unaccountable &amp; apparently no blame attachable to anyone. Got new Iron Hut erected today. Saw Lt. Col. re delay to Transport &amp; promised that firm action would be taken. Lost night detail given satisfactory treatment. Dull in operations, our front bay, weather perfect. Inspected all Company, lines thing satisfactory. Jan</p>	

30/4/17

Cpl. W. ...  
 20th Australian Division  
 30/4/1917