

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

Medical, Dental & Nursing

Item number: 26/50/34

Title: 7th Australian Field Ambulance

December 1918



AWM4-26/50/34

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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.

7th	
AUSTRALIAN	
FIELD AMBULANCE	
No.	Date

WAR DIARY
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Boyd Stewart

Original
ARMY FORM C. 2118.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
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7th. AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE.
DECEMBER, 1918.

PETIT FAYT. 1-12-1918.

Major W.J. STACK, D.S.O. and Major RAYSON, M.C. were detached to 2nd. A.G.H. for REFRESHER COURSE and Capt. G.H. CAMERON was detached to 1st. A.G.H. for same purpose. This was part of a scheme for the re-education of Medical Officers who had served for a long, continuous time in the field.

7 sick admitted.
12-12-18.

One (1) reinforcement was received. While the fighting was on during the year, only four (4) reinforcements were received, the unit being kept up to strength by men returning from hospital.

2-12-18.

Great difficulty was experienced in getting sufficient accomodation for the Educational classes, but finally the accomodation in the billets was re-arranged and so comparatively comfortable accomodation was found for the Educational classes.

5 sick admitted.
3-12-18.

A Lecture on Repatriation, Demobilization and Education was delivered to all ranks, the texts of the Lecture being obtained from the General Scheme issued by Lt. Gen. Sir John Monash, K.C.B. The ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ claims of the Educational Classes were strongly emphasized and men were urged to utilize the time prior to their return to Australia in preparing themselves to resume their occupation.

9 sick admitted.
4-12-18.

During the stay in this area, very few sick were admitted the health of the troops being remarkably good. There have been to date no special features of Medical interest.

10 sick admitted.
5-12-18.

All ranks greatly appreciated the relaxation in the Censorship Regulations, copy of which appeared in Camp R.O. of this day, allowing them to state their locality and to describe their surroundings.

6 sick admitted.
6-12-18.

An interesting side-line of Ambulance work was experienced in this village. Many of the civilians in the area had been under German domination for four years and now that they were liberated they were anxious to rejoin their relatives in other parts of France and Belgium. As the Germans had destroyed all railway communication for many miles around this area, the only method of transport open to the civilians was by road. Frequent applications were received through the local Maire and Cure for transport of civilians, especially for old people who were unable to "lorry-hop". They were transported in all directions and as far as possible all were helped, especially as many of them were having considerable difficulty in obtaining provisions. 4 sick admitted during day.

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PETIT-FAYT. 7-12-18.

During the first week in December the weather was very damp. Fine, drizzling rain fell practically every day.
No sick.

8-12-18.

No. 6033, Pte. F.D. HARRISON of this unit was promoted to the rank of 2nd. Lieut. (temp.), dated, 23-11-18, and to be Education Officer, 23rd. Bn. Lt. HARRISON was a graduate of Sydney University (B.A.).

6 sick admitted.

9-12-18.

Major A.P. DRUMMOND rejoined from leave to U.K.
Seven (7) reinforcements were received.

A note had been received stating that any undesirable character could be transferred from the unit. It seems fitting to place on record that there were no transfers sought for in this unit.

3 sick admitted.

10-12-18.

The establishment of the Regimental Details (Water Duties) had been altered on A.I.F. Order 1441 and men were withdrawn from the various units whose details were supplied by this Ambulance. The withdrawal of these men was completed on this date.

4 sick admitted.

11-12-18.

3 sick admitted.

12-12-18.

6 sick admitted.

13-12-18.

Lt. Col. A.M. WILSON, D.S.O. was detached to 2nd. D.H.Q. as Actg. A.D.M.S. to replace Lt. Col. CROWTHER who had been A/A.D.M.S. while Col. SHEPHERD, D.S.O. was on leave.

5 sick admitted.

14-12-18.

Capt. D.A.A. DAVIS rejoined from leave to U.K.

7 sick admitted.

15-12-18.

Warning had been received of the approaching move on 17th. and all R.M.O.'s. sent to Field Ambulances those men whom they thought would not be able to stand the march.

4 sick admitted.

16-12-18.

4 sick admitted.

One of the most interesting features of the stay at PETIT-FAYT was a review of the Division by His Majesty the King. It was originally intended that the troops should line the road between MARBAUX and MAROILLES; BUT it was decided at the last moment to review the Division by Brigades. The 7th. Field Ambulance was reviewed with the 7th. A.I. Brigade Group in a large paddock just off the main road. The Brigade was drawn up in Review Order and the troops presented a very fine sight. All the men very keenly appreciated the great interest displayed by His Majesty the King and H.R.H.

Place Date Hour

Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and references to Appendices

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7th AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE.	Intelligence No. Part II File pages
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WAR DIARY
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Copy submitted
Pages
Original

Place

Date

Hour

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence
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WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erased heading not required.)

Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and
references to
AppendicesPETIT-FAYT. 16-12-18.

the Prince of Wales and they gave His Majesty a very warm reception. The day was fortunately moderately fine and the King appeared immediately after the Parade was drawn up for inspection.

17-12-18.

The whole of the 2nd. Division commenced its move to the CHARLEROI AREA, the 7th. Aust. Fld. Amb. leaving PETIT-FAYT at 7-30 a.m. and marching with the 7th. A.I. Bde. to ECLAIBES where the men were billeted for the night. The distance marched was 22 kilometres. Before the move great difficulty was experienced in obtaining boots for those who needed them. Under instructions from the A.D.M.S. the three (3) H.Amb. Wagons travelled in the rear of the Brigade Column to pick up any stragglers who had a "chit" from their R.M.O.

6 men were picked up this day.

11 sick admitted.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

On the march the Brigade was inspected by the G.O.C. of the Division who expressed himself satisfied with the turn-out of the 7th. Fld. Amb., but suggested several alterations which would improve the appearance of the unit.

18-12-18.

The march was resumed, the unit leaving ECLAIBES at 8-45 a.m. and marching to COUSOLRE, a distance of 20 kilometres arriving there about 2-30 p.m. The whole unit, except the Officers, was billeted in the school. During the march a drizzling rain fell most of the way and the roads were very wet and damp. Many men found the march very trying and 29 had to be transported.

Capt. D.A.A. DAVIS was detached to 27th. Inf. Bn. as R.M.O., temporarily.

27 sick admitted.

19-12-18.

The march was resumed at 8-45 a.m. the unit marching to THUIN (16 kilos). The whole unit was billeted in a large tavern, the billets being fairly comfortable.

Twenty three (23) were sent by lorry part of the way from ECLAIBES to CHARLEROI where a temporary hospital had been established by the Advance Officer (Capt. F.G. T.C. DECRESPIGNEY--).

22 sick admitted. 12 transported.

20-12-18.

The march was resumed at 9-30 a.m. the unit marching about 12 kilometres to MONT-SUR-MARCHIENNE and arriving there about 1 p.m.

MONT-SUR-MARCHIENNE is a suburb of CHARLEROI with which city it is connected by Electric Tram. The people in this area were extremely hospitable and did everything they could to further the interests and comfort of the troops. The forward Billeting Officer was frequently requested by the people to billet Officers and O.R.'s. on them. Soon after their arrival the men became comfortably settled. 6 sick admitted. 6 transported.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

WAR DIARY

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Summary of Events and Information

MONT-SUR-MARCHIENNE.

21-12-18.

One large hall was obtained for the hospital capable of holding well over 50 patients. Beds and mattresses which had been requisitioned from the Commune by the Germans and which were still in the possession of the local Maire, were supplied for use by the unit in the hospital. In addition, preparations were made to accommodate Scabies patients, who, under instructions from A.D.M.S., were to be sent to this unit from the other Field Ambs. of the Division.

Permission was given to the men to billet themselves in private houses, provided the location was advised.

6 sick admitted.

22-12-18.

Rooms had been obtained for the use of the Educational Classes through the courtesy of the local people. It was decided not to get the classes in working order until after Christmas as the men were required for many general fatigues and also to prepare a large hall for the Christmas Dinner of the Unit.

3 sick admitted.

23-12-18.

Lt. Col. A.M. WILSON, D.S.O. rejoined from D.H.Q.

2 sick admitted.

24-12-18.

The second batch of men for return to Australia (10 in number) were despatched to 2nd. Div. Reinforcement Wing en route to Australia.

During the afternoon a slight ~~xxx~~ fall of snow fell, the first of the season.

10 sick admitted.

25-12-18.

CHRISTMAS DAY. The Christmas Dinner was celebrated in the large Recreational Hall, MONT-SUR-MARCHIENNE.

A report is attached as appendix.

A Xmas present was received from the Australian Comforts Fund for all the men of the unit.

5 sick admitted.

26-12-18.

2 sick admitted.

27-12-18.

Instructions were received that the Ambulance was to be reorganized on a Two-Section Basis. This was proceeded with.

ESTABLISHMENT.

	Off. S/Sgts & Sgts.		R.&F. Total.		Horses.				
	W.O.				R.	L.D.	H.D.	Total	
Old	10	3	14	204	228	8	17	20	45
New	8	3	9	178	198	6	13	18	37

4666666

2 Sgts. (Clerk & H.T.) 2 Cpls. (P.S.K. & Cook) and 1 H.T. driver were placed supernumerary to establishment. Orders were received for one (1) Section's gear, less the following articles, to be returned to Ordnance.

Remarks and references to Appendices

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

WAR DIARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Summary of Events and Information

Section 2 a.	
Buckets, water, G.S. Canvas	2
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Nets hay	4
Pads surcingle	4
Ropes H.H. with ring Mark IV	4
Section 5 a.	
Harness P.D.G.S, WHEEL sets	4
Bags, nose, G.S.	4
Brushes, harness, hard	2
" horse	4
Rubbers	4
Section 13 c.	
Stretchers ambulance	12
Section 21 a.	
Wagons G.S.	2

27-12-18. 5 sick admitted.
 28-12-18. No. 17927, Pte. Thomas PERKINS of this unit was appointed Chaplain Fourth Class (O.P.D.) and was struck off the strength of the unit.
 6 sick admitted.
 29-12-18. 9 sick admitted.
 Lt. Col. A.M. WILSON, D.S.O. proceeded to Australia with second batch of 1915 men.
 30-12-18. 7 sick admitted.
 Major C.F. PITCHER proceeded to A.I.F. Headquarters for return to Australia on transport duty.
 31-12-18. 10 sick admitted.

The strength of the unit at 31-12-18 was 8 Off. 172 O.R's
 9 proceeded on leave to U.K.; also 1 Officer) during
 3 " " " " PARIS. (month.

A. Drummond Major.
 Actg. C.O. 7th. Australian Field Ambulance

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Remarks and references to Appendices

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WAR DIARY

OF

7th Australian Field Ambulance

FOR

December 1918



LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.

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| <i>1</i> | <i>Report by C. S. Major, Horse Transport</i> |
| <i>2</i> | <i>W. Sergeant</i> |
| <i>3</i> | <i>Secretary Sports & Amusements Committee on Christmas Dinner.</i> |

A. Drummond Major
Adj. C. 7th Australian Field Ambulance.

MONTHLY REPORT ON HORSE TRANSPORT

By C.S.M.

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From the first to sixteenth of month we were in rest at PETIT-FAYT when opportunity was taken of getting the H.T. in first class order in anticipation of the movement forward.

On 17th. the transport moved off with the remainder of the unit to the CHARLEROI AREA. That day the G.O.C. of the Division inspected the H.T. as it was on the move and expressed himself as satisfied when several alterations were effected. These alterations were made.

The three horsed Ambulance Wagons moved in the rear of the 7th. A.I. Brigade Column to pick up any men who fell out on the march.

During the move the accomodation for both men and horses was very satisfactory.

The transport arrived at its destination MONT-SUR-MARCHIENNE, on the outskirts of CHARLEROI, about 1 p.m. on 20th. December and was billeted in the Steel Factory. All horses and wagons are under cover and the accomodation and facilities are good.

During the past ten days the transport has been re-organised into two Sections, "C" Section being cut out. Two G.S. Wagons of "C" Section, however, together with harness and equipment, remain with the Ambulance. We are at present awaiting orders for the disposal of the remainder of the horses, harness etc.

Under the new establishment the following horses will be disposed of.:-

Rides 2 L.D. 4 H.D. 2.

The present condition of all horses is excellent.

Teams are being supplied daily as required, the average being 4 teams per diem, viz., 2 G.S. Wagons and 2 Limbered Wagons.

(Signed) J.F. Hornbuckle, C.S.M.
7th. Australian Field Ambulance.

MECHANICAL TRANSPORT.

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Monthly Report by M.T. Sergeant .

During the month of December probably more annoying trouble has occurred with the running of the cars than during any previous month. Such can always be expected when any big move of units is taking place as it is hard to keep in continual touch with workshops and it is difficult for workshops to keep up the supply of spare parts. Probably the greatest difficulty for the period was experienced with tyres. For the first three weeks it was almost impossible to secure any replacements in this line, this necessitating the excessive running of the best shod cars. As a result we were unable to give the right attention to them. Things got so bad finally that the average punctures per day per car was about four. The roads have been in bad condition, which, doubtless, has accounted for a deal of the trouble.

Sunbeam 44855 has run satisfactorily for the period, the only trouble experienced being slight magneto and the breaking of two springs. This car has covered for the period 1457 miles at an average petrol consumption of 12 Mls. P.G.

Sunbeam 29592 has been in shops for the last fortnight with a broken back axle. Prior to being sent to shops it had covered 823 miles at 11 M. P.G.

Sunbeam 29591 has also been in shops for ten days with a broken back axle. This car is now out and running. It covered for the period 918 miles at an average of 11 M. P.G.

Daimler 44006 has also spent half the period in workshops undergoing repairs of various natures. For the time it was running it covered 815 miles at 11 M. P.G.

Daimler 17485 has run splendidly for the whole time and no trouble has been experienced with this car. Its mileage is 1753 at an average of 11-5 M. P.G.

In the last week the two Fords have given considerable trouble, one of which is still in bad running order.

Ford 54827 has run 1228 miles at an average of 15 M. P.G. and Ford 54733, 1457 miles at an average of 16 M. P.G.

(Signed) R.E. DeGaris Sgt.

2nd. M.T. Coy., attached 7th. Australian Field Ambulance.

CHRISTMAS DINNER.

Report by Secretary of Sports and Amusements Committee.

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Punctually at one o'clock and under circumstances which provided a most enjoyable function, N.C.O's. and men of the Ambulance assembled in the Cafe Theatre to celebrate our first Christmas Day following the cessation of hostilities. Perhaps the knowledge that this would be the final dinner for such an anniversary away from our native land and that almost immediately ten of our comrades were returning to Australia, made the spirit of comradeship and goodwill befitting such an occasion.

The Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. A.M. Wilson, D.S.O., prior to the serving of dinner, briefly expressed his pleasure in wishing all a Merry Christmas and a speedy return to Australia. Pte. S.G. Maxwell responded.

The menu consisted of the following :- Vegetable Soup, Salmon Mayonnaise, Stuffed Mutton, Cabbage and Mashed or Baked Potatoes, Christmas Pudding (gift of Aust. Comforts Fund) & Custard, Fruit set in Jelly, Cake (Comforts), Beer, Rum Punch, Orangeade, Cigars & Cigarettes.

Pte. Metcalfe in an informal speech, toasted our ten comrades who occupied a special table on the stage of the Theatre. R.Q.M.S. W.E. Dobson responded.

The Orchestra of the Society of Harmony very kindly rendered musical numbers throughout the Dinner, the English items in particular being much appreciated.

Our thanks are due to the N.C.O's. who took charge of the waiting and to those who had charge of the decorations which were quite a feature of the occasion.

Throughout all the preparations the Belgian civilians assisted heartily.

Our Menu was considerably augmented by a special donation from the League of Loyal Women of South Australia who have always been very liberal.

Undoubtedly the assistance of those mentioned in the foregoing, along with the special efforts of a competent staff of cooks and enthusiastic committee, made a unique success of our Christmas Dinner of 1918.

(Signed) R.M.S. Dunn, Secretary
Sports & Amusements Committee, 7th. Aust. Fld. Amb.