

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

Medical, Dental & Nursing

**Item number:** 26/51/24

**Title:** 8th Australian Field Ambulance

January 1918



AWM4-26/51/24



**CONFIDENTIAL.**

ORIGINAL.  
~~DUPLICATE.~~  
~~TRIPLICATE.~~

Australian Imperial Force.

**WAR DIARY**

OF

8<sup>th</sup> Aust Field Ambulance

FOR

JANUARY 1918

Signature of Officer compiling

*J. M. Baker P. Col.*

Signature of Officer Commanding

*J. M. Baker P. Col.*



WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 277

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

8th AUST. FIELD AMBULANCE (Erase heading not required.) Vol IV Page 1.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRWIGNES Map Reference CALAIS 140000 4 D 15 20	1918 JAN 1		13517 Pte Rodgers reported from A.G.B.D. New Years Day was observed as a holiday at night the Unit Concert Party entertained the personnel. This was their anniversary performance & during the past year have given probably forty performances to the other units. <u>Sick evacuations 8</u>	
		2	14502 Pte Ward HW } 18265 - White AG } Evac. sick & truck off strength 4399 Pte Howarth L.R. Detached as AMC details to 30 Bn 6741 Cpl Nix A.L. }	
		3	Arrangements made to collect waste paper etc for ammunition purposes. <u>Sick evacuations 11</u> Capt Guest J.V.R. proceeded on leave to England. Bathing parade held at Desvres. <u>Sick evacuations 18</u>	
		4	Major CLAYTON A.R. rejoined from leave to Paris 2394 Pte HUTCHISON W.C. } Taken on strength from 6767 - RILEY J.G.B. } Reinforced to.	
		5	<u>Sick evacuations 16</u>	
		6	Capt BROWN K.S.M. Proceeded on leave to England. 15028 Pte WEIGHT A.B. Evac sick to truck off strength. <u>Sick evacuations 16</u>	
		7	The following were mentioned in despatches by Sir D HAIG (New Years List) Major Bond L.W. D.S.O. 6608 Sgt ASPINALL B.C. 6732 - MARSHALL J. 2193 Pte Woodbine D (att 30th Bn)	<i>Shank</i>



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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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8th Aust Field Ambulance

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRWIGNES MAP REFERENCE CAIHS 1-100,000 4D 1520	1918 JAN 7		For meritorious work rendered on active service during the present war the Minister for Defence has approved <del>that</del> of the following promotion. To be Brevet-major. Capt (Major AIF) CLAYTON A.R. <u>Sick evacuations</u> 16	
		8	Capt JAMES F.H. } Proceeded on leave to Paris Howard A.J. } <u>Sick evacuations</u> 10	
		9	All Box Respirators furnished with new containers <u>Sick evacuations</u> 12	
		10	6599 Sgt MATHESON A.H. } Evac to CCS + struck off strength. Bathing Parade held at DESVRES 6620. Pte COXON N.V. } <u>Sick evacuations</u> 16	
		11	10055 Pte WELLS G. } Evac to CCS + struck off strength. 17512. LANDS PS } <u>Sick evacuations</u> 12	
		12	<u>Sick evacuations</u> 8	
		13	6765 Dvr MCMATHON CS Evac Sick to CCS + struck off strength. <u>Sick evacuations</u> 5	
		14	<u>Sick evacuations</u> 9	

J. M. Col.



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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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8TH AUST FIELD AMBULANCE

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRWIGNES MAP REFERENCE CALAIS 1-100000 4 D 15 20.	1918			
	Jan			
	15		4462 Pte Skiller FC } 7897 - RUSHTON V.L } Proceeded to Aust Corps School Aveluy. 13951 - HAYMAN P.B }	
			<u>Sick evacuations</u> 14	
	16		6661 Pte Rex G.J. Detached as AMC details to 5th DIV TRAIN <u>Sick evacuations</u> 20	
	17		Bathing Parade at DESVRES Capt Howard + James rejoined from leave to Paris 709 Lc Lear CA } 16471 Pte Smeed T. } Taken on strength from Reinforcements.	
			<u>Sick evacuations</u> 11	
18		5th Divisional Gas Officer lectured to all ranks on gas equipment & the various enemy gases <u>Sick evacuations</u> 15.		
19		<u>Sick evacuations</u> 10. Capt Brown K.S.M rejoined from leave to England.		
20		Capt Guest J.V.H. rejoined from leave to England <u>Sick evacuations</u> 9		
21		The following were decorated by with Military Medal ribbons by Gen Birdwood at a ceremonial parade held at DESVRES: 6648 Lc McCullum W      16469 Pte Ridgway J.W.      6616 Pte CAIF EE 6422 - HUNT A.J      13668 - WIGGINS F.W      6766 - ATHERTON L.H 6618 Pte Colley-Priest L.W.      15525 - WATTS E.R.      6493 - JACKSON R.W.		
		<u>Sick evacuations</u> 15.		

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*[Handwritten signature]*



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or  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

8th Aust Field Ambulance (Erase heading not required.) Vol IV Page 4.

Place	Date 1918	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIRWIGNES Map Reference	July 22		Receipt acknowledged of Secret Order No 155 Copy 8 from 8th Infantry Brigade <u>Sick evacuations</u> 9	
CALAIS 1-100-000 4.D 15-20	23		6630 McHARD GG Promoted to rank of Lance Corporal <u>Sick evacuations</u> 12	
	24		709 Lt LEAR CA Detached as AMC details 31 Bn vice McHARD H ET. rejoined Unit Capt F.W. ROBINSON. 5th Div Intelligence Officer lectured to Personnel on "Our present position in the War" <u>Sick evacuations</u> 13	
	25		<u>Sick evacuations</u> 11	
	26		2922 McWilson H.W. } Evac sick + struck off strength. 8986 - Orr W.L. } <u>Sick evacuations</u> 8	
	27.		Preparations made for move to new area. 14728 Sgt RAWLINSON H Evac sick + struck off strength. <u>Sick evacuations</u> 12	
	28.		The Horse Transport in charge of Capt Howard with exception of 1 Water Cart + 2 L.Ds left for Loire by road at 7 AM. <u>Sick evacuations</u> 14	
	29		<u>Sick evacuations</u> 19	
	30		The Unit with exception of Horse + Motor Transport personnel, marched to SAGER leaving WIRWIGNES at 3.30 AM. Entrained at 11.10 AM - detrained at DE KENNEBEKE 7.50 PM + marched to LOIRE arriving at 8.30 PM. Motor ambulances left at 6.00 AM + arrived DRS LOIRE 1.30 PM. One Water Cart, 2 L.Ds + 3 OR entrained at DESVRES at 8.40 AM + arrived at DRS at 6 PM. All area stores handed over to Area Commandant. 1 receipt of stores for same also a certificate that billets were left in a clean condition. <i>Malby</i>	

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8th Aust Field Ambulance

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Place	Date 1918	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
5th DRS LOCRE Map Reference M 29 b. 2 g Sheet 28	JANV 31.		<p>The Divisional Rest Station taken over from 3rd Aust Field Amb. at 10 AM receipts given for all equipment handed over by them. Number of patients taken over 174.</p> <p>A 2 Dental Unit rejoined from 8th Bde HQ for duty at DRS.</p> <p>Number of patients 174                      Admitted after 10 AM 137                      Evacuated 23                      Remaining 168</p>	<p><i>[Signature]</i></p>



## WAR DIARY

OF

8<sup>th</sup> Aust Field Ambulance.

FOR

JANUARY 1918

## LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1	Commanding Officers Report
2	Programme of Work for the month.
3	Movement Orders.
4	Report on Transport.
5	Report on Q.M. Dept.



8th. AUST. FIELD AMBULANCE.

APPENDIX 1

Commanding Officer's report for the Month of January 1918.

During this month the Unit has been resting in the DESVRES area near BOULOGNE, and in consequence the moral of the men was excellent and the discipline left little to be desired.

The general health was good, despite the prevailing cold and damp weather, the number of evacuations to hospital being eleven. reinforcements received totalled six, so that the Unit was never at any time much below Establishment strength.

Bathing Parades were held regularly, but clean or new under-clothing was unobtainable at the baths. Only one issue of clean under-clothing was made during the stay of six weeks in this Area.

The Motor & Horse Transport was kept busy. The stabling for Horses was indifferent, and two horses were evacuated sick. Otherwise the remainder were kept in good condition. Two Motor Ambulances were in Workshops throughout the period of resting, so that only five were available for duty.

The equipment was kept up to standard and the men's clothing on the whole was good. Gifts from The Red Cross Society of cardigans, jackets gloves etc., greatly assisted to the comfort of the men. New boots were difficult to obtain for some time.

*J. M. H. Col.*



## PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR PERIOD ENDING 31st. JANUARY 1918.

DATE & TIME.	WORK	LOCALITY.
Jan 1		
2	HOLIDAYS.	WIRWIGNES.
3 9-11a.m.	Route March to DESVRES.	
2 p.m.	Lecture on Care of Feet	do. Capt. James
4 9-11a.m.	Squad & Company Drill	
11-noon	Inspection of Gas helmets	
2p.m.	Lecture on Field Sanitation	Capt. Guest
5 9 a.m.	Route March for Baths	DESVRES.
6 10 a.m.	Church Parade	WIRWIGNES
7 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	FORET DE BOULOGNE.
2 p.m.	Lecture on Care of Feet	Capt. James
8 9 a.m. - noon	Loading & Unloading Waggons	
2 p.m.	Demonstration on use of Thomas's Splints	
9 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	CREMAREST
2 P.M.	Lecture on Gas	Major. Walsh.
10 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	QUESTRECQUES.
2 p.m.	Lecture on Field Sanitation	Capt. Earnshaw
11 9 a.m.	Route March for Baths	DESVRES.
12 9 a.m. - noon	Squad & Company Drill	
2 p.m.	Demonstration on Splints.	
13 10 a.m.	Church Parade	
14 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	CREMAREST
2 P.M.	Demonstration on Bandaging	
15	5th. Divisional Sports Day.	
16 9 a.m.	Bathing Parade	DESVRES
17 9 a.m.	Whole Day Route March	FORET DE BOULOGNE
18 9 a.m. - noon	Squad & Company Drill	
2 p.m.	Gas Helmet Inspection & Drill	
19 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	BOURNONVILLE.
2 p.m.	Demonstration on Splints.	
20 10 a.m.	Church Parade	
21 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	SAMER.
22	Holiday for Sports	
23 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	PORT MAHON.
2 p.m.	Lecture on Field Sanitation	Capt. James.
24 9 a.m. - noon	Squad & Company Drill	
2 p.m.	Lecture on Winter Hygiene.	Capt. James.
25 9 a.m. - noon	Physical Drill	
2 p.m.	Gas Drill	
26 9 a.m. - noon	Route March	CREMAREST
2 p.m.	Lecture on Haemorrhage.	Capt. Brown
27 10 a.m.	Church Parade	
28 9 a.m. - noon	Squad & Company Drill	
2 p.m.	Preparing for Move	
29	do.	

(Sgd) F. H. MAKIN. LT. COL.  
C.O. 8th. AUST. FIELD AMBULANCE.



8th. AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE.

APPENDIX. 3

MOVEMENT ORDERS BY LT. COL. F.H. MAKIN.27th. January 1918.

1. The Unit will move to the Forward Area by train from SAMER on the 30th. Jany., with exception of Horse Transport and Motor Transport Details to take over the D.R.S. from 3rd. Aust. Field Ambulance. Reveille 2.30 a.m. Breakfast 3.a.m. The Personnel will 'fall in' in full marching order, carrying one blanket, water-proof sheet and 24 hours rations at 3.30 a.m. One blanket per man will be taken on lorry leaving WIRWIGNES at 5 a.m. on 30th. inst.
2. The Horse Transport in charge of Capt. Howard, with exception of 1 O.R., 1 Water Cart and 2 L.D's will 'Move off' on 28th. inst., No transport vehicle moving by road will have more than its proper load.
3. Three O.R's., 1 Water Cart and one cycle, will proceed to entrain at DESVRES at 8.43 a.m. on 30th. inst. and will report to 8th. Brigade Entraining Officer withnentraining state 3 hours before departure. Each cycle must have label showing Unit to which it belongs and one rider must accompany each cycle.
4. Motor Transport will move in Convoy on 30th. inst. Speed not to exceed 10 miles per hour. C.O., Q.M., and 6 O.R'S. only will proceed in cars in addition to M.T. personnel. Motor Cycles
5. Entraining Officer. Capt. Brown will be Entraining Officer for Unit.
6. No. 2 Dental Unit will move with Unit and will remain at D.R.S. for duty.
7. Receipts for all articles handed over to Area Commandant will be obtained in five copies.
8. The taking over at the D.R.S. to be completed by 10 a.m. on 31st. inst. Copies of receipts given to 3rd. Field Ambulance. to be handed in same day.

(Sgd) R. Whistin Walsh. Major  
for C.O. 8th. AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE.



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8th AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE.

REPORT ON TRANSPORT WORK FOR MONTH ENDING JANUARY 31st. 1918.  
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The work of the Transport Section during our stay in the Desvres Area has been carried on under difficulties. During the earlier part of the month heavy frost was experienced, and several heavy falls of snow occurred. Climatic conditions made an unusually heavy call on the resources of both men and horses.

The billets were very scattered and the stable accommodation in many cases very poor

Immediately on our arrival in the Desvres Area, the work of shoeing horses and fitting with frost cogs was commenced. It is to be regretted that, owing to the difficulty of obtaining adequate supplies, this work was delayed; but all horses were shod during the earlier part of the month with frost-cog shoes and frost-cogs were fitted as required.

Horse Transport was used for drawing supplies from Dump at Long Fosse. Horse Ambulances were on several occasions used to convey teams for various sports.

The average number of teams employed per diem was four, (4) minimum being one (1), and maximum eleven (11), in any one day.

All horses not in regular work were exercised daily.

Two horses were evacuated sick to the M.V.S. These have not yet been replaced. Apart from these two cases the horses kept in excellent condition, largely owing to the care and attention of the individual drivers.

Owing to the unsatisfactory nature of the stable accommodation a large amount of work had to be done in improving stables and in disposing of manure etc. left by Unit previously occupying the positions. All stables were disinfected once per week with cresol or other crude oil.

Wagons were greased once per week.

All harness was kept clean, leather work being kept clean and pliable and metal free from rust and oiled.

From 28th to 31st inclusive Transport moved from Wirwignes to Lochre Area. This was completed in less than schedule time and was free from any but pleasurable incidents and is declared by the cognoscenti to be the most ~~pleasurable~~ enjoyable yet experienced in France.

*Arthur Steward* Capt.  
Transport Officer.



8 Australian Field Ambulance  
 Monthly report on f.m. work 5  
 2/2/18  
 To C.O.

With the division at rest in a Base area during the last month, the ambulance, except for clearing the Brigade sick, has had little medical work, with the result that, except for rationing & equipping the unit personnel, the Quartermaster staff has had little to worry daily.

While the heavy frost was with us, some difficulty was experienced in drawing supplies, but with the horses' shoes well frost clogged, the roads proved passable and supplies arrived regularly. For a time the bread issue was light, the daily issue running for some days at seven or eight men to a loaf. Due, it was said, to the bombing of a field bakery.



Much to the satisfaction of all concerned the issue improved after some days, and has remained between 60% & 70% since.

Much difficulty was experienced in obtaining supplies from engineers. The billets for men in Wirwignes area, were quite impossible for winter months and without hessian, malthoid, paillasses & straw much discomfort must have occurred. Some weeks after our arrival in rest area most of the above stores were obtained.

The resultant improvements in billets made latter habitable.

It was, while in rest area, that we experienced the most severe weather up to date, and had not the Red Cross Society very kindly issued the ambulance personnel with gloves woollen &



Jackets cardigan, the men must have felt the cold weather considerably. This winter's Ordnance supplies have been lamentably slow in reaching the field. Luckily for the troops the winter, up to date, has been comparatively mild.

With route marches frequently filling the programmes of training, naturally, the men's boots suffered, supplies of new boots were rather slow in coming along; on one occasion the unit bootmaker dumped 20 pairs in order to enable us to take delivery from DAPS. Such was the demand from other Div. units that had we left the boots to be dumped by Div. bootmaker we would possibly have lost them at the time.

The unit bootmaker was busily employed solesing & heeling boots of the personnel all the time in rest area.



The move up from rest area was effected with no trouble, supply arrangements were good and weather conditions almost perfect.

Transport, with ambulance equipment aboard, made good time and arrived before schedule time.

The take over from outgoing ambulance has been effected, and the staff confidently expect the rest station affairs to be quite in order and working smoothly at all times during our occupancy.

C. H. M. Tadylen  
Lieut & Com  
8th Aust Field Amb.

2/2/18



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APPENDIX

