

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

Medical, Dental & Nursing

Item number: 26/58/29

Title: 15th Australian Field Ambulance

September 1918



AWM4-26/58/29

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

15th Australian Field Ambulance, A.I.F.

FOR

September 191*8.*

Signature of Officer compiling

Alfred Trabel Lt Col *Loebel*

Signature of Officer Commanding

Alfred Trabel Lt Col *Loebel*

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.

(Erase heading not required.)

Page 1.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<p>A. D. S. HERBECOURT H.26.c.7.2 Sheet 62C</p>	<p>1-9-18</p>		<p>Fine day - semi tropical heat. Observation balloons appear to be moved more forward on our left. Enemy shelling on cross roads, HERBECOURT - H.32.a.9.8. - and vicinity of A.D.S. causing a few casualties among transport moving forward. The Evacuation scheme for casualties of 5th Australian Division is working satisfactorily, the Officers in charge of Bearer Divisions advising that contact is being maintained with R.M.Os. and that no blockage is occurring. A few changes in Relay Posts have been made and it is evident that to ensure satisfactory evacuation of casualties the routes will have to be studied minutely and Posts and routes changed speedily when occasion demands. To this end I intend making frequent inspections. I have verbally instructed Officers i/c Bearer Divisions that contact with R.M.Os. must always be maintained and no hitch in this direction has appeared today. The roads generally are all battle worn making the evacuation of cases a little more difficult, but all MT/Drivers are now thoroughly acquainted with the roads so I have no fears on this account. Cases arriving at A. D. S. have all been treated, given warm refreshment, and after they have rested have been evacuated to M.D.S. No cases have been held beyond an hour - a steady evacuation being maintained throughout the day. An adequate supply of stretchers and blankets have been received and forward posts supplied - the A.D.S. and forward posts being well able to cope with all</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>contingencies in this connection. 3 Ford and 9 Sunbeam Ambulance Cars plus 9 Horse drawn Ambulance Wagons and 3 Motor Buses are now at my disposal. I do not anticipate having to requisition any further transport. During the day the A.D.S. has been completely fitted out and two large rooms capable of holding 100 patients have been made ready for the reception of a large influx of patients - this step being taken in the event of the enemy using Gas. It is not proposed to hold patients when evacuation is possible. The Horse Transport is located immediately behind the A.D.S., all horses are tethered in small groups in shell holes whilst the wagons are scattered. This appears necessary as the enemy holds the high ridges of PERONNE and therefore has direct observation. Enemy Aircraft bombed the area between 9 and 11 p.m., telephonic communication has been dislocated in consequence; no casualties however have been brought into this A.D.S. with bomb wounds. <i>RW</i></p>	
	2-9-18		<p>Day fine - cloudy - light winds. Bridges across the SOMME having being made practicable for Horse Ambulances and Motor Ambulances, new routes have been put into operation making the journey much shorter to A.D.S. The roads however are all battle torn and only slow driving will be possible for the present. All Posts and R.A.Ps. have been inspected and Officers i/c Bear-er Divisions consulted on new routes of evacuation before the scheme was put into operation.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>Casualties are very moderate and the evacuation is running smoothly. 3 Sunbeam Ambulance Cars broke down during the morning - two being sent to Workshops whilst the latter is being repaired on the Stand at A.D.S. No replacement for these Cars is considered necessary at present.</p> <p>Captain Marshall, R.M.O., 30th A.I. Battalion evacuated to M.D.S. sick and Captain Downer from 8th Australian Field Ambulance sent out to carry out the former's duties. The Cross Roads at HERBECOURT were again shelled at infrequent intervals - about 25 shells falling in and around this area during the day. Enemy Aircraft again bombed the area between 10 and 11-45 p.m. but no casualties caused to my knowledge. One Stretcher Bearer wounded in action and evacuated to C. C. S. <i>RW</i></p>	
	3-9-18		<p>Weather - sky overcast - light rain during the night but no further rain during the day.</p> <p>The 8th Aust. Field Ambulance Bearer Division relieved the 14th Aust. Field Ambulance Bearer Division early this morning. As the Advance has further developed, new R.A.Ps., Relays and Motor Posts have been arranged and just at present seem to be working satisfactorily. Unfortunately several 5th Aust. Divisional Casualties were switched on to 2nd Aust. Divisional Sector and passed through 2nd Aust. Divisional A.D.S. in consequence; this matter was immediately adjusted on my becoming notified of this irregularity. The evacuation throughout the day has</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>been far from satisfactory although no serious hitch occurred and all casualties received early attention. Battalions frequently changing their positions necessitating new R.A.Ps. being formed, and contact in a few instances being failing to be maintained has been responsible for the many difficulties presented. No rush of patients occurred at the A.D.S. everything here running smoothly. The enemy has not shelled this area during the day and enemy aircraft have not visited the vicinity of HERBECOURT throughout the day or night. 3 Men were evacuated to C.C.S. "Sick" and struck off strength. <i>RW</i></p>	
	4-9-18		<p>Day fine - clear sky - fairly hot - no wind. Captain J. L. Diggle appointed R.M.O. 5th D. A. C. reported to that Unit this morning and relieved Captain J. Gray, who has been taken on the strength of this Unit and attached to 5th Aust. Division Resuscitation Team. Captain R. M. Shaw relieved Captain Diggle in the forward area with the Bearer Division. Officers i/c Bearer Divisions advise contact maintained with all R.M.Os. New Posts have had to be established and arrangements made for the evacuation of 5th Aust. Divisional casualties on a wider front, the Division extending it's front on the Left, relieving the 2nd Australian Division in the area taken over tonight. The evacuation scheme is therefore only temporary but quite satisfactory for current conditions. On the whole the day could be termed quiet and only a</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>few casualties passed through the A.D.S. and forward posts. The enemy has neither bombed nor shelled the area during the day or night. <i>RN</i></p>	
	5-9-18		<p>In company with D.A.D.M.S., 5th Aust. Division, I inspected the Forward area and selected and established new Loading Posts and R.A.Ps. Contact was successfully maintained with R.M.Os. throughout the day and evacuation of casualties carried on without blockage or hitch. At 6 p.m. orders received that the 5th Aust. Division were side stepping to the Right, being relieved by the 3rd Aust. Division and A.D.S. and Forward Posts to be taken over by 10th Aust. Field Ambulance. Relief was completed by 10 p.m., Ambulance Cars sent forward wik for duty with 8th Aust. Field Ambulance and Tent Division and Horse Transport moved to ESTREES - M.30.c.5.7. - Sheet 62C and opened up as M.D.S. and ready for reception of patients by 11-40 p.m. The Bearer Division moved with 15th A.I. Brigade. A.D.S. was established by 8th Aust. Field Ambulance at MONS-en-Chaussee - P.26.c.4.9. During the day and night large fires were plainly seen between ^{behind} the enemy lines - being evident that the enemy is burning the villages as he retreats. Two men evacuated to C.C.S. "Sick" and struck off strength. <i>RN</i></p>	
ESTREES M.30.c.5.7.	6-9-18		<p>The men not engaged on Dressing or Evacuation duties were put on to clean the camp up and to improve and clean out the billets, bivouacs and dug-outs; this work continued throughout the day.</p>	

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>1 Motor Lorry and 1 Motor Bus were sent down to this Station for the evacuation of Walking Wounded to C.C.S. from the M.D.S. Report received from Major R. F. Craig, Officer i/c Bearer Division advising that they are still working with 15th A.I. Brigade forward and everything with him is satisfactory. 1 Sunbeam and 2 Ford Cars returned from detached duty with 8th Aust. Field Ambulance. Stretchers and Blankets were collected from Forward areas North of PERONNE and returned to 3rd M.A.C. dump at BRAY. Medical Stores collected from 3rd M.A.C. and delivered to 8th Australian Field Ambulance (A.D.S.) by Motor Lorry in accordance with instructions, A.D.M.S., 5th Australian Division, also 50 Stretchers and 100 Blankets were sent forward for use at this Station. <i>RW.</i></p>	
	7-9-18		<p>Day threatening - cloudy - with light showers. Owing to the long run between the A.D.S., MONS-en-Chaussee to this M.D.S., ESTREES, arrangements were made with the C.O., 8th Australian Field Ambulance to form a Motor Ambulance Car Relay Post at the bridge over the SOMME between BRIE and VILLERS-Carbonnet - 0.26.d.3.4. All Ambulance Cars of this Unit were then returned to this M.D.S. and a Motor Post formed at the Bridge together with a Loading Party. Cases were then debussed from the Ambulance Cars coming from the A.D.S. carried across the Bridge and loaded on the Relay Cars and brought on to M.D.S. Orders received to the effect that</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			the Advance was not to be continued until further orders. Captain H.W.B.Cairns rejoined this Ambulance from temporary duty with 55th A.I.Battalion. <i>RW</i>	
	8-9-18		Day unsettled - showery - cold. Report received from Major R.F.Craig, O. i/c Bearer Division that he was being relieved by a 12th Brigade Field Ambulance Bearer Division on the 9th instant, and that he would be reporting back to Ambulance Headquarters with his Bearer Division on 9th instant. <i>RW</i>	
	9-9-18		Weather still unsettled. Major Craig with Bearer Division, 15th Aust. Field Ambulance reported back to these Headquarters at 3 p.m. today. All men were made comfortable in billets dug-outs and bivouacs and served with a hot meal. The Car Relay Post was closed and Loading Party and Cars reported back to this M.D.S. <i>RW</i>	
	10-9-18		Arranged with 15th A.I.Brigade to collect their sick and opened up two wards capable of holding 50 patients for the treatment of slightly sick. The Bearers were allotted no duties being given the day to rest, clean their clothing, bathing, etc. The 2 Motor Lorries attached to this M.D.S. for the evacuation of Walking Wounded to C.C.S. were withdrawn at 4 p.m. today. Day - showery and very cold. <i>RW</i>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	11-9-18		During the whole of this period the Division was out of the Line; the work of the Ambul-	
	to		ance being to collect the 15th A.I. Brigade sick, evacuate cases, other than slightly sick, to	
	25-9-18		C.C.S. A Scabies Station was formed on this site and Brigade cases treated. A daily inspection	
			for detecting Scabies was held at Brigade Baths, and all cases with skin rashes were reported to	
			the R.M.O. of the Unit to which the man belonged. An Educational Committee was formed and	
			preliminary classes started on 25th instant. The men seem to be very keen and once the scheme	
			is operating fully, individual material benefit should result. In anticipation of further	
			active operations, and with A.D.M.S.'s approval the equipment of one Section was dumped under	
			a guard of 2 men in PERONNE. Advantage was taken to completely overhaul all Horse drawn	
			Wagons, all necessary repairs being made and a few vehicles painted. The dug-outs, buildings,	
			etc. on this site have all been repaired and made habitable, special attention being paid to	
			the erection of adequate sanitary arrangements. Kit inspections and Gas parades have been	
			held and all N.C.Os. and men are now in possession of complete kits and serviceable boots in	
			good repair. All deficiencies in Unit equipment have been brought up to date and the Unit	
			made quite ready for further action. On 11-9-18 Lieut-Colonel R. Whiston Walsh "DSO" proceed-	
			ed on leave to England, Major J. D. Norris taking over Temporary Command. On 13-9-18 Captain	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>Captain J. R. Robertson was detached for duty as R.M.O. to 55th A.I. Battalion during the temporary absence on leave of Captain MacKay. On 15-9-18 Captain R. M. Shaw was transferred to 59th A.I. Battalion as R.M.O. vice Major MacLennan the latter being transferred to 8th Aust. Field Ambulance. During the whole of this period the weather was moderately fine with very cold nights. <i>RW</i></p>	
	26-9-18		<p>Major R.E. Craig in charge of Bearer Division 15th Australian Field Ambulance joined 15th A. I. Brigade near BARLEUX in order to move forward with the Brigade. Captain A.W. LeSouef transferred from 60th A.I. Battalion and taken on strength of this Ambulance. Mild day with cloudy sky. <i>RW</i></p>	
	27-9-18		<p>Orders received for the Ambulance less Bearer Division to move forward to TINCOURT area on the morning of 28-9-18. All equipment was packed on wagons during the afternoon. Major J.D. Norris went to TINCOURT and arranged with the Area Commandant for suitable billets for the Unit. Unsettled day with light showers and very cold. <i>RW</i></p>	
	28-9-18		<p>The 15th Australian Field Ambulance less Bearer Division moved off from ESTREES at 10-30 a.m. by route march arriving at TINCOURT at 5-30 p.m. A hot meal was served on the road at 2 p.m. a halt of one hour being called for this purpose, the cooks having been sent forward earlier. Day fine but very cold.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TINCOURT	29-10-18		<p>Lieut-Colonel R. Whiston Walsh, "DSO" reported back from leave and resumed Command. At 4 p.m. the 15th Australian Field Ambulance less Bearer Division moved to J.23.c.2.4. Sheet 62C on the site of the old C.C.S. and opened up the No. 1 Corps Relay Post, detraining patients from the Light Railway sent down from the M.D.S. and embussing them on lorries and evacuating them to C.C.S. No buildings or bivouacs were on this site, tents therefore had to be erected to shelter the patients from the weather. Had the 53rd C.C.S. been built on this site, where everything seems admirably suited for a C.C.S. instead of a mile from the detraining and entraining places, this Post would not have been necessary, and patients would not have been subjected to so much discomfort as the detraining in a place where no conveniences were available to receive them with the additional uncomfortable bus ride over a road on which the traffic was markedly heavy. The day was very cold, windy with heavy showers. <i>RW</i></p>	
	30-9-18		<p>Patients arrived down at this Post regularly throughout the day. As the 53rd C.C.S. was not receiving and patients had to be evacuated by Motor Lorry to C.C.Ss., DOIGNT. Word received that five Stretcher Bearers, members of this Ambulance, had been wounded - one case being serious. Major J. D. Norris proceeded on leave to England. The day was cold - no rain - sky overcast. <i>RW</i></p>	
<p>A6945 Wt. W11422/M1160 350,000 12/16 D. D. & L. Forms/C./2118/14.</p>			<p><i>R. Whiston Walsh</i>Lieut-Colonel, C.O., 15th Australian Field Ambulance, A.I.F.</p>	

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WAR DIARY

APPENDIX

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OF

15TH AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE, A. I. F.

FOR

SEPTEMBER, 1918.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.

Subject.

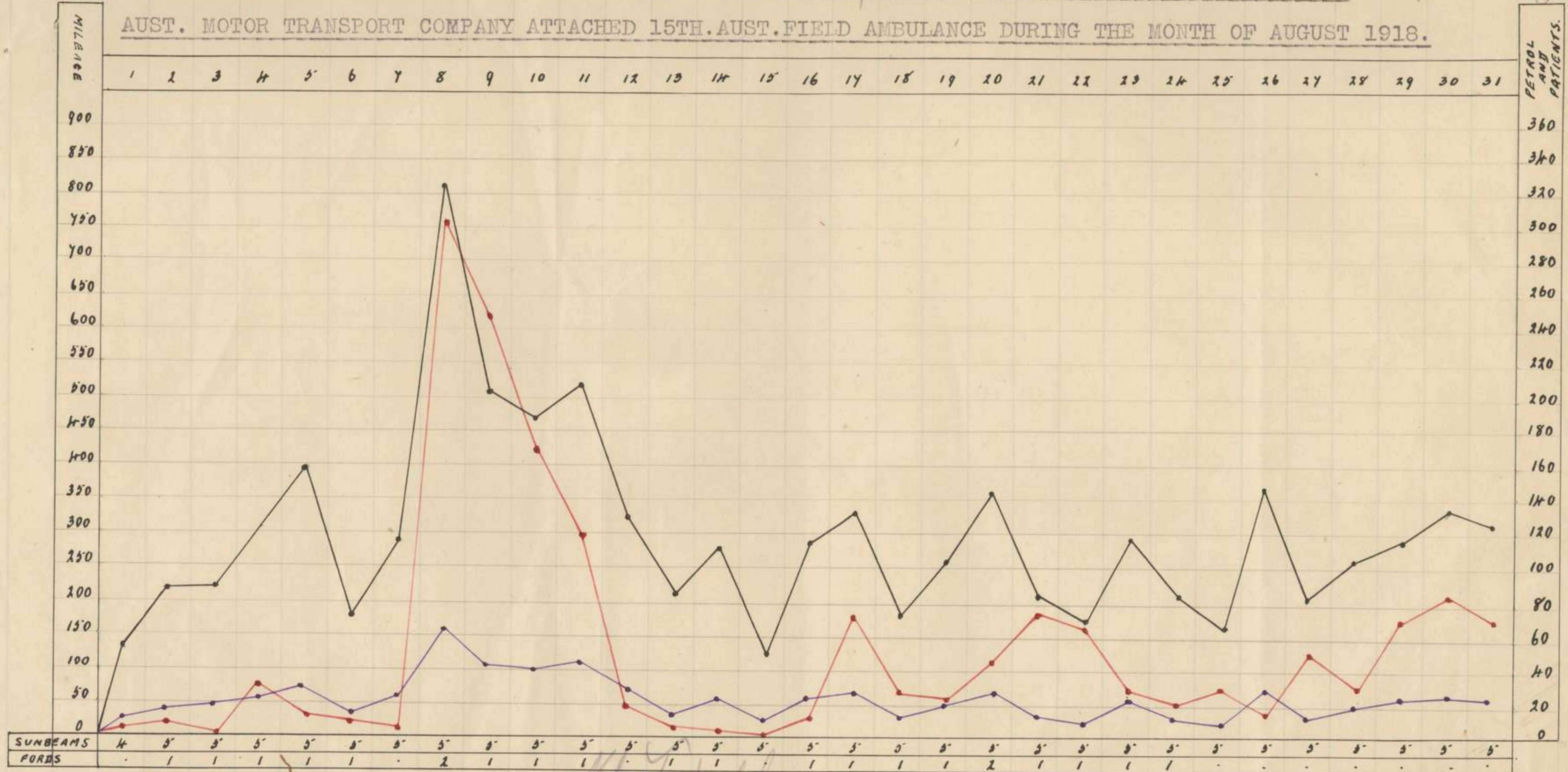
Graph showing Mileage covered, Petrol consumed, Patients carried and Cars on duty of 5th Aust. Division M.T. Company attached 15th Aust. Field Ambulance for month of August 1918.

Graph showing Admissions of Sick, Wounded and Gassed Patients of 15th Aust. Field Ambulance during month of September 1918.

Graph showing Principal causes of Sickness, passing through 15th Aust. Field Ambulance during month of September 1918.

GRAPH SHOWING MILAGE COVERED, PETROL CONSUMED, PATIENTS CARRIED, AND CARS ON DUTY OF 5TH.

AUST. MOTOR TRANSPORT COMPANY ATTACHED 15TH. AUST. FIELD AMBULANCE DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST 1918.



MILEAGE COVERED SHOWN _____
 PETROL CONSUMED ✓ _____
 PATIENTS CARRIED ✓ _____

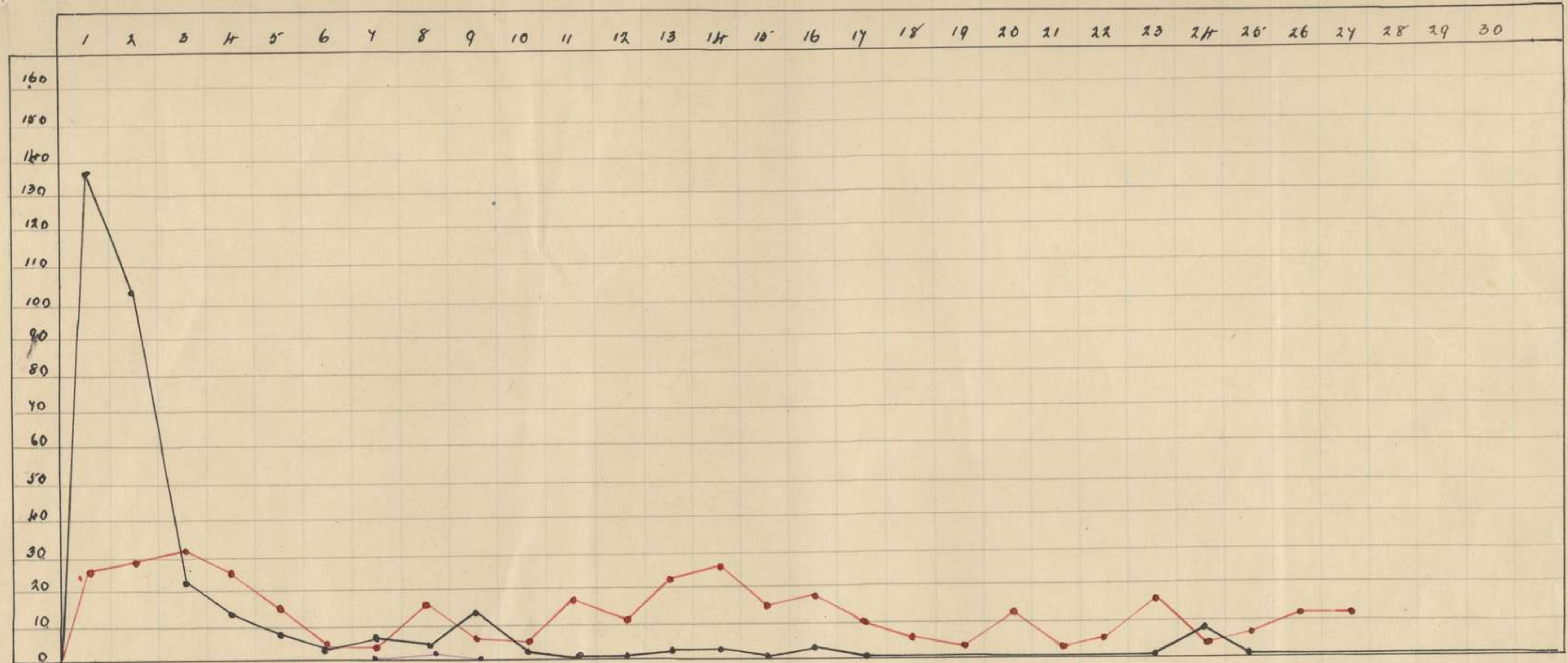
Thruston
 Lieut. Colonel.
 C.O., 15th. Aust. Field Ambulance, A.I.F.
 1-9-18

TOTAL MILEAGE COVERED 9271 MILES
 PETROL CONSUMED 738 GALLONS
 PATIENTS CARRIED 1694 PATIENTS
 AVERAGE MILES TO CALL PETROL. 12.578 MILES.

APPENDIX 12

GRAPH SHOWING ADMISSIONS OF SICK, WOUNDED AND GASED PATIENTS

TO 15TH AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE, A. I. F. DURING SEPTEMBER 1918.



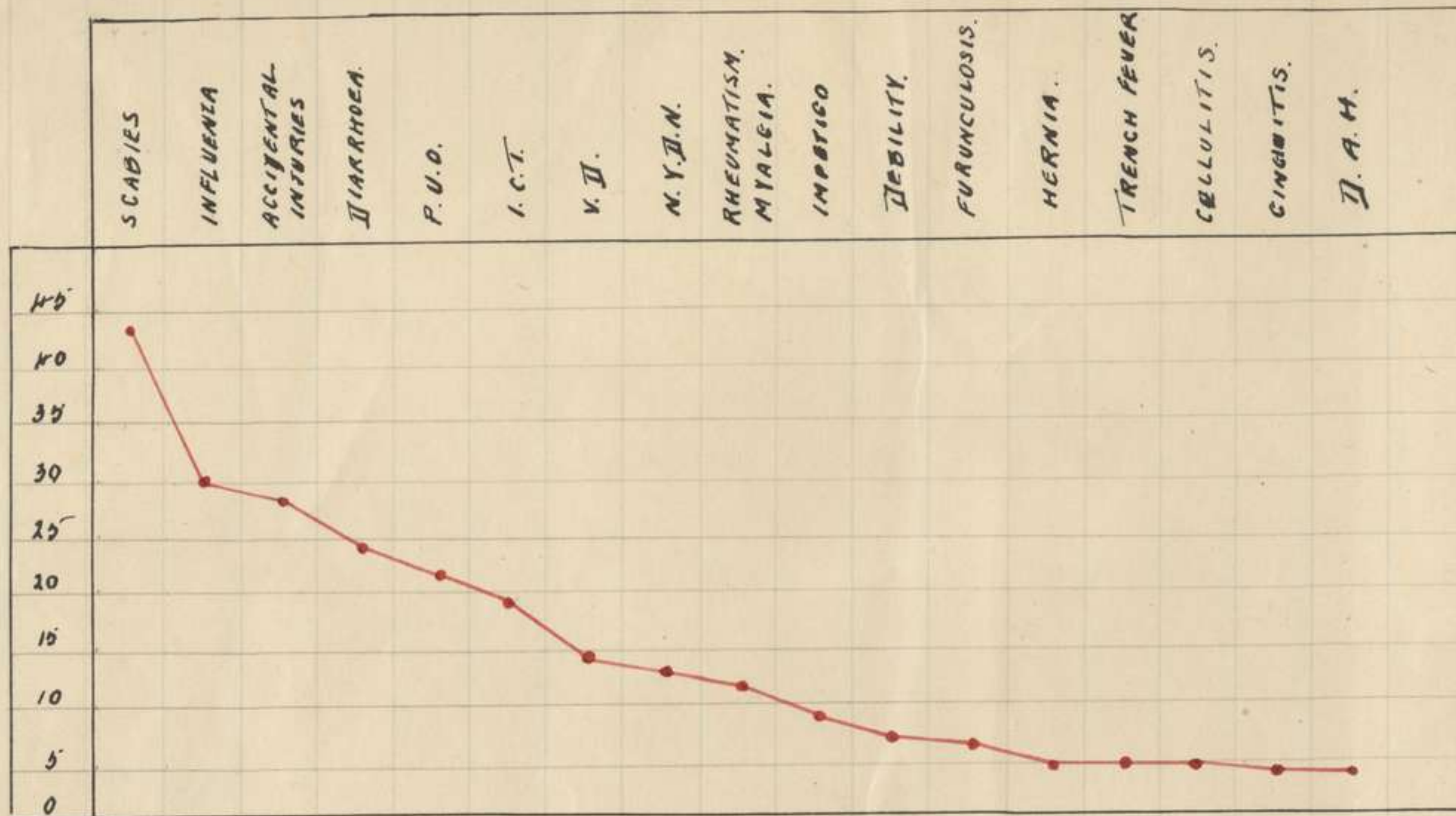
WOUNDED	SHOWN	_____	TOTAL WOUNDED	334
SICK	✓	_____	SICK	360
GASED	✓	_____	GASED	1

Arthur F. Walsh
 Lieut. Colonel.
 C.O., 15th Aust. Field Ambulance, A.I.F.
 1-10-18.

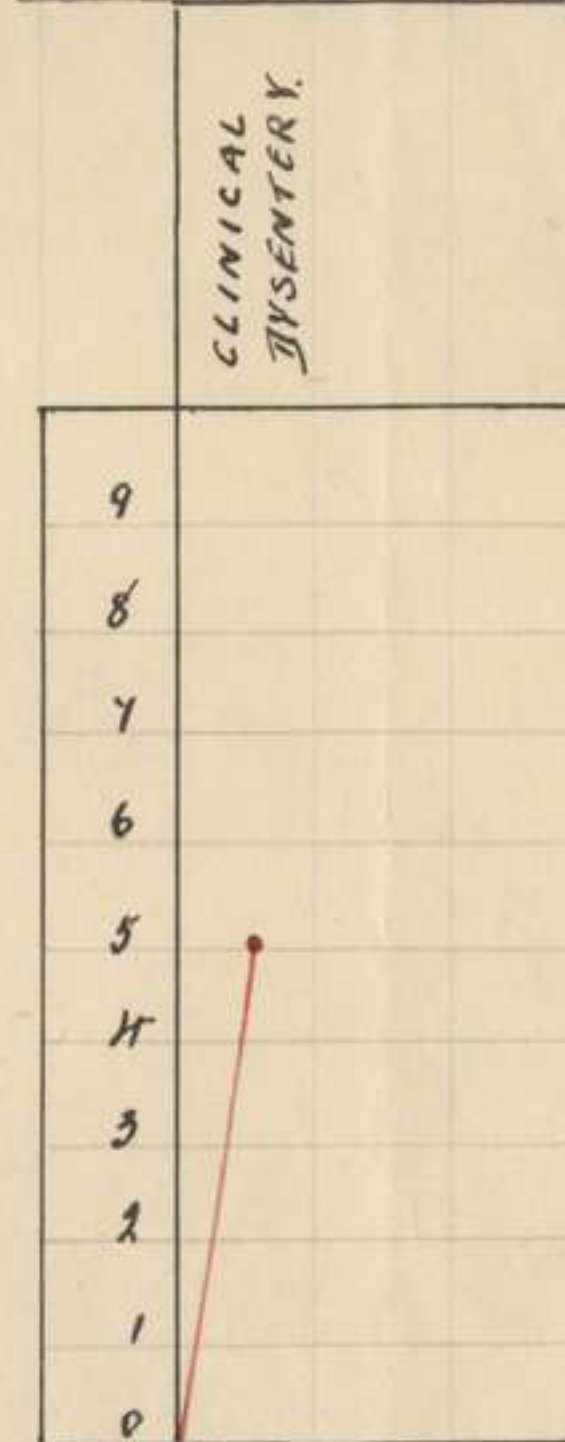
APPENDIX 2
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GRAPH SHOWING PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF SICKNESS PASSING THROUGH
15TH AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE DURING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1918.



INFECTIOUS CASES.



Arthur Walsh

Lieut. Colonel.
C.O., 15th Australian Field Ambulance, A. I. F.

1-10-18.

APPENDIX 14