

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

Cyclists

Item number: 12/3/4

Title: Australian Corps Cyclist Battalion

April 1918



AWM4-12/3/4

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

WAR DIARY

Australian Corps Archist Battalion.

april 1918

Dawson Lieut & adjt.

nding *St. Michaels* map

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Australian Corps Light Battalion.

Sheet 1.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
map Ref. Sheet 28. M24. B2.3.	1/4/18.		<p>The Battalion in LEEDS CAMP. mounted troops Headquarters situated LOCKE.</p> <p>Strength:- Officers 18. Other Ranks 305. Attached 1. Armourer. 2. A.S.C. Drivers. 3 A.M.C. Orderlies.</p> <p>120 other ranks supplementary to establishment. Total Strength 18. Officers 42.</p> <p>Distribution of personnel as follows:- In Hospital 1 Officer 3 other ranks. On English leave 1 Officer. 15 other ranks. 2 other ranks attached. G.H.Q. Lewis Gun Battalion.</p> <p>2 Platoons "standing to" under orders to report to 1st and 2nd Divisions.</p> <p>Orders received from Corps for Battalion to move to MORBECQUE area on 2nd inst. 13th Light Horse Regiment to move to CAESTRE.</p> <p>Weather Report Fine.</p>	
map Ref HAZEBROUCK 5A. 6.4.	2nd		<p>The Battalion vacated LEEDS CAMP at 10.30 am. & moved via LOCKE. STRAZELLE.</p> <p>BORRE into billets at AV SAUVERAIN 1 mile East of HAZEBROUCK, arriving at destination at 3.30 pm. Distance approx. 25 Kilometres.</p> <p>Detachments with Corps and Divisional Signal and Salvage Companies, A.P.M.S. and Corps Commander's Guard moved with units to which attached. other detachments rejoined on night of 1st inst. and during day.</p> <p>Weather Report Strong winds and rain at night.</p>	

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WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Australian Corps Cyclist Battalion

Sheet 2.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Map Ref Sheet LENS. II. E. I.	3rd		The Battalion vacated billets at 10. am and moved via SIVENANT, LILLERS, PERVES to VALHON. arriving at 6 pm distance approx. 50 Kilometres. Rain fell during day + previous night + going very hard.	
			Lieut. P. C. Reid late of 22nd Corps Cyclist Battalion joined Battalion en route.	TD
Map Ref LENS. II. C. 4.	4th		The Battalion vacated billets at 9 am and moved via ST. POL. and FREVENT to MEZEROLLES arriving at 1 pm. Distance approx. 30 Kilometres.	
			Weather Report. Dull, frequent showers and going very heavy.	TD
Map Ref LENS. II. B. 5.	5th		Billets vacated at 10. am and Battalion moved via LE MAILLARD and BERNAVILLE to ABENVILLE. arriving at 11.30 am. Distance approximately 15 Kilometres.	
			Weather Report. Improved conditions, but roads still heavy in places.	TD
"	6th		Under orders to move at an hours notice. General overhaul of cycle made.	TD
"	7th		Equipment and cycle inspections carried out.	TD
Map Ref AMIENS. 17. D. A.	8th		5 officers 91 other ranks marched out to BEAUCOURT for duty with A.P.M. 4th Aust. Division. 2 O.R.s sent to Corps HQs on duties in connection with receiving aeroplane messages.	
			Instructions received for self contained platoons to be detailed for attachment	TD

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Australian Corps Cyclist Battalion
Sheet 3.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Map Ref AMIENS. 17. Sheet D.A.	8th		to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Australian Divisions, and one to be held in readiness for attachment to 5th Aust Division.	
			The Battalion received movement orders at 10 am and vacated billets at 2 pm and moved via BERNAYVILLE CAMPELLES and FLGSELLES to VILLERS BOCAGE arriving at destination 4 pm. Distance approximately 30 Kilometres.	
			The 4 Platoons detailed for attachment to Divisions marched out on arrival at new location.	
			Weather Report. Heavy rain just prior to move, but conditions improved.	TH
	9th		Capt. J. J. Scoules appointed Town Maps CORBIE.	TH
			Weather Report. Dull. Light showers during day.	TH
	10th		Orders received for Battalion to move to ALLONVILLE on 11th inst.	
			2 other ranks reported from G.H.Q. Lewis Gun Battalion.	
			Weather report. Dull and showery.	TH
Map Ref Sheet 62 D G.I. 8.2.	11th		Vacated billets at VILLERS BOCAGE at 1 pm, and moved to ALLONVILLE via COISY a distance of approximately 5 Kilometres, arriving at 1.30 pm.	
			Platoon attached to 1st Aust Division moved with that Division on transfer	TH

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Army Form C. 2118.

Australian Corps Cyclist Battalion

Sheet 4

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Map Ref Sheet 62 D G. H. 8.2.	11th		from 4th Army to 2nd Army.	TH
"	12th		1 officer 16 other ranks marched out for traffic duties with A.P.M. Corps.	TH
"			Platoon in reserve marched out for duty with 5th Aust. Division.	TH
"	14th		Lieut. A. E. Ford late 22nd Corps Cyclist Battalion reported for duty from Hospital.	TH
"	17th		3. Other ranks evacuated to Hospital suffering from gas poisoning whilst on patrol duties with 5th Aust. Division.	TH
"			weather Report. Dull. frequent showers.	TH
"	18th		1 other rank killed in action whilst doing patrol duties with 5th Aust. Div.	TH
"			weather Report. Improved conditions. Light westerly breeze.	TH
"	19th		3. Other ranks evacuated to Hospital suffering from gas poisoning whilst doing patrol duties with 5th Aust. Division.	TH
"			Lieut. O. L. Byrnes selected by Corps to attend "A" Course at G.H.Q. L.C. School.	TH
"			Aerial activity at night. 6 bombs dropped in close proximity to billets.	TH
"	21st		Capt. J. L. Harrison and Lieut. H. C. Reid rejoined from detachment sent to A.P.M. 4th Division.	TH
"			Corps commanden guard of 21 other ranks, relieved, and rejoined. Bombs dropped in close proximity to billets at night. Billets untouched.	TH

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Australian Corps Cyclist Battalion

Sheet 5.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
map ref. Sheet 62.D G 11 82.	23rd		3 other ranks gassed, and evacuated to Hospital whilst doing patrol duties with 5th Aust Division.	
			Lieut. A.E. Ford assumed duties as Town Major WARLOY under Corps orders.	(H)
"	24th		1 other rank killed, and 1 other rank wounded whilst attached to 2nd Aust Division during Enemy operations against VILLERS BRETON-NOX.	
			Capt Harrison assumed duties as Area Commandant PIERREGOT under Corps orders.	(H)
			weather Report Due.	
	25th		1 other rank wounded, 2 other ranks gassed, and evacuated whilst attached to 2nd Aust Division for duty.	(H)
"	26th		Capt W. Ross M.C. recently Town Major BAILLEUL now assumed duties as Area Commandant COISEY.	(H)
"	27th		Capt J.J.S. Scouter relinquished duties as Town Major CORBIT and assumed duties as Area Commandant CABRY. Lieut. P.C. Reid as Area Commandant ECOLE NORMALE (AMIENS) and Lieut. J.G.W. White assisting Capt Scouter to organise the CABRY Area.	
			weather Report Due. light shower.	(H)

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

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WAR DIARY

OF

AUSTRALIAN CORPS CYCLIST BATTALION.

FOR

A P R I L 1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| No. 1 | Subject. Extracts from Australian Corps Order No.53 regarding attachment of Platoons to Divisions. |
| 2. | QUARTERMASTER'S Report. |
| 3. | Report by LIEUT.O.S.SYMON on work done by Platoon whilst attached to 2nd Australian Division. |
| 4. | Report by LIEUT.W.J.WARD on work done by Platoon whilst attached to 3rd Australian Division. |
| 5. | Report by LIEUT.I.G.TROUT on work done by Platoon whilst attached to 5th Australian Division. |

Secret. Copy No.16.

G.
Australian Corps.
6th April, 1918.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS ORDER No.53.

1. Corps Mounted Troops.

(1) The O.C. Corps Mounted Troops will detail to each the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Australian Divisions 1 troop of Light Horse and 1 platoon of Cyclist Battalion.

The troop and platoon will report on the 8th instant to Headquarters of respective divisions who will arrange quartering.

(11) O.C. Corps Mounted Troops will allot 1 troop of Light Horse and 1 platoon of Cyclist Battalion to 5th Australian Division, these to be held in readiness to join the division at a later date.

(iii) The troops allotted to divisions are for the specific duties of -

(a) patrol and reconnaissance, including flank protection :

(b) maintenance of communications :
and not for administrative duties.

Sgd A.M. Ross Lieut-Col.
For Brig-General.
General Staff, Australian Corps.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS CYCLIST BATTALION.

APPENDIX 2

QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT FOR MONTH OF APRIL, 1918.

RATIONS :- Normal.

FUEL :- Some difficulty has been experienced in obtaining both wood and coal in adequate quantities.

ORDNANCE STORES :- No difficulty has been experienced in this respect, supplies being maintained normally through Ordnance except Hats, Felt, none of which have been obtainable for two months.

RETURNS :- FAT. As the Battalion has been on the move for 11 days out of the month, and as almost the whole of the personnel then went on detachment, no return of fat has been made during April.

TRANSPORT :- Before the move, orders were received to reduce baggage to a minimum. All officers, therefore, reduced their kits to one valise per officer, and the surplus kits plus certain surplus Q.M stores were dumped. On the move no motor or any additional transport was supplied. The Battalion moved for the first day carrying 48 hours rations, but it was found that the horses were overloaded and permission was received from Corps "Q" to reduce to 24 hours rations which was picked up each day from railheads during the move South. The transport proved adequate to requirements with 24 hours rations carried.

During April, no evacuations of horses took place.

F. H. Duggall
.....Captain.
Quartermaster.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS Cyclist Battalion.

REPORT by LIEUT. O.S.SYMON on work done by Platoon attached to
2nd AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Map Refs. Sheets 62.D. 57.D.

8/4/18. On arrival of Battalion at VILLIERS-BOCAGE, I received orders to report at once with complete Platoon to 2nd Division Headquarters.

Moved off at 5.30 p.m. and proceeded via MOLLIENS-au-BOIS to BEAUCOURT, arriving at 6.40 p.m. Billeted my Platoon. Received orders to furnish patrols of 1 N.C.O. and 6 O.R's to :-

1. (a) Make acquaintance of all Headquarters, and tracks and roads thereto, in Divisional Area.

(b) Make road reconnaissance of all roads and tracks in patrol sectors.

(c) Ascertain how far forward cycles could be ridden.

2. Make contact with Flanking Patrols of Right and Left Divisions.

9/4/18. Left Group Patrol proceeded by road via HENENCOURT as far as cemetery at V 29.c.10.30 and owing to heavy enemy shelling could proceed no further by cycle. This patrol carried out it's job satisfactorily, except they could not reconnoitre roads in square D 9 owing to hostile shelling.

Central Group patrol succeeded, except for the location of a Headquarters in the S.E. of LAVIEVILLE, as the tracks to it were being heavily shelled.

Right Group patrol proceeded to BRESLE on cycles and then on foot to D.17.c.4.2. This patrol did good work.

No patrol got further forward than line running through V.29.c.10.30, D.10.b. central, D.17.c.4.2.

10/4/18. Left patrol working with Light Horse patrol reached as far as D.6.a.9.4. through MILLIENCOURT and were then fired upon.

Central patrol reported roads in D.9 damaged by shell-fire.

Right patrol reached D.16.c.4.4. on cycles then dismounted and proceeded through D.21 to HEILLY returning to D.20 central.

This day 2 patrols made reconnaissance of roads in area behind Divisional Headquarters.

Our patrols worked well with those of Light Horse, and comparison of their respective reports most useful.

11/4/18. Right Group patrol proceeded via FRANVILLERS to about D.20 central, and at 11.30 a.m. met our Right Division's Flanking Patrol of Light Horse.

Left Group patrol could not get in touch with Flanking Patrol of our Left Division.

Poor visibility to-day and roads still bad for cycles.

12/4/18. Right Group patrol made contact with flanking patrol of our Right Division at 11.10 a.m. about D.20 central.

Left Group patrol could not find any patrols of our Left Div.

Visibility very good to-day and road and track reconnaissance in many cases have to made on foot and singly owing to enemy observation.

The road running N.E. in D.4 has been heavily "strafed".

13/4/18. Lieut. P.R.WELDON relieved me in accordance with orders.

.....Lieut.
O/C Platoon Aust. Corps Cyclist Battn.
Attached 2nd Australian Division.

This Platoon from the 13th inst. to 30th inst. remained attached to 2nd Aust. Division and carried out further reconnaissance work.

APPENDIX 4

REPORT by LIEUT. W.J.WARD on work done by Platoon attached to
3rd AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Location Sheet 62D I.17.c8.2.

Platoon reported to 3rd Division on 8th April and proceeded to BONNAY to be attached to 11th Inf. Brigade for duty. 2 sections billeted in BONNAY and 2 at I 36.c5.5. The duties were to patrol the North bank of the SOMME daily with 2 sections, from VAUX to SAILLY-le-SEC.

In the event of a retirement the Platoon would be employed on flank guard duties in conjunction with infantry on the right flank of the 3rd Division which rests on the North bank of the SOMME. The Platoon would also destroy any bridges which the Engineers were unable to demolish through casualties.

On the night of the 20th instant two picquets, each of 1 N.C.O. and 3 men, were placed on bridges across the SOMME at SAILLY-le-SEC and on the two barrel pier bridges between VAUX and SAILLY-le-SEC. These were relieved on the night of the 21st instant.

At 3.45 a.m. on the 23rd instant the enemy put down an intense bombardment of the forward area, H.E. and gas-shells being principally used. Whilst moving to the point of assembly two casualties were received (1 O.R. killed, 1 O.R. wounded) two O.R's were also evacuated suffering from gas poisoning. Consequent upon bombardment Platoon moved to I 36.c.4.5.

One O.R. was wounded at HEILLY whilst on running duties.

Patrol operations on the Right Division flanks ceased on the 22nd instant, the 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION having absorbed the valley of the SOMME in its front.

The Platoon at present is part of Divisional Reserve with instructions to be ready at a moments notice for use in a tactical capacity.

...Sgd.W.J.Ward.....Lieut.
O/C Platoon Aust. Corps Cyclist Battn.
Attached 3rd Australian Division.

APPENDIX

5

REPORT by LIEUT. I.G.TROUT on work done by Platoon attached to
5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Location Sheet 62 H.35.c.

The Platoon reported to 5th Division on 12th instant for duty.
Reconnaissance was carried out of forward areas, men being
made conversant with roads and approaches.

Night of 17/18th inst. 1 N.C.O. and 2 O.R's accompanied a fighting
patrol of 32nd Battalion, no contact being made with the enemy. 3
O.R's on patrol duties with 14th Brigade were evacuated to Hospital
suffering from the effects of gas.

Night of 18/19th inst. 1 N.C.O. and 2 O.R's accompanied a fighting
patrol of 30th Battalion. The patrol got in touch with enemy and
shots were exchanged. 1 N.C.O. and 2 O.R's accompanied patrols of
14th Brigade and contact with the enemy was again made. 1 N.C.O.
killed in action.

Night of 19/20th inst. Two parties, each of 1 N.C.O. and 2 O.R's
accompanied patrols of 31st Battalion and 14th Brigade.

Night of 20/21st inst. 1 N.C.O. and 2 O.R's patrolled with 32nd Battn.
and fired on enemy's strong post.

Night of 23/24th inst. Patrol of 3 O.R's sent to 29th Battalion, and
myself and 4 O.R's to 31st Battalion. On the way up, both parties
were caught in the most severe gas-shell bombardment yet put down
on this front, 4000 shells falling in one small sector. After
remaining for 2 hours in this bombardment, parties felt the effects
and 3 O.R's were evacuated to Hospital suffering from the effects of
gas. Patrol to 29th Battalion struck no opposition whilst on patrol.
Patrol to 31st Battalion met a stronger patrol of the enemy and
successfully dispersed them.

The men have done good work and have behaved well under fire.
I attach copy of instructions received from 5th Divisional
Headquarters regarding the duties of Platoon whilst attached to them.

.Sgd..I.G.Trout.....Lieut.
O/C Platoon Aust. Corps Cyclist Battn.
Attached 5th Australian Division.

COPY.

G16/176.5

APPENDIX 5

8th Infantry Brigade.
 14th Infantry Brigade.
 15th Infantry Brigade.
 No. 4 Troop "C" Sqdn. 13th A.I.H.
 Cyclist Platoon attached 5th AUST. DIV.

1. Small parties (approximately 1 N.C.O. and 3 men) of No. 4 Troop "C" Sqdn. 13th A.I.H. and Cyclist Platoon respectively will be attached to each Infantry Brigade in the line nightly to gain experience in front line patrol work.
2. Infantry Brigades will ensure that these attached parties work as part of battalion patrols and that they are under experienced patrol leaders and thus gain maximum value of instruction afforded them.
3. O's.C. No. 4 Troop A.I.H. and Cyclist Platoon will ensure that as far as possible, all men of their commands are attached in turn to Infantry Brigades for the above instruction.
4. Details re the above will be arranged between the Infantry Brigade Headquarters and the unit commanders concerned.
5. In addition, suitable men will be attached both by No. 4 Troop A.I.H. and Cyclist Platoon to Infantry Brigades for instruction in observation duties (Brigade and Battalion O.P's.) and in the writing of reports.
6. A record will be kept of men who are detailed for instruction in accordance with the above, particulars being forwarded to Divisional Headquarters. This information will be forwarded to 13th A.I.H. and Aust. Cyclist Battalion by 5th D.H.Q.

17th April, 1918.

Sd. G.F. Wootten Major G.S.
 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Copies to :-

Australian Corps.
 13th A.I.H.
 Aust. Corps Cyclist Battalion.