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1914-18 War

Engineers

Item number: 14/15/11

Title: 3rd Australian Pioneer Battalion

September 1917



AWM4-14/15/11

Original.

3rd Pioneer Bn

159

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|--------------|----------------------------------|------|---|--------------------------------------|
| NEUVE EGLISE | 1917. SEPT. 1-30 1st. P.M. | | <p>Pursuant instructions received, the 3rd Australian Pioneer Battalion moved from its quarters at NEUVE EGLISE, SEPTEMBER 1st, 1917, 1-30 P.M., and Route Marched to STEENWERCK Station. It entrained there at 4-0 P.M. for LUMERES.</p> | |
| LUMERES. | XXXX | | <p>LUMERES was reached 10 P.M., and the Battalion marched to Camp immediately East of WAVRANS, reaching there 11-15 P.M., and remaining under canvas that night.</p> | |
| WAVRANS. | 2nd. | | <p>On SEPTEMBER 2nd the Battln. paraded 9 A.M. for Church Parade, then route marched 1½ hours. A General Inspection was held, and the afternoon observed as a holiday.</p> | |
| WAVRANS. | 3rd - 10th. | | <p>From the 3rd to the 10th, general Infantry Training was carried on, and Specialists, divided into to different classes, were instructed. Twenty Signallers per Company passed through a course of instruction. Ten Stretcher Bearers per Company were trained under the R.M.O., and eight men per Company trained in the use of the Lewis Gun, under the L.G.O. Ten N.C.O's per Company were put through a special course for N.C.O's, under the Senior Officer of the Battln.</p> | |
| | | | <p>A Syllabus of Training had been drawn up, and was observed, and for the first week, WEDNESDAY, SATURDAY and SUNDAY afternoons were devoted to Sports and Recreation.</p> | |
| | | | <p>On SEPTEMBER 10th, half the Battalion moved from canvas to Billets.</p> | |
| | | | <p>After the first week the hours of training were from 9 A.M. to 12 Noon, and from 2 to 4 p.m., the afternoon being principally occupied in Lectures and practical demonstrations, on on the lines of the Lectures delivered.</p> | |
| -do- | 13th | | <p>SEPTEMBER 13th was kept as a general holiday, and on this day, the Battln. Sports were held.</p> | |
| -do- | 14th | | <p>A Route March of about six miles, with packs up was carried out by the Companies, independantly. In the afternoon, bathing parade.</p> | |
| -do- | 15th | | <p>On SEPT. 15th, the usual training was resumed.</p> | |
| -do- | 16th | | <p>Church Parade, and ceremonial Battalion Drill.</p> | |
| -do- | 17th | | <p>A Gas Demonstration was given by the Divisional Gas Officer, and all ranks of the Battln. put through Gas Drill under actual service conditions.</p> | |
| -do- | 18th | | <p>Usual training resumed.</p> | |
| -do- | 19th | | <p>Companies in attack.</p> | |
| -do- | 20th | | <p>Battalion Drill.</p> | |
| -do- | 21st | | <p>Usual Infantry Training, followed by Ceremonial Drill of Battalion.</p> | |

Adjutant 3rd. Aust. Pioneer Bn. A.I.F.

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| WAVRANS. | 1917. SEPT. 22nd. 23rd. 25th. | PT | <p>The Battalion attended a Review held by Sir Douglas HAIG.</p> <p>Usual Infantry Training.</p> <p>REMARKS:- Too much stress cannot be laid upon the advantage afforded the Battln. of three weeks training. All ranks entered into the spirit of the work, and it was carried out under most favorable conditions, and a marked improvement observed, even after the first few days. It will be observed that the first week of training, only forenoons were employed, and the afternoon given to the men for rest and recreation. This served to restore the morale of the troops, in a marvellous fashion. They had been actually working in and about the trenches without rest, for over nine months, and the change was most urgently needed.</p> <p>Only three weeks were given for the work, but during this three weeks, almost an impossibility seemed to have been accomplished. The developement of the marching, bearing and soldierly appearance of the men was most marked, and gave opportunity for its use during the subsequent weeks.</p> | |
| WAVRANS. ESQUERDES. WIZERNES. ARQUES CLAIREMARAISE. | 26th. | PT | <p>Under instructions received, the Battalion moved out of WAVRANS in column of route, to return to the trenches.</p> <p>Their Route for the first day was over Hill No. 124 at HALTE, to ESQUERDES, thence to WIZERNES, and thence North East to ARQUES, encamping the first night at CLAIREMARAISE, immediately North of the forrest by that name, and North East of ST.OMER.</p> <p>Headquarters was established at the MONASTERY, evidently a school, utilised previous to the war, but in its present condition, was most dilapidated.</p> <p>Attached to this Unit are many men with technical knowledge of great value to the Unit, but unable to march any distance, carrying packs. Provision, previous to moving off, was made for the transport of these men. It should be, and it always has been recognised, that the value of men with technical knowledge, is not so much their ability to march, as it is to do the work required by a technical Unit, and the convenience of transport for these men is something that should always be borne in mind, in handling a Unit of this nature.</p> | |
| ZUYTPEENE. BAUVINCHOVE. TERDEGHEM. EECKE. | 27th. 9 A.M. | PT | <p>The "Marching Out" State of the Battln. was 26 Officers and 826 O.R., and the "Marching IN" State was 26 Officers and 824 O.R. A distance of about 14 miles was covered the first day, with full packs up, and only two men dropped out en route.</p> <p>The Battln. moved out of its quarters at CLAIREMARAISE 9 A.M., via ZUYTPEENE, BAUVINCHOVE, TERDEGHEM, to its new billets in the EECKE AREA.</p> <p>Its H.Q. were established on the road about half way between EECKE and STEENVOORDE.</p> | |

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| ECKE AREA. | 1917. SEPT. 27th (Contd.) | | On this day, the march was a trying one, as the hill on which the town of CASSEL is situated, had to be crossed, and the distance covered was approximately 16 miles. Only one man dropped out en route. | |
| WORMHOUDT. | 28th | 1-30 P.M. | On SEPTEMBER 28th the Battalion moved from the ECKE AREA, 1-30 P.M., to the WINNEZEELE AREA, via STEENVORDE and WORMHOUDT, a distance of six miles. On this occasion the Battln. moved into tents, and the accomodation furnished it was most markedly good. The Camps into which it moved, although occupied previously for months, by many Units, were found scrupulously clean. | |
| -dc- | 29th | | Companies paraded in their respective lines. Kit and general inspection was had, and in the afternoon, a half holiday. | |
| -dc- | 30th | 9 A.M. | Church Parade was held, and the Battln. moved out from WINNEZEELE 11-30 A.M., embussed, | |
| VLAMERTINGHE. | 5-30 P.M. | | and were conveyed to VLAMERTINGHE, arriving there at 5-30 P.M. | |
| YPRES SOUTH. | 7 P.M. | | Left VLAMERTINGHE at 7 P.M. and marched to Area known as YPRES South, arriving there at 8 P.M., and bivouaced for the night in paddock. | |

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