

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

Ordnance

**Item number:** 2/8/16

**Title:** Deputy Assistant Director Ordnance  
Services, 5th Australian Division

November 1917



AWM4-2/8/16

# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 236

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.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<p style="margin: 0;">Sh. 28 G15. G2.4</p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Near Popoinght</i></p>	1917.			
	Novr.			
	1st.		The position of the dump remained unchanged, also railhead. Stores arrived in large quantities for all units.	
	2nd.		Replacement of Boots gum thigh for Brigade in the line was completed.	
	3rd.		Went to area to be taken over by 14th. Bde. to make arrangements for a dump if necessary. Found that there was no need for action to be taken.	
	4th.		The first consignment of long rein coats and undercoats sheepskin arrived. These were issued to 15th. Bde.	
	5th.		Issue of winter underclothing to 8th. Bde. was completed. The returns of unserviceable was on the whole good.	
	6th.		Two lorry loads of stores for the 14th. Bde. were sent to their H.Q., and all units were visited and stores delivered. Indents were collected. It was found that this procedure would be quite satisfactory.	
	7th.		Visited 30th. Division's dump and received all possible information. Inspected site and billets of staff. At. D.H.Q., saw "G" and "Q" Branches.	
	8th.		Went to D.H.Q. to received any further instructions as to move. Winter clothing and general stores, issues made. Base hastened for sheepskin coats.	
	9th.		Visited new dump and arranged to take over all area stores.	
10th.		Saw D.A.D.O.S., New Zealand Division, reference his taking over area stores at forward dump, acting on instructions from A.D.O.S. A.D.O.S., 2nd. Anzac stated that the New Zealand Division were to take over. D.A.D.O.S., New Zealand Division had received no orders, but had taken over 25th. Div. area stores. Started a party making a road at new dump.		
11th.		Visited Corps to get definite orders as to area stores. A.D.O.S. wired Army. Issues to Arty. of underclothing in complete numbers.		

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Novr. 12th.		General issues.	
	13th.		<p>Work at new dump proceeding well. Road finished and shelters erected. 15th. Bde. staff moved with stores.</p> <p>I accompanied the G.O.C. to Calais for the purpose of inspecting everything in connection with the Ordnance Services. On arrival, the G.O.C. met Colonel Trimmell, C.M.G., A.O.D., the Chief Ordnance Officer, Northern Base. He briefly outlined the scheme of the buildings in use at Calais, and mentioned that forty-one Divisions were now being supplied from that Base.</p> <p>Lieut-Colonel Dudley, A.O.D., the Ordnance Officer, then acted as guide through the Depot. He briefly explained the system of supply, from the time the indent was passed by a Unit to the Divisional Ordnance Officer, and after inspection and checking by him, was sent on to the Base Field Indent Office, where it was again checked and, if found correct, an Issue Order was made out which was sent to the group responsible for the issue of the particular stores demanded.</p> <p>We then saw the system of issuing the orders and the office where this was done, where both English and French girls are employed as clerks.</p> <p>The division of the Depot into groups, where the stores belonging to different sections, as laid down in the vocabulary of Stores, are issued from, was then explained.</p> <p>We then started through the first group, where all electrical stores were issued from, and saw the process how, from the moment the issue order was received from the Field Indent office, it was dealt with, until the stores were put into the truck for delivery to the Unit's railhead.</p> <p>We then passed on to the gun group, where the difficulties of man power were very forcibly made apparent, by seeing how in a store of this description how extremely necessary it is to have to keep skilled and experienced men behind the line. Here all the many parts of all types of guns have to be assembled and issued, and the necessity of taking so many skilled men has greatly handicapped the work of the Base.</p> <p>We then passed to the Machine Gun and Rifle and Revolver Store, and then on to the Harness and Saddlery, in each being shown a concrete example of how the Unit is supplied with its exact</p>	

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	Novr. 13th. (Cont.)		<p>demands.</p> <p>We then saw a train being made up, and how the checking of stores from the group to the Divisional bay, the place where all the different Divisions' stores are separated from one another, and then to the truck, and again in the truck, made for accuracy.</p> <p>The next group was clothing, and here an idea as to the issues made was gained by observing the size of the store and the quantity of clothing in store, by observing from the gallery used as a store for arm-bands and all sorts of badges. Here it was explained that, so great was the quantity of stores now being issued, that a separate depot had had to be leased for the accommodation of winter clothing, of which seven shiploads had arrived.</p> <p>The tool group was then seen, and from there the returned store dump was visited, and the method of taking into stock again stores returned from the front, noted. An idea of the large number of guns of all calibres, wagons of all sorts, and all vehicular stores, was gained by observing the number of all of these stores that were in the open.</p> <p>This concluded the visit to the Depot.</p> <p>The textile factory was then visited. Here all stores returned from the front that can be renovated or mended are dealt with, and everything that has been repaired here is taken into stock for re-issue. The officer in charge of this depot gave some interesting figures about the stores which I was particularly interested in, as they are those which can easily be salvaged and sent back from the front.</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">No. of pieces.</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Cost to repair.</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Value.</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Amount saved to Govt.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Equipment</td> <td style="text-align: right;">168,784.</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£109,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£104,000.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Steel Helmets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">94,990.</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£16,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 94,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 78,000.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water Bottles</td> <td style="text-align: right;">99,729.</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 1,400</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 11,400</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 10,000.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tents</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 4,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 65,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 61,000.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The above figures show the amounts saved to the Government in three months, and these were only a few types of stores worked on. The process of renovating the steel helmets was very interesting,</p>		No. of pieces.	Cost to repair.	Value.	Amount saved to Govt.	Equipment	168,784.	£5,000	£109,000	£104,000.	Steel Helmets	94,990.	£16,000	£ 94,000	£ 78,000.	Water Bottles	99,729.	£ 1,400	£ 11,400	£ 10,000.	Tents		£ 4,000	£ 65,000	£ 61,000.	
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	Novr. 13th. (Cont.)		<p>(a) lining removed, (b) put in disinfecting mixture, (c) dried and painted, (d) sanded, (e) hung up for drying, (f) new cover rivetted on. The repair of tents showed how waste can be kept down, and the repair of such equipment was bringing into use very large quantities of equipment that otherwise might have been thrown away. Every use was being made of all parts of any Ordnance Stores that would come in handy to help some other stores to become fit for issues. Very interesting was the machine which was cutting pieces of unserviceable tents up to make tabs for great-coats, and the rate at which they were being sown by the women workers was extraordinary. The whole Depot showed in a very marked way the amount of saving that can be accomplished by good salvage work of units, and also when all ranks are informed of the wonderful saving made possible by a Depot of this description working in conjunction will all ranks in the front areas. This completed this Depot, and we returned to the C.O.O's. office, meeting there Colonel Hale, D.D.O.S., Second Army.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p>In the afternoon we went to the Ordnance Workshops and made a thorough inspection of the Carpenter's, smiths', foundries, boot-repair, engineers', armourers', tinsmiths' and all other shops. In the carpenters' shop, many women were employed on all sorts of machines and work. One particular operation was the repair of stretchers by them. This was of interest as one sees so many of these, if unserviceable, broken up for firewood in front areas. Special notice was taken of a rumbling machine which was loaded with old stirrup irons, bits and chains, old pieces of leather being used as the cleaning agent. The result after thirty minutes rumbling was a perfectly polished article, all rust having been removed. The bootshop, which is the largest of its kind in the world, was of great interest. The system of repairs, from the start, i.e., pairing and preparing for repair (the latter operation done by women) to the finish, i.e., dipping in oil and placing stretching pieces inside, was extremely interesting. The saving accomplished by this shop has been enormous, 20,000 pairs of boots being repaired each week.</p> <p>The gun repair shops, where many women were working drilling and planing machines, were very busy with guns and carriages returned from the front.</p> <p>The armourers' shop, where Machine Guns and Rifles were being repaired and inspected, were also seen.</p>	

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	Novr. 13th. (Cont.)		<p>The tinsmiths' shop was of particular interest. Here old mess tins that did not look as if they could ever be made serviceable, were worked on, made into shape, and returned after a thorough washing in a special mixture. After retinning they were practically as good as new, and went into stock for re-issue.</p> <p>Parts of camp kettles and cookers were treated in the same way., Lamps and all other tin stores were repaired and made up for re-issue.</p> <p>We then passed on to the Salvage Dumps, seeing how the stores arrived by train, how they were separated and disposed of.</p> <p>Service Dress impossible to repair is sent to England as rags, that possible for re-issue, to Paris to be made new. Gas appliances to a special depot for disinfection and new containers to be put in. Water-bottles to be cleaned and to textile depot for recovering. Old shovels to have broken handles removed and new ones put in. Unserviceable horse shoes to be sold, and all fit for re-issue to be boxed in sizes. Horse shoe nails to be rumbled and gauged and boxed for re-issue. Mess-tins to be sent to tinning shop. Waterproof sheets to be returned for use in making new ones. In point of fact every possible use was being made of any store returned from the front line.</p> <p>The technical instrument repair department was visited last, and there dial sights, telescopes, binoculars, and all instruments of precision were dealt with by highly skilled workmen.</p> <p>The whole visit was one of exceptional interest, and the working of this department showed what a great amount of saving can be done by close co-ordination from the front line to the bases.</p> <p>The depots inspected showed me how it was possible for the huge army at the front to be kept supplied with all its needs to carry on.</p>	
	14th.		Office moved, and 8th. and 14th. Bdes. A party left to clear old site.	
Dran- outre.	15th.		New Zealand Division ordered to take over area stores at Dickebusch. Arrangements made for	

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	Novr. 15th.	(Cont.)	moving Artillery staff and stores from there.	
	16th.		General issues proceeded with. Laundry stocked.	
	17th.)		Indents of brigades gone into, and arrangements made for supplies of gum boots, hot food containers.	
	18th.)			
	19th.)			
	20th.		Special provision of axes hand required by G.O.C. for front line.	
	21st.		Issue of two German Machine Guns to "G" Branch.	
	22nd.		Visited 2nd. and 3rd. D.A.D.O.S.'s. to borrow lamps and blankets for reinforcements. Also to Corps Armourers Shop taking machine Gun and heads for Clipping machines. The new arrangements for firing three or more Vickers Guns simultaneously was inspected with its mounting.	
	23rd.		General issues were made.	
	24th.		Completion of horse rug issue made.	
	25th.		Brigades visited and indents discussed.	
	26th.		General issues. Laundry stock made up.	
	27th. 28th. 29th.)		All units who desired an issue were completed with F.S. Boots.	
	30th.		Base hastened for gloves and sheepskins. Points of interest. The establishment of a central horse-clipping establishment has helped wonderfully. Horse rugs, clipping machines, and their repairs can be kept under one head. Issues and replacement were made very rapidly, and the Corps Armourers Shop made many quick repairs. Issues from the base were good, and very little difficulty was found in the change of railhead. Many complaints were made by units about F.S. Boots, and it was found that a large number were returned so a rule was made to obtain certificates from C.O.'s. as to the number of men who actually wanted this issue. The remainder left over from the supply were returned to Base.	

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*J. M. D. O. I. 5th. Aust. Division*  
*Capl.*