

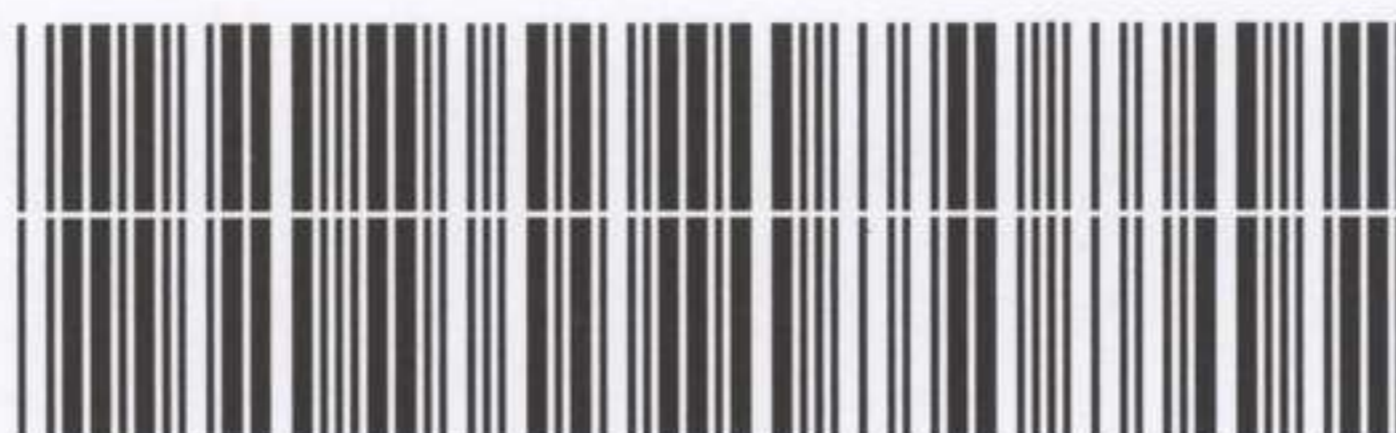
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Chaplains

Item number: 6/3/6

Title: Senior Chaplain, Presbyterian,
Headquarters AIF, London

June 1918



AWM4-6/3/6

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.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>June 1918.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Smith MacBain (9th Battalion) has been doing good work during June. He was with one of the Regimental Aid Posts for 8 days while the Battalions were in the line, this was near Strazeele. The Brigade was twice in action, in each case having about fifty casualties, but on the second occasion they took the ridge of Merries and captured 300 prisoners. At the R. A. P. he saw most of the wounded on their way back to the advanced and main dressing stations. The Brigade usually keeps one or two Chaplains at the R. A. P. while the Brigade is in the line, one at the advanced dressing station, & one at the main dressing station, so that all who are wounded may be seen by some Chaplain; while the one or two Chaplains at the rear would be available for Burials &c., and the various padres take these positions in turn.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. D. P. Macdonald (2 D. A. C.) - says the artillery has gone to another portion of the front, & whole Division is doing good work in the very thick of things.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. J. A. Forrest (137 A. Brigade; 5th Division Artillery) has found his work hampered by movements. The Brigade went for a spell, but after three days were hurried back again - Still the sudden return was worth something, for the men took the objectives and came back with 1350 prisoners including 14 officers, and a large number of machine guns & trench mortars. Our Barrage was so great that the enemy could not reply to our Heavy artillery & was silenced for the time at least.</p> <p>Mr. Forrest has on an average six services every Sunday, and in addition gives occasional services to wagon lines of the Royal Heavy Artillery. He has had to bury one of the finest young officers and two excellent lads. He has a Bible Class every week - which is well attended. Communion services are held generally every Sunday. Concerts have been given in the wagon lines, and a concert party has been organized in the 54th Battery and has given various entertainments in several places. He has also secured a splendid cricket set for the 49th Battery - & has obtained a large tent for reading and writing. Censoring letters and personal talks with the men have well filled up his time for the month -</p>	

Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. F. Shannon
Adm. Hdqrs. London

Army F C. 2118.

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	June 1918.		<p>Chaplain the Rev. W. J. Gray (A.G.B.D. Havre) arrived there in the end of May, and had only commenced work when he took ill of Bronchitis and had to be evacuated to Hospital and later to England. He has started parade services, and has taken his part in farewell services for drafts of men going up to the front; and had acted together with the D.P.D. Chaplain in Sports, Voluntary Services, and Bible Classes, and in visits at the Convalescent Camp. It was unfortunate that his work was cut short by illness.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. R. C. Foyster (A.I.B.D. Havre) just arrived in the Base at the end of May, & was only there one month when he had to be sent up the line to replace another Chaplain in a Battalion who had been gassed and evacuated to Hospital. Mr Foyster however did excellent work during that short period, and on Sundays he usually had at least four services - or took part in them, except on one week when he was a victim of the prevalent epidemic of influenza. He has also been trying to do the work of another sick Chaplain as well as his own, in farewelling drafts of men leaving for the front. Mr. Foyster had the satisfaction of seeing the result of some of his labors in Victoria - before he came away he was Minister in Hamilton Victoria; and the people of Hamilton, with his help, raised funds and presented the U.M.C.A. with a Hut; and at Havre this "Hamilton" Hut has been erected, so Foyster had the privilege and satisfaction of working in the very place he & his people had been instrumental in building.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Dr. Merrington (Tidworth Hdqrs. England) finds that the posting of a Presbyterian Chaplain at these H.Q. was fully justified, and for that centre it is easy to reach Parkhouse where about 1000 machine gunners have gone into No 3 dept. His good work at the Dermatological Hospital Bulford had to be stopped for a while owing to the influenza epidemic, services having been for a time forbidden for medical reasons. Dr. Merrington is just about to be transferred to France.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	June 1918.		<p>Chaplain the Rev. A. S. McCook (3rd Command Depot, Huridcott) in addition to his ordinary duties, acts as deputy Senior Presbyterian Chaplain on Salisbury Plains, and in this capacity finds that the A.S.C. Camp at Fovant was increased in number by the addition of about 400 men from the A.S.C. at Parkhouse, visited their camp and arranged for services for them. Excellent arrangements were made most cordially by the Com. Officer & adjutant, which turned out most satisfactory. It is a united service, and Chaplain Legate (Pres.) took the first Sunday, and the C. of E. and Methodist Chaplains followed later. Mr. McCook had two funerals during the month, one was that of a medical officer from N.W. who met sudden death through a fall from a horse: the other was that of a priest who had after long service taken ill & died of pneumonia.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. F. J. Paton (No. 1 Com. Depot, Sutton Veng) has only recently arrived but is already making his influence felt wonderfully. Mr. Paton is a son of the famous Missionary, Rev. Dr. J. G. Paton, of the New Hebrides, and possesses many splendid gifts, & has himself had many years experience in those islands, and was looked upon by the authorities as a valuable helper and wise adviser. In his present position he holds parade service in forenoon of Sunday, followed by Communion; a Bible Class in the evening, usually in Y.M.C.A. and an evening service in the U.A.B. Hut. His relations with the Roman Catholic and C of E. Chaplains are very harmonious, and he wins the confidence of men in a very short time. He also on week days visits the Hospitals and conducts Bible Classes as time and opportunity permits. He takes services too in the local Churches where Australian troops attend.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. P. A. Smith (now attached to Fovant Headquarter) has just arrived. Up till now he has been employed visiting Hospitals in London district. He got through 14 Hospitals, and saw 219 Australian patients.</p> <p>Senior Chaplain the Rev. W. F. Shannon (A.I.F. Headquarters London) has had a busy month. In addition to administrative work at the Headquarters he held a conference of his Presbyterian Chaplains on Salisbury Plains, and also at the request of the Commandant addressed at Steyning in Sussex, a meeting of residents in connection with Hospitalities for Australian Soldiers on furlough - which was very successful judging by its results, and great interest was shown in the matter by the people who attended, and by the Lady <small>D. D. & L., London, E.C.</small> whose house was thrown open for the occasion.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>June 1918.</p> <p>On the recommendation of Gen. Sir W. R. Birdwood, G.O.C., he was awarded the O.B.E., for work done on behalf of the troops. During the early part of the month he visited Hospitals in the following Centres in England:- Brighton (2), Chichester, Portsmouth (2), Cosham, Isle of Wight (3), Netley (2), Southampton, Winchester (3), and also paid a visit to the Australian Detention Barracks at Lewes, Sussex.</p> <p>During the latter part of the month he went on an official periodic visit to France, for the purpose of seeing all the Presbyterian Chaplains working there, and also inspecting the camps, &c. After arriving in Boulogne he visited the 3rd Aust. General Hospital in Wimereux, and found Chaplain Robertson doing very fine and lasting work there, and saw many of the personnel among officers & nurses; and took the opportunity of visiting many of the patients. Travelling from there to the Corps Headquarters, an itinerary was then drawn up, and following that he visited a British Casualty clearing station close by Vignacourt; and then went to the Headquarters of the 5th Division, then to the 4th Division where he stayed for two nights with Chaplain A. M. Stevenson (who on 1/1/18 had been awarded the Military Cross); and also saw Chaplain F. W. Rolland MA (who on 3/6/18 had been awarded the Military Cross) - both of these Chaplains after 2½ years of most strenuous work are feeling the effects of the constant strain, and are needing a change or a rest. Passing on from there, where he had the pleasure of meeting with several men belonging to his own congregation in Western Australia, he arranged a meeting of four of his denominational Chaplains at the Hospice Rivery, beside Amiens, sleeping in a tent on the previous night with Chaplain R. J. W. G. Crawford of 5th Brigade ^{5th Brigade}, whose Brigade was at that time on the move to other positions. Chaplains B. P. Macdonald of 2nd DAC, and J. Calder of 9th Brigade, & A. E. Goller of 10th Brigade, were all found to be doing their duty fearlessly and satisfactorily. After leaving that sector Senior Chaplain Shannon went on to Abbeville where he visited the 3rd Aust. General Hospital. By some mismanagement there happened to be no Protestant Chaplain in the Hospital just then, as the C. of E. Chaplain had gone to England for return to Australia and his successor had not arrived; and the Methodist Chaplain had gone to England on leave. No one turned up to conduct any service, so Sen. Chap. Shannon arriving on the scene on the Sunday took a morning service in the Hospital, and preached at an evening service in the Soldiers Christian Association Hut near by.</p> <p>(The remainder of this visit to France will come in under the July month's Diary).</p>	