

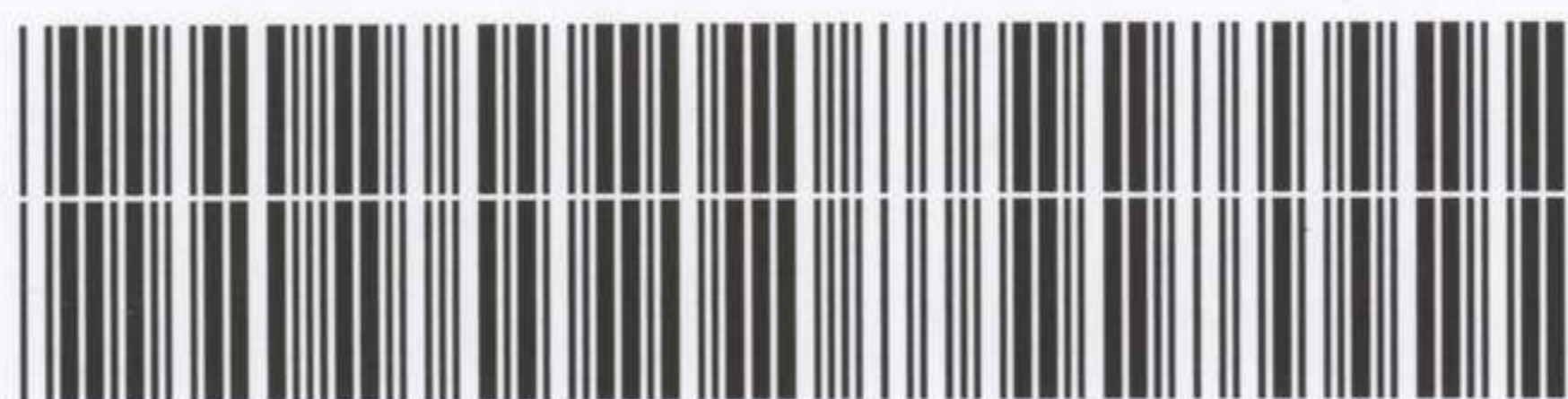
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/70/10

Title: 53rd Infantry Battalion

May 1917



AWM4-23/70/10

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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.)

53rd Battalion
May 1917.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BECOURT. May 1.	1917.		<p>Period May 1st to 6th occupied in training, sports and organised games, which proved most beneficial in building up the strength + stamina of the men. Climatic conditions were ideal + the spirit and morale of the men were never better.</p>	
"	7:12-30 AM.		<p>Received orders from Brigade ^(per phone) that Bn. would move to forward area in about 8 hours time. Bn. moved from Becourt Camp at 8.0 A.M. proceeding to ALBERT and entrained at 9.0 A.M. on first train (with Bde. HQ + 56th Bn.). In accordance with instructions 6 officers + 160 O.R. were left behind at Becourt. The Bn. moved forward 21 officers and 660 O.R. strong. The C.O. (Lt. Col. Croshaw) owing to an accident while riding at Diemt. Horse Show, was unable to go forward + Major W. Thomson (2nd in Command) took command of the Bn. Reinforcements - 28 O.R. marched into Details Camp, arriving 8.0 PM.</p>	

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53rd Bn. (Sheet 2)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917 May 7		Bn. detrained at BAPAUME at 1.30 pm. and marched to Reserve Line (BEUGNY - YTRES Line) occupying trench system forward of BEUGHATRE.	
	" 8.		Bn. moved forward at night through VAULTX and NOREVIL to Front Line and relieved 10th + 12th Bns. The sector taken over was the wedge in the Hindenburg Line near BULLECOURT + immediately in front of RIENCOURT-LEZ-CAGNICOURT. The line was fairly good on the whole. During the whole of the 5 days since the enemy shelling was very active (mostly from direction of QUEANT). Many gas shells were sent over by the Germans.	
	" 9		Lieut. A. O. Coory was wounded + 3 OR killed + 26 OR wounded	
	" 10		Lieut. J. M. Jefferson was killed + Lieut. Hill was wounded also 1 OR killed + 13 OR wounded.	
			Information was received about that enemy was massing troops for an attack. Our artillery	

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53rd Bn. (Sheet 3)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917		got on to them however & the attack did not eventuate.	
	May 10.			
	" 11.		Usual heavy artillery activity (enemy) 3 O.R. killed & 16 O.R. wounded. Weather had been continuously hot for several days now, & owing to the number of unburied dead there was a terrible stench.	
	" 12.		Again usual heavy shelling & many gas shells. 2 O.R. killed and 17 O.R. wounded.	
	" 13.		Artillery (enemy) slightly less active during day. Night of 13/14 th Bn. relieved by 54 th Bn. Relief completed by 2-15 A.M. During 13/14 th casualties were 4 O.R. killed & 26 O.R. wounded.	
	" 14.		On relief the Bn. moved into Support line near NO REUIL. Disposition as follows: 2 Coys in road running from C 16. d 95 to C 16 b 16. and 2 Coys + H.Q. in road running from C 16 c 55 to C 16 a 34.	

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

53rd Bn. (Sheet 4)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917 May 3 rd		<p>The C.O. (Lt. Col. Croshaw D.S.O.) took over command from Major R. Thomson during night of 13/14th.</p> <p>During time in support line enemy shelling was much less active though still fairly considerable. Bn. was occupied in carrying to front line & working on new dug-outs in support line.</p>	
	" 14		<p>Very heavy ^(enemy) gas shell attack during night of 14/15th.</p>	
	" 15		<p>2 O.R. wounded.</p>	
	" 18		<p>The C.O. (Lt. Col. Croshaw D.S.O.) was wounded. About 5 am. a party was manning along the sunken road near H.Q. at Lt. Col. Croshaw when he suddenly came under heavy shell fire. Lt. Col. Croshaw went out into the road & was giving instructions for the safety of the men when a shell fell close by killing 2 men & wounding the C.O. & 2 others. Col. Croshaw received 2 wounds - one in head & one</p>	

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53rd Bn. (Sheet 5)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917 May 18.		<p>in the leg, neither of which ^{appear} likely to prove of a serious nature. Capt. Roberts assumed command of the Battalion.</p> <p>On the night of the 18/19th the Bn. again moved to front line to relieve the 54th Bn. Relief completed by 1-45 AM.</p> <p>Casualties 18/5/17. 1 officer (C.O.) wounded. 19R killed, 13 OR wounded.</p> <p><u>Reinforcements.</u> The following officers marched in to Details Camp at Becont. Lieut. H.C.W. Parise (from Supernumerary List). Lieut. W.S. Cooke (from duty 14th Training Bn) Sgt. Clift. (from cadet Bn) Sgt. Baldry + Sgt. Woolwrych (from reinforcements) also 14 OR.</p>	
	" 19		Bn. in front line. Enemy Artillery activity medium.	
	" 20		Considerably less than during previous time in front line	
	" 21		Casualties - 20 th May. 3 OR killed + 10 OR wounded. 21 st May 12 OR wounded.	

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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53rd Bn. (Sheet 6)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917			
	May 22		casualties - 8 OR. Wounded. Two 16th Bn. (A.I.F.) men who had been prisoners in German hands for 6 weeks came in through our lines at 3.40 A.M. having escaped from their captors. They were sent back to D.H.Q.	
	" 22/23		Bn. relieved by 54th Bn. Relief complete by 1.45 am. Moved back into support line again (disposition as before) Batta. occupied with work on new dug-outs and carrying. Enemy artillery shelling much lighter.	
	" 25		Casualties - 23rd May 1 OR killed. 24th May 3 OR Wounded. Relieved by 12th L. R. R. & moved back to FAVREUL for the night, moving again the following day	
	" 26		to BEALENCOURT to camp previously occupied by 12th L. R. R.	
	" 27		Period from 27th May to 29th May occupied in clearing up of the men & re-organisation of the Battalion.	
	" 30		2 Coys. (A + B) employed on work digging new trenches	

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53rd Bn. (Sheet 7)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917 May 30		North of VILLERS-AU-FLOS. C + D. Coys on training. All men on training + building up (physically) drill etc.	
	" 31.		<p style="text-align: center;">Attached hereto is Summary of Casualties for the month.</p>	
			<p style="text-align: right;">J. Thomson Major Comm. of 53rd Bn. A.I.F.</p>	

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

5th Troop Battalion

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	<u>Summary of Casualties for period</u> <u>1/5/17 - 31/5/17.</u>			
	<u>Date.</u>		<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>
	9. 5. 17.		3.	1 - 26
	10. 5. 17.		1 - 1.	1 - 13.
	11. 5. 17.		3.	16.
	12. 5. 17.		2.	17.
	13. 5. 17.	}	4	26.
	14. 5. 17.			
	15. 5. 17.		-	2.
	18. 5. 17.		1.	1. 13.
	20. 5. 17.		3.	10.
	21. 5. 17.		1.	12.
	22. 5. 17.		-	8.
	23. 5. 17.		1.	-
	24. 5. 17.		-	3.
			<u>1 - 19.</u>	<u>3. 146.</u>