

War Diary of 3rd Wellington Infantry Battalion, 4th NZ Infantry Brigade – December 1917

Archives New Zealand Reference ACID 18416 WA89 154/[89q]

- Dec 01 Sat BATTALION was relieved in the Support Area at POLYGONVELD J.9.c. by the 3rd BATTALION NZ Rifle Brigade – relief was carried out in daylight. No casualties. BATTALION proceeded to HOWE CAMP hutments, H.24.c
- Dec 02 Sun Captain A. S. MUIR left for Division. BATTALION employed in cleaning up and resting. Fall of snow, weather very cold. Shelling of Balloons in vicinity of Camp by ENEMY long range guns.
- Dec 03-04 BATTALION supplying working parties as usual for salvage work in HOOGE Area.
Dec 05 Wed BATTALION moved back to WALKER CAMP H.27.b.77 vacated by 1st BATTALION OTAGO REGIMENT. Men in hutments.
- Dec 06 Thu BATTALION supplying working parties as usual for salvage work HOOGE Area. Remaining men improving camp for winter quarters. 2/Lt E. G. COUSINS joined the BATTALION.
- Dec 07 Fri Meritorious Service Certificates awarded to 10/2433 S/Sgt G. A. HAYDEN, 10/388 Sgt. A. G. HARRIS, and 10/2693 Cpl. W. H. McLELLAND.
- Dec 08-09 Raining steadily. Working parties as usual. C.O's. Conference discuss Training Details Camp. Camp and camp vicinity shelled by ENEMY.
- Dec 10 Mon 30 reinforcements arrive for the BATTALION.
Dec 11-12 BATTALION supplying working parties as usual.
Dec 13 Thu 2/Lt. C. R. HOWDEN and 2/Lt. K. M. Little joined the BATTALION.
Dec 14 Fri 120 reinforcements arrive for the BATTALION.
- Dec 15 Sat BATTALION entrained at DICKEBUSCH SIDING H.26.b. for HELL-FIRE CORNER on light railways and from there proceeded to line and relieved 2nd. BATTALION OTAGO REGIMENT. BATTALION's first time in the REUTEL SECTOR J.10.b.12.65. BATTALION had three casualties carrying out relief.

- Dec 16-21 Owing to the severeness of the weather overland routes and the bad state of the SECTOR taken over generally, the men during this period, were subjected to a trying time. Casualties, eight killed and 25 wounded. Four of these were killed by ENEMY pine-apples, wiring in front line. Sick evacuations were heavy. 2/Lt's HOWDEN C.R. and LITTLE K.N. were evacuated to Hospital sick. ENEMY shelling during the period was consistent and heavy.
- Dec 22 Sat BATTALION was relieved in the line by 2nd BATTALION OTAGO REGIMENT, and proceeded to MANAWATU CAMP I.15.c. 2/Lt. E. G. COUSINS wounded slightly on the way out. Relief was completed by 9 p.m.
- Dec 23-24 BATTALION supplied working parties for Reserve line and HOOGE Area. 58 reinforcements arrived for the BATTALION. Lt. H. R. Biss joined the BATTALION.
- Dec 25 Tue BATTALION had a day of rest, no working parties were required. Weather miserable, snowing and rain. CHRISTMAS parcels were distributed to the men AND a special CHRISTMAS dinner of PLUM PUDDING AND TURKEY was provided.
- Dec 26 Wed Snowing, weather very cold. BATTALION supplied working parties for Reserve line and HOOGE Area.
- Dec 27 Thu BATTALION relieved 2nd BATTALION OTAGO REGIMENT in the REUTEL SECTOR. Last Company was in position by 8 p.m. Relief was carried out without interruption. Capt. E. WHITE rejoined the BATTALION. 2/Lt. S. M. LANG was evacuated to Hospital sick.
- Dec 28-31 Weather freezing, very cold. Intermittent shelling by ENEMY. Casualties for these four days were light. One man killed and eight wounded. Observation of the ENEMY was keen and we obtained good sniping results. Trench improvements were carried out and the SECTOR showed a decided improvement on our last period in it.
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Operation No.5 by Lt. Col. J. L. Short 15 Dec 1917

- [1] The Battalion will relieve 2nd Battalion Otago Regiment tomorrow 15th inst.
- [2] COMPANIES will move in the following order;- BN. HQS; W.W.C. CO.; RUAHINE; TARANAKI; HAWKES BAY CO.
- [3] The head of the Battalion will pass the BIRR CROSS ROADS at 3 p.m. East of this point troops will move in single file and will maintain the following distance. Companies 200 yards, Platoons 50 yards, Sections 25 yards.
- [4] W.W.C. Co will relieve Right Sector Front Line and will pick up guides at JARGON CROSS ROADS and guides per platoon at BLACK WATCH CORNER (b) Taranaki Co will relieve Support Co and guides will be as for W.W.C. Co. (c) Ruahine Co will relieve Left Sector Front and will pick up Guides at LA BUTTE XX (d) H.B. Co will relieve Reserve Co. Guides as for Ruahine Co. (e) Specialists will move up independently leaving this camp at 10 a.m.
- [5] All Trench Stores including Maps, Aeroplace Photographs, Gum Boots Etc. will be taken over and duplicate receipts for the same sent to Battalion Hqrs.
- [6] ALL camp lines will be left scrupulously clean and tidy. A certificate to this effect will be obtained from relieving Unit and forwarded to Battalion Hqrs.
- [7] Company Officers Mess Gear, Orderly Room Boxes, Blankets, Valises Etc will be left stacked at Q.M. Stores at 11 a.m. Blankets to be rolled in bundles of ten.
- [8] All Company Clerks will remain at Dump.
- [9] Completion of relief will be reported to Battalion Hqrs by the code word "SET"
- [10] Battalion Hqrs will close at present camp at noon and will open at J.10.b.12.65 at the same hour.
- [11] Train arrangement will be as follows;- The Battalion, less Specialists, will be at DUCKEBUSCH SIDING at 12-30 p.m. Train departs at 1 p.m. and arrives at HELL FIRE CORNER at 2-30 p.m. The Battalion will move from this camp at 12 noon in the same order as above. Capt. J. MACRAE is appointed Entarining and Detraining Officer and will report at the above siding at 11-45 a.m.

C. G. STEWART, 2/Lt. A/Adjutant
Copies to 1/2 WAR DIARY; 3/6 4 Coys.; 7 BN HQ.; 8 Q.M. and T.O.

Order No.7 26 Dec 1917

- [1] 3rd Battalion Wellington Regiment will relieve 2nd Battalion Otago Regiment in the Reutel Sector of the line on the night of 27/28th December.
- [2] Wellington West Coast Coy will be on the right and Ruahine Coy will be on the left, Hawkes Bay in the supports, Taranaki in reserve.
- [3] One Lewis gunner per gun of both front line Coy's will report to their opposite numbers by 9 a.m. on the 27th instant.
- [4] Battalion Signallers will relieve during daylight on the 27th inst.
- [5] One observer per front line O.P. and Sgt. Burgess will report to their opposite numbers by 9 a.m. on the 27th inst.
- [6] Each Coy will send up one Officer during the morning of the 27th inst. to take over all trench stores.
- [7] All trench stores will be taken over and duplicate receipts forwarded to Battalion H'qrs. Along with Disposition Map by noon on the 28th inst.
- [8] Blankets will be rolled and stacked by roadway ready for limbers by 10 a.m. in the morning. Officers kits, valises, Orderly room boxes etc will be stacked by roadway ready for limbers at 2 p.m.
- [9] The coy's will move in the following order:- H'qrs; W.W.C. Coy.; Rua. Coy.; Hawkes Bay Coy.; Taranaki Coy. No Coy will pass BIRXX roads till the whole of Auckland Battalion has passed. Auckland Battalion will not pass Half-way House before 3-45 p.m.
- [10] Units will maintain the following distances, 50 yards between Sections
- [11] All dug-outs and bivouacs must be left scrupulously clean.
- [12] Completion of relief will be reported to Battalion H'qrs by word "RATIONS"

1&2 War Diay; 3-7 Coy's; 8 T.O. & Q.M.
Signed C. G. Stewart 2/Lt. A/Adjutant

 Daily State 3rd Battalion Wellington Regiment 31 Dec 1917

Effective Strength	33 Officers; 869 other ranks 10 Riding Horses; 20 Large Mules; 6 Light Draught Horses; 9 Heavy Draught Horses; 7 Pack Mules 9 Bicycles; Four 2-wheeled horsed vehicles; 14 4-wheeled horsed vehicles; 16 Lewis Guns	
Details Attached as in W.E.	N.Z.M.C. N.Z.O.C.	One Officer; 5 other ranks – 1 Riding Horse One other ranks
Other Details Attached	Two Chaplains; A. D. C. – one other ranks	
Less Detached	Brigade HQ Y.M.C.A. Field Ambulance Leave Schools N.Z.E... N.Z... HQ Coys Workshops Salvage C.R.A. (Band)	one officer, 9 other ranks, 1 bicycle one other ranks 6 officers; 66 other ranks 2 officers; 20 other ranks 6 officers; 23 other ranks 1 officer; 23 other ranks 1 officer; 1 other ranks 3 other ranks 4 other ranks 26 other ranks
Ration Strength	19 Officers; 700 other ranks 11 Riding Horses; 20 Large Mules; 6 Light Draught Horses; 9 Heavy Draught Horses; 7 Pack Mules	
