

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

Chaplains

Item number: 6/3/11

Title: Senior Chaplain, Presbyterian,
Headquarters AIF, London

November 1918



AWM4-6/3/11

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. E. S. Petherick (5th Battalion) says that three days before the signing of the Armistice the Brigade entrained at Longpre and went to Roisel, crossed the Hindenburg Line at Bellicourt and reached Bazoul. And when marching on the 11th to Landrives, that they learned of the cessation of hostilities. "It was well for the enemy that the Australians had not again to enter into battle, for their indignation had been roused by the tales of oppression they heard from the villagers, and the mean pillaging which had been carried out by the Germans." Owing to transport difficulties they were marched back to Bohain, and via Mazinghem, Pische, to Sans-Poterie on 26 Nov.</p> <p>Only one Church Parade was held: three voluntary services, and the Communion following. While at Bohain there was for a week worship held every evening in Church Army Hut. On the 10th (Sunday) a dozen or so gathered in a little kitchen & made intercession for the coming armistice; seven remained for Communion — On 17th (Sunday) the Brigade paraded and a great crowd gathered on the frosty grass land and offered thanksgiving for the cessation of hostilities.</p> <p>Several debates were held in the Battalion — but inter-Battalion debates were not possible; the padre gave lantern lecture on "Australia" to a crowded house. Sports, Recreations, Football, competitions for various Cups, concerts, &c were well arranged & carried out.</p>	

Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's WAR DIARY *Rev. W. Floyd Hamner*
 (Australian) or Aust. Adm. Hqs. London

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
			<p>November 1918</p> <p>The padre acted temporarily as Educational Officer - and the launching of the Scheme caused great interest. Over 250 men enrolled for 40 different subjects. Some will be carried on in the Battalion, others will be provided for in various workshops & factories. Those classes now in progress at the end of the month are - Carpentry, Motor Engineering, Shoemaking, Farming, care of stock, Book keeping, accountancy, shorthand, arithmetic, Telegraphy, English, French. Instructors are got from among the men. Three students have been nominated for Correspondence courses. But all are most anxious for return to Australia now that hostilities are over.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. Smith MacBain (9th Battalion). Early in the month the Battalion moved from Alberville district near to St. Quentin, and since the Armistice have been marching towards the Belgian frontier & the Rhine. Two Church parades were held during the month - On the other Sundays the Battalion was on the march.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. R. J. W. G. Cranford. (20th Battalion). Spiritual, intellectual, and social work was carried on at the YMCA by this Chaplain in conjunction with the others of the Brigade. The day following the signing of the Armistice, a united service of French and British was held in the Church at Vignacourt, the Australian Chaplains were given seats in the Sanctuary. The service included the Te Deum & the singing of the various National Anthems. At the close, the</p>	

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(Australian)

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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London

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918.</p> <p>Brigadier, the Brigade Major, the Staff Captain, the C.O's of the Battalions, and the Chaplains were the guests of the Mayor and Council of Vignacourt. On Sunday 17th a large united Protestant Thanksgiving Service was held in which the two Coy E. Chaplains conducted the Devotional part, + Chaplain Crawford gave the Address. And it was felt that after such a service on such an occasion, it was only right that all should sit at same Communion Service - and this was done. The people of Vignacourt officially took over the care of the graves in the British Military Cemetery. Since the Battalion moved to Beawepaire Padre Crawford has been supplying separate services to his Battalion which is now some distance from the rest of the Brigade. Chaplain the Rev. E. N. Merrington (5th F. A. Brigade) arrived at this unit from the A. I. B. D. on 21st inst. Though the recommendation for his transfer was made by his Senior Chaplain on the 8th October, the movement order did not reach the A. I. B. D. until 19th November - exactly six weeks. Surely transfers ought to take effect with much less delay than this. In due time he was placed in the 13th Battery and given a hearty welcome. The whole Brigade held a big Victory Thanksgiving Service, and then did a three days trek to Cartegnes. Church Service on the following Sunday was held in a barn, but the attendance was small owing to the visit of His Majesty the King.</p>	

Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev W. Floyd Shannon
Aust. Adm. HQ

Army Form C. 2118.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev Fred J. Paton (14th Battalion) declares the men are "fed up" with the waste of time over the demobilisation Scheme, and the Education Scheme. They think the latter is far too elaborate, and creating a department that need not exist now, and "providing cushy jobs for his red-hats" — Why not let them get back to Australian universities at once? They also grumble about the poorness of the food now, still they keep cheery, and do light salvage work over the country side. At present they are housed in a windy factory which is very draughty and dirty. Football is played when possible. The Brigade Debating Contests continue, with deepening interest. Draughts have been played and Competitions held. Want of light is detrimental to night meetings. But good programs have been carried out during the month, including a lantern lecture; a lecture by Dr Docker; a lecture on the West Pacific by the Padre — including trading life, Schooners, Luegers, &c; address by Brig. Gen Brockman on Repatriation; Battalion debate on "That the Savage is happier than the Civilized Man"; another on "Has Civilization Progressed?" and another "That Drink is worse than Gambling"; two interbattalion debates — one was won by 14th, the other by 15th. French classes were held repeatedly; also musical evenings, and a Concert.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. R. C. Foyster (31st Battalion). was on leave during the first two Sundays of the month, but on 17th inst. there was a large united Brigade service combined with Thanksgiving for Armistice. It was conducted by Chaplain Foyster, the Anglican Chaplains read the prayers, the Jewish Chaplain of the 5th Division read a Psalm, and the address was given by Genl. Hobbs, the G.O.C. of the 5th Aust. Division. The attendance was about</p>	

Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floyd Shannon

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918.</p> <p>3000, and includes 30th, 31st, & 32nd Battalions, 8th Field Ambulance, 8th F. Engineers, Machine Gunners, and Trench Mortar Battery. On the 24th he had a Parade of 31st Battalion, but it was a very cold day, and the numbers were small, - Communion service followed. During the period Oct. 8 till Nov 25 Chaplain Foster supervised the Marquee with the aid of two orderlies: James, ready, mallet, free cocoa, were supplied, & the place was usually full from 4 pm till bedtime. The Padre gave two "Fun Entertainments" himself, to add to their happiness. Literature was obtained from private friends, but a large parcel sent by the Camps Library (London) was evidently valued highly by somebody else en route and failed to reach the 31st Battalion. Influenza was rife for a while, but was not serious. Correspondence was very heavy by reason of inquiries about men killed during the September fighting. At present the Battalion is incamped near Le Cateau. Chaplain the Rev. Malcolm McQueen (14th F.A.B.). The Y.M.C.A representative having too extensive a field to cover, Chaplain McQueen established a Y.M. Hall in the 14th F.A.B., and ran a free cocoa canteen, getting what cigarettes and biscuits he could. He has a great deal of correspondence about Casualties, etc. and is kept busy. Concert parties for the Division, and a Cinema show, were kept going for about a week in the Hall; Brigade Parades were held as opportunity offered, and Song Services (voluntary) in the evenings.</p>	

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Aust. Adm. HQ

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Page 67.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918.</p> <p>He has found the C. O. and the Officers exceedingly ready to help him, and particularly sympathetic with his work. Classes are out of the question until they settle down in winter quarters. An orchestra has been got together, and instruments and outfits are being purchased. The padre has started a German class for the troops, and promised also to teach History when the Education Scheme gets going.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. W. J. Gray (3rd Tunnell's Coy) is working hard, and finding his time fully occupied - He acts as Chaplain, Education Officer, Chairman of Concerts Committee, Sports, Xmas Treats, &c. Sports are held every afternoon, and Concerts or Picture Shows every night, with an attendance of about 750 every night. These prove a boon both to the Imperial troops and to the French civilians. A splendid syllabus of lectures was arranged by the Padre & is being carried out satisfactorily. Services were held whenever practicable but were not regular owing to the frequency with which the Camp was moved. This unit joined with the 58th Division in a Service of Thanksgiving on the signing of the Armistice.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. R. C. Racklyeft (A. I. B. D.) arrived at this unit on the 12th inst. from No. 2 Command Depot, Weymouth, and has held the usual Sunday Parade services in conjunction with other non-Anglican Chaplains.</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floyd Shannon
Aust. Adm. Headqn.
London.

Army Form C. 2118.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918</p> <p>To all drafts of men leaving the unit, comforts are distributed; the men are then separated according to denomination, and to each section an address is delivered by the denominational Chaplain, and Communion Service is held, and a letter is written by the padre to the friends of each lad who takes Communion. Religious services are held every Sunday + Wednesday in connection with the YMCA either in the Depot or near by. The Hospital in the Camp is regularly visited, and visits also paid to men of the A.D.F. who are patients in a hospital in the British lines. Padre Racklyeft also celebrated a marriage between two Australians on active - both Presbyterians, who desired to be married by a Presbyterian Chaplain the Rev. P. A. Smith (I.A.G.H. Rouen) held six voluntary services during the month, with fair attendances; and on the Sunday following the Armistice a big united service of Thanksgiving was held in the YMCA. There were a good number of Influenza + pneumonia patients as well as wounded cases in the Hospital, and Padre Smith paid 549 visits to those who were dangerously or seriously ill, wrote 154 letters for helpless patients, 32 letters of condolence to the next of kin of deceased men, and several letters of answers to inquiries; conducted 23 funerals; and helped to distribute papers, fruit, etc. in the wards. The unit moves soon to England.</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's
(Australian)

WAR DIARY

Rev. W. Floyd Shannon

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Aust. Adm. HQ

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918.</p> <p>Chaplain Rev. A. S. Houston (5th Light Horse Brigade, Egypt.) found the great Cavalry move very trying, as both men and horses were called on to expend almost the last ounce of energy. They went 400 miles - going day & night - over country that would be considered almost impassable in normal times. They had few ordinary casualties, but a tremendous lot of sickness, chiefly malignant malaria and Influenza and complications following. The whole brigade was down to little more than a regiment's strength. Practically all the kit was lost on the way, and the padre lost all his Chaplain's materials. Services have been impossible for almost two months owing to so constant movements. All the Chaplain could do was to ride night & day with the men, and talk to them individually as opportunities offered. He had an interesting experience while in Syria - he discovered a Syrian Presbyterian Church away up in Homs, or rather the Syrian assistant minister sought out the Chaplain, urged him to visit the Church & the Presbyterian English Schools and to take an English service. He visited both the boys' and the girls' schools, and addressed the children - about 500 in number - about half being Christians. He also took a service in the Church, & held Communion, as the ordained pastor had to flee the country early in the war, & this assistant who is trying to carry on the work is not an ordained minister.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Donald Dow (1st Light Horse Brigade, Egypt.) was able to hold short</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918.</p> <p>Services in the regiment (3rd Regt) until they came to Richon le Sion near Luad. There is now a Ymca tent available, and meetings of all kinds are held there. Communion Service follows the ordinary service & many remain for it. He has started a Bible Study Class dealing with the Scripture History of the Land. Social and Recreational affairs are cared for by the Ymca, and a Chaplain's work at present lies chiefly in holding services or sing songs when opportunity is given, and in keeping a personal touch with the men. At present he is the only padre in the Brigade, and tries to work in all the units as far as he can do so.</p> <p>Chaplain the Rev. Frank H. L. Paton (1 Com Depot, Sutton Army, England) attended an important Conference in London on the future administration of the New Hebrides under the Cognizance of the Foreign Office. He also spoke at a big public meeting in Manchester on the similar subject. Being so closely and so long identified with the New Hebrides, his knowledge of the relationship of French and English power there is in the present critical state of affairs there of the greatest importance. He, after consulting with the C of E Chaplain, made a suggestion to the Commandant as to the advisability of holding a united parade of thanksgiving service at the signing of the Armistice, but for some reason the suggestion was not acted upon, so an informal service was held</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's WAR DIARY *Rev. W. Floyd Shannon*
 or *(Australian)* **INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.** *(Aust. Adm. HQ)*

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London

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			<p><i>November 1918</i></p> <p><i>In the evening in the U. A. B. Hut. In addition to the usual Church Parade services in the Depot, he also conducted Sunday morning parade on 17th and 24th at the Overseas Troop Brigade, as there was a temporary vacancy there. A few days later he was ordered to report at Southampton for transfer to Havre.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Paton puts on record the very valuable assistance given to the A. S. F. Chaplains on all occasions by Chaplain the Rev. E. Hayward of the U. A. B. who time and again has filled the gap when our A. S. F. Chaplains were unavailable or during a vacancy; and has always thrown his hut open to the Australian men equally with Englishmen, and carried on Bible Classes for them, and in many ways helped on our work when our own Chaplains were unable. His kindness, given without thought of reward, ought to be officially recognised.</i></p> <p><i>Chaplain Rev. J. E. Nicholls (Engineers Troop Depot, Brightline) regularly visits the Hospitals, and conducted the funerals of two lads who died from pneumonia following influenza. Entertainments were well provided, + included dances, concerts, cinemas, astronomical lecture, elocutionary evening, etc. With the decreasing number of men in the unit, + the approach of winter, outdoor sports have become less attractive, + almost impossible. Several outings were</i></p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's WAR DIARY Rev. W. Floyd Shannon

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(Australian)

or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Adm. Adm. HQ

London -

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918</p> <p>however arranged with the local naval representatives, and the men were taken on trawlers to various places of interest, including Harwich to see the surrendered German submarines.</p> <p>Church services have been conducted regularly ^{every Sunday} and many of the men attend the village churches regularly, some sing in the choirs and otherwise assist. On the signing of the Armistice the conduct of the men of this unit is stated to have been most exemplary, when naturally a little immoderate outburst of feeling might have been expected, the people of the village have borne testimony to the magnificent conduct of the men of Australia.</p> <p>Senior Chaplain the Rev. W. Floyd Shannon (Adm. Head qrs. London) in addition to the usual administrative work in the office, visited the Detention Barracks at Lewes, and also the Australian patients in the Hospitals at the following centres:—Shrewsbury (2 Hospitals), Chester, Bangor, Llandudno, Liverpool (2 Hospitals), Birmingham (2 Hospitals), Winchester (5 Hospitals), Southampton, Netley, Bournemouth, Swanage, Wareham, and Basingstoke. He conducted a funeral of an Australian soldier, and visited the Engineers Training Camp at Brightlingsea.</p> <p>He also wishes to put on record the gift of a large sum of money (£540) sent to him by Mrs. George Dunnett of Toorak and</p>	

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Senior Presbyterian Chaplain's
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WAR DIARY Rev. W. Floyd Shannon
or Aust. Adm. HQ
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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>November 1918.</p> <p>Melbourne, for distribution among the Presbyterian Chaplains - to be used by them for the good of the men in their various units. This nobly generous action was appreciated by the Chaplains among whom it was distributed, all the more for the breadth and catholicity of spirit shown by the terms she laid down. She wrote: "We wish the Chaplains to have this money to spend just how and when they think proper for the comfort of the men with whom they come in contact, whether in field or hospital, without consideration of country, creed, or color - but just where the need is." It might be interesting, as a record of a mistake that rarely occurs, to note that when the Cashier in the Bank where the Cheque was cashed passed over the sum to the Senior Chaplain the latter found that the Cashier had given him twenty £20 notes, and thirty-four £10 notes. After the Senior Chaplain had counted the notes over twice to make certain he had counted them correctly, he said to the Cashier "I think you have made a mistake here." The Cashier looked at his pencil note of the amount and said "I gave you twenty £20 notes, and thirty-four £10 notes." The Chaplain said "You did. But that makes £740 instead of £540. You have given me just £200 too much!" Needless to say the Cashier thanked him for pointing out the mistake in time!</p> <p>One Chaplain arrived from Australia during the month.</p>	

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