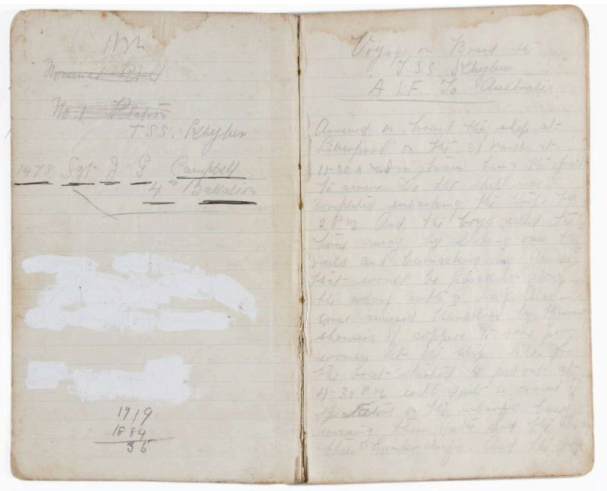


Basic Detail Report



00044373

Title
Sgt J G Campbell's handwritten diary aboard HMAT KHYBER

Date
1919

Primary Maker
John Gordon Campbell

Medium

Paper

Dimensions

Overall: 200 x 130 mm, 60 g

Name

Diary

History

Sgt John Gordon Campbell (service number 1478) served in the 4th Battalion, one of the first infantry units to be raised for the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) during Word War I. Like the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions it was recruited from New South Wales and, together with these other battalions, formed the 1st Brigade. The battalion was raised within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later, on 27 October 1914. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, they proceeded to Egypt, arriving on 2 December. It took part in the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 as part of the second and third waves. At Anzac Cove, the battalion took part in the defence of the beachhead and in August, along with the rest of the 1st Brigade it led the charge at Lone Pine. The battalion served there until the evacuation in December. After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the Battalion returned to Egypt. In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the Battalion took part in operations against the German Army, principally in the Somme Valley in France and around Ypres in Belgium. Its first major action in France was at Pozières in the Somme valley in July 1916. Later the Battalion fought at Ypres, in Flanders, before returning to the Somme for winter. It participated in a short period of mobile operations following the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line in early 1917, but spent much of that year fighting in increasingly difficult conditions around Ypres. In 1918 it returned to the Somme valley and helped stop the German spring offensive in March and April. Subsequently it participated in the Allies' great offensive in 1918, launched east of Amiens on 8 August. The Battalion continued operations until late September 1918. At 11 am on 11 November 1918, the guns fell silent. The November armistice was followed by the peace treaty of Versailles signed on 28 June 1919. Between November 1918 and May

1919, the men of the 4th Battalion returned to Australia for demobilisation and discharge. Sgt John Gordon Campbell embarked from Liverpool on 31 March 1919 on the troopship HMAT KHYBER which travelled to Port Said to pick up the troops of the Australian Light Horse who had been serving in Palestine, across to Colombo and then to return soldiers home to Australia in Fremantle, Port Adelaide, Portsea and Sydney on 14 May 1919. Sgt John Gordon Campbell kept a daily diary whilst on board HMAT KHYBER which detailed life on board, including events such as two cases of smallpox and the vaccinations of all on board. The ship was present at the strikes in Fremantle, Western Australia upon coming into port. Sgt Campbell noted in his diary that 'It has been quite a pleasure being on board the boat'. He was awarded the Military Medal for his service overseas.