



Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies  
New South Wales

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### The AIF and the Australian nurses and the influenza pandemic Reading List

Once men started to arrive home after the Great War ended, there was an unforeseen problem – the influenza pandemic, which had begun in mid-1918, and continued through to 1919, sweeping through Europe and killing approximately 15 million people. As early as 26 June, Captain Ivor Williams wrote that 600 out of 750 men in his camp in France had contracted the flu. Although the decline in wartime health due to rationing can be partly blamed for the immense impact of the flu, countries such as Sweden that were not involved in the war, also experienced high mortality from the virus. Many of the Australian transport ship passengers were held in quarantine upon arrival. Signaller Alexander Burns of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, who arrived home in February 1919, after two and a half years of service in the AIF, was forced to wait another two frustrating months in quarantine before being allowed to return to his home in Victoria. Private Harry Hansell, 27<sup>th</sup> General Reinforcements, who enlisted in July 1918, never saw any action, but still saw many people around him die from an outbreak of flu on their transport ship when a group of soldiers who had just had shore leave in New Zealand arrived on board. Harry himself contracted the flu, but was lucky to survive it.

The books listed below are available in the Institute's Ursula Davidson Library. The call number (*i.e.* compactus shelf address) follows the citation in each case.

BARKER, Marianne (1989) *Nightingales in the mud: the Digger sisters of the Great War, 1914-1918* (Sydney : Allen & Unwin) Call No: 570.14 BARK 1989 [Influenza p. 7, 63-64, 77, 92-94, 115-116, 139-146, 162-153.]

BUTLER, Arthur Graham, Colonel (1940) *Official history of the Australian Medical Service in the war of 1914-1918* Vol I Gallipoli, Palestine and New Guinea; Vol II The Western Front ; Vol III Special problems and services. (Melbourne and Canberra: Australian War Memoria) Call No: 570.14 BUTL 1940 [Vol. III, Section IV – The Aftermath of the war is particularly relevant]

DE VIRES, Susanna (2013) *Australian heroines of World War One: Gallipoli, Lemnos and the Western Front [2nd ed.]* (Chapel Hill, Brisbane: Pirgos Press) Call No: 570.14 DEVR 2013

HARRIS, Kirsty (2011) *More than bombs and bandages: Australian Army nurses at work in World War I* (Newport, N.S.W: Big Sky Publishing) Call No: 570.14 HARR 2011 [General illness and diseases: Chapter 7 p.158-180. Spanish influenza: p.121, 170, 177.]

MACPHERSON, Sir William Grant, Major-General, [Editor] and others (1922) *History of the Great War [1914-1918], based on official documents: Medical Services. Diseases of the War - Vol. 1.* [London: H.M.S.O.] Call No: 815 MACP 1924 [Influenza: Chapter 7: p.174-211, 376-7]

REES, Peter (2008) *The Other Anzacs: nurses at war, 1914-18* (Crows Nest, N.S.W: Allen & Unwin) Call No: 570.14 REES 2008 [Note this is an earlier edition of "Anzac girls" by the same author. Spanish Influenza first hand: p.291-294. Impact of Influenza on the German army: p. 295]

REES, Peter (2016) *Anzac girls: the extraordinary story of our World War I nurses* (Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin) Call no: 570.02 REES 2016 [Spanish Influenza first hand: p.291-294]

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The Library Catalogue can be reached and searched at this address: <http://rusi.slimlib.com.au:81/>

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