

## Cover for Documents.

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### URGENT NEED FOR REINFORCEMENTS.

#### Nature of Enclosures.

- not required*
- A. Letter to Sir J. Maxwell, regarding:
    - (1) Light Horse as reinforcements.
    - (2) Actual strength of all four infantry brigades.
  - B. Letter to Sir J. Maxwell, - reinforcements practically untrained and source of danger.
  - C. Letter to General Callwell, regarding:
    - (1) Heavy fatigues - trenching underground and beach duty and man-handling all stores etc. - preparations for larger force.
    - (2) Large evacuations irrespective of wounded.
  - D. Major-General Braithwaite - re weak condition of men due principally to heavy fatigues.

### PROVISION OF CANTEEN.

- E. <sup>2</sup> Letters to Sir Ian Hamilton re urgent need for change of diet - only minimum number evacuated, but many retained unfit for work.
- F. Letter to Sir Ian Hamilton re allotment of canteen stores.

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Notes, or Letters written.



B ✓

25th June, 1915.

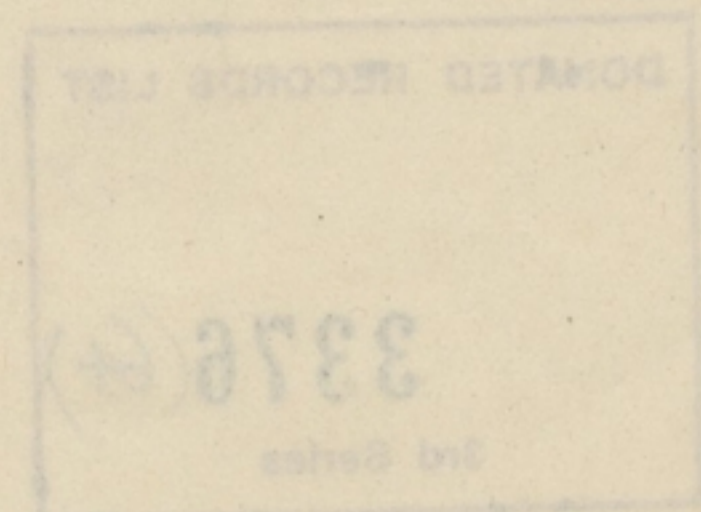
General Sir John Maxwell.

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We are asking that further reinforcements may not be sent on until asked for. I have had to do this, as the 4th and 5th reinforcements recently arrived from Australia are reported to be to all intents and purposes untrained, and consequently almost a danger. I have been informed that in some cases when these were sent, previous reinforcements were retained in Egypt. This I fancy can only refer to the mounted brigades, and I have asked that in their case earlier reinforcements, who were left in charge of horses, may be sent on, and their places taken with the horses by men of the 4th and 5th reinforcements.

I understand from Legge that the three new infantry brigades will require a good deal of looking after in Egypt before they are ready to come out here. He tells me that they consist of nothing but actual brigades without ~~any~~ divisional organization of any sort, though I presume they will be formed into a division later on, in which case of course much will be required for them, which I hope the good Egypt military cow will be able to provide. You are indeed wonderful in the way you meet our many requirements so quickly, and I can assure you we are indeed always most grateful to you.

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C

27th July, 1915.

General Callwell.  
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Many thanks for yours of 16th July which I have just received on my return after having personally conducted a small party consisting of Admiral Gamble, Altham and Ellison round a very small part of my position. The Admiral, not being in great walking form, I was <sup>only</sup> ~~not~~ able to take them up to the high ground above my beach, and point them out the ~~high~~ trenches in the distance. I am glad to say they all seemed to enjoy their visit, and were apparantly impressed with what they saw, and approved of our general arrangements here. I always like to take people round all my not too dangerous trenches, but on this occasion could not do so.

We are living at present in great hopes of a Turkish attack. They see to have brought over a lot of new troops quite recently, and I doubt if they would have done this unless they mean business, as their supply arrangements must be difficult, and I don't suppose they want to have to cater for more troops than are absolutely necessary. We heard they were likely to attack on the 23rd, but as their reinforcements were still arriving on the 24th and 25th, we still hope that they may come on any day now. My boys are, I think, simply spoiling for it, though I think that, perhaps, they do not realise what a very determined attack, of, say 50,000 to 60,000 men may mean. I have been living in the trenches with them as much as possible all last week -- spending six or seven hours there daily, and going round every point and talking to all, and I feel absolutely happy about the spirit in which the heaviest attack possible will be met. If they come on in overwhelming numbers at any one point, it is always possible they may get into the trenches opposite, but I hope they will never get out of them. In two

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or three places where a big attack is possible, I had almost completed an advanced firing line, which had been dug entirely underground, and to which openings for fire platforms had just been prepared. As these could not be ready before an immediate attack, I have merely had all these openings filled with barbed wire. The openings are on the ground level and invisible, so troops attacking across the front in the dark will fall into them, and after getting into the coils of barbed wire will find a couple of men at each to shoot any who fall in. This makes a really effective obstacle in front, of course, ~~xx~~ of the original fire trenches which still exist. So disappointed do I find the men now are by the delaying of this attack, which we have anticipated for about 24 hours? , that I have had to give them two special issues of rum, which has been some small compensation! But I fear even this will not prove the real tonic which an attack would. You see, the sitting here for three months, especially lately when the weather has been very hot, and water difficulty a really trying business for all, and I personally feel that if I do not go round the trenches daily to do everything possible in the way of keeping the men cheery that I should never be happy. The necessary fatigues are what are so killing, and you will know what they mean, when you realise that there is not only the enormous miles of trenches and mine galleries that we have to dig, but there are literally miles of covered ways and traverses as well. Then again, we have had to man-handle the whole of our guns and ammunition, and practically all our stores and water, up to the tops of the hills on which our posts are situated. Lately, the work in this way has naturally all had to be enormously augmented by my having to make all the arrangements for the reception of a much larger force here, with the enormously increased number of guns and amount of ammunition and supplies, which I have had to land and arrange in suitable depots for them. The men, I must say,

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are wonderful and have never grumbled, but as I told Sir Ian, when encouraging some men I saw on water fatigue yesterday, one of them said, "We only want to be given an Indian to lead us when we would become an excellent mule corps!" However, I think they realise that it is all part of a bigger show when their compensation will come in due course.

Stopford has been here, and I have shown him the country he will fight over. Sir Ian asked me some little time ago for my appreciation regarding the advance. This I gave him and I understand he has been good enough to accept it in toto.

x        x        x        x        -        .        It will be a high trial for troops, especially at night, and I have urged Stopford to do all he can to practise his men now in night attacks while they are at Mudros, and I am glad to say he has promised to do this.

What I feel very anxious about myself is the necessity of having fresh troops ready to push right through the gap between the two Anafarta villages, and to hold 820, which I feel convinced must be seized with the least possible delay, and I remember laying stress upon this to Sir Ian before we left Mudros in April. If we can get the Turks well on the run, it is just possible that Stopford and I may be able to manage this between us, but I am none too sure of this, and I should like another two divisions available to be shoved right through to it. Once we have got that and 971, I feel the Turkish game here will be nearly over.

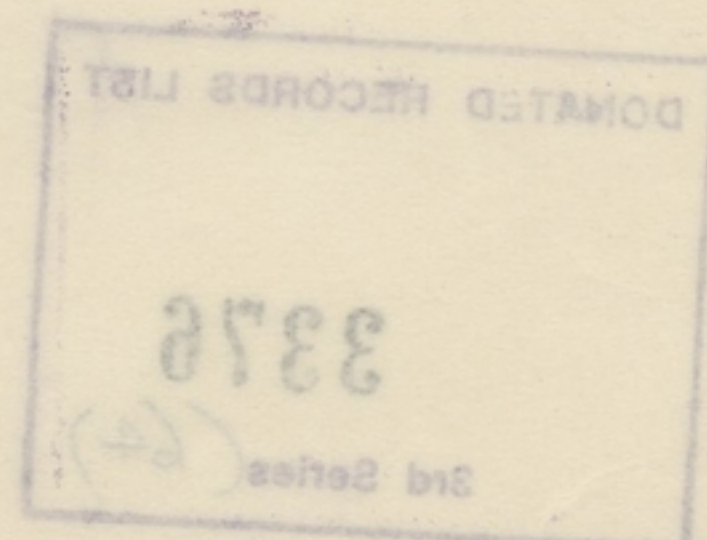
x        x        x        x        -----.

I am sorry to say I am getting a good many sick now, and actually evacuate about 200 daily, irrespective of wounded. You will see this is a very serious strain. There is nothing in the way of any epidemic, and most cases are more of diarrhoea and influenza, which we always hope a few days' rest will cure, but in practice I find that men, once sent off, are not returned for some considerable time. My doctors (almost entirely Australians and



New Zealanders) are excellent, and assure me that this is nothing to worry about, for it must be regarded as climatic and normal, while I am glad to be able to say that the cleanliness of my trenches and surroundings have been very much remarked on by all to whom I have shown them, so I think we have done all possible in that line.

x      x      x      x      x      - - - .





D

24th July, 1915.

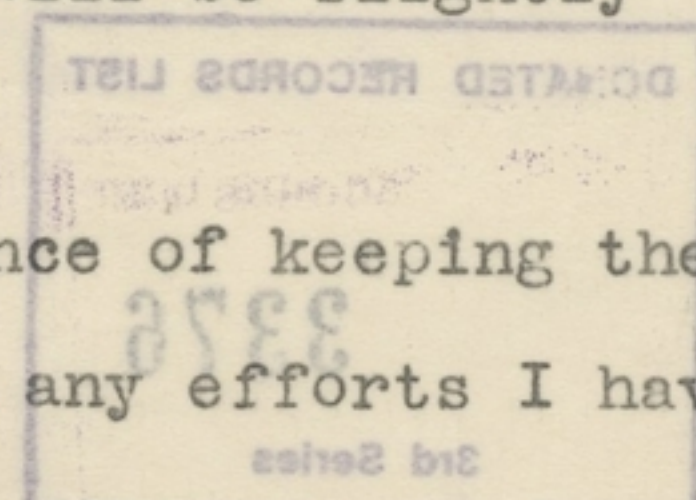
Major-General Braithwaite, C.G.S., G.H.Q.  
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Many thanks yours 23rd just received. All right, we will, as Sir Ian know~~s~~, do all we possibly can to land everything re-<sup>it</sup>quired here, and deal with to the best of our ability. We all know well that Sir Ian appreciates the really hard work our men have been doing here to do what they can to ensure victory -- and this too without ever a murmur. It is, however, only within the last few days that I have fully realised what a strain has been put on them owing to the necessary fatigues that have to be done mostly in the way of carrying water, ammunition and supplies.

When in the trenches only a few days ago, and talking to a sergeant, he said, "Yes, Sir, we are all fit and ready to go for the Turks at any time, but I am afraid we could not manage him doubling." When I asked him why, he said the men were so exhausted from their heavy fatigues.

Again to-day, when I came across a string of men carrying up water, and when telling them how much their work in this respect was appreciated, they said they only wanted an Indian driver to lead them for them to become a perfect mule corps! This was not said in the least nastily, and I only mention it to show you how really heavy the fatigue work is. I am doing all I possibly can to lessen, by working all our mules (including the gun mules) very hard in the day, during which this can be safely done, and I am hoping that our water pump <sup>will be</sup> ~~is~~ in working order, as I trust it may be, very soon, when things will be slightly improved.

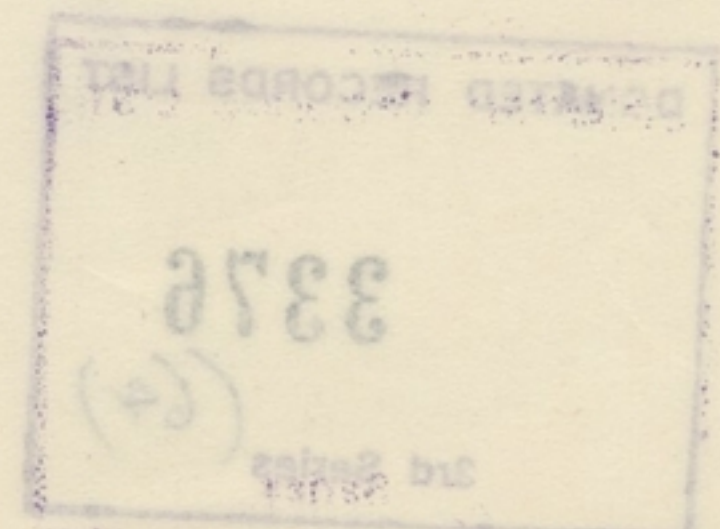
Recognising as I do the enormous importance of keeping the men cheery and in good fettle I am redoubling <sup>my</sup> efforts I have made





made as regards seeing men in the trenches, in which I yesterday spent seven hours going round talking to them, and seeing that all was as perfect as we could make it to meet this possible attack. If it will only come off, the men will be full of good cheer, for we are terribly disheartened at the possibility of the Turk attacking Cape Helles instead of us.

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E

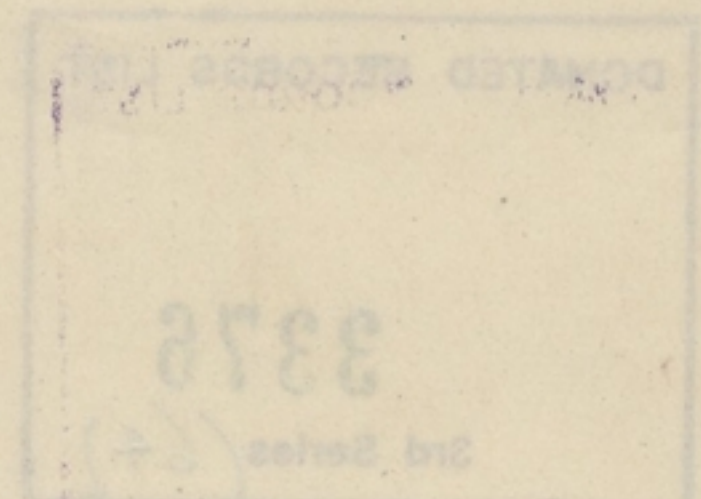
23rd June, 1915.

Sir Ian Hamilton.

x      x      x      x      x      x

I quite agree with you about the change of diet, and by a curious coincidence, just as your letter was handed to me, in fact, I had it in my hand unopened) I was talking to Knox and asking him about the very two things you mentioned, viz., the possibility of a rice and milk ration. He tells me there will certainly be no difficulty about the former, and I am asking both my divisions for suggestions in the matter

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E

17th August, 1915.

Sir Ian Hamilton.  
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X X X X X

The most disturbing factor, however, is this health of the men. As you will have seen from my daily returns, I now have a complete strength of 23,500 rifles only in this Army Corps, including 13th Division. Of these, 12,500 only are with Godley and available at present for any further advance or attack. The disturbing factor, however, to which I allude, is the condition of these men. As I have just said, they are quite cheery and the spirit is just as well as ever, but I am afraid there is no disguising the fact that the flesh really is weak. Every little group of men to whom I speak all agree that they are quite ready to take on any number of Turks, and get a bit of our own back in killing more of them to make up for some of our losses, but nearly all of them finish up by saying that they feel just as weak as cats, and hardly on for marching more than a mile or two.

I imagine that this is only really natural and climatic, as we must all feel that the climate here now is enervating, while the sameness of the food prevents these men who are generally very big eaters, eating anything like the quantity they ordinarily do. They all say there is lots of food, and they have no complaint against it, but that with the exception of rice and raisins and days when they can get stews, they very seldom eat much and hardly touch their meat. If we could only get this wretched canteen ship along and, if when she comes, she contains anything like enough condiments to permit them to buy freely from her, I believe it would make all the difference in the world. But the fact remains that, at present, I much doubt if we could call on anything like a big effort from the men who have been here all these months.

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For the first time I have seen Allison who led the 6th Gurkhas on their charge on Chunuk Dere. He was as you know wounded, but I hoped only slightly. It has, however, developed into water on the knee, and he was just being taken to hospital when I saw him. After his story, I more than ever feel so sad about their charge. He tells me that they not only got on to the top of the ridge in square 81.a.2, but that they were actually driving the Turks well down the slopes in the direction of 3 and 6. Then these big shells came amongst them, which he says seems to have completely panic stricken the Gurkhas. One man was practically blown to pieces, and the men began to bayonet each other in their panic, and fled back down the hill. The Turks, of course, took advantage of this, ~~whil~~ and counter-attacked in strength, while Baldwin's Brigade was not sufficiently near to give the immediate support required.

It really almost makes one cry, though at the same time it is impossible to show that we could have maintained our footing, when we realised the very big numbers that were brought against the regiments up there early the following morning, also with the Turks still in possession of Ismail Oglu Tepe, they could have brought guns right into our back and, perhaps, driven us off there.

In these few days, I am sorry to say, the Turks even have trenches the whole length of the ridge and all along Koja Chemen Tepe, covering an advance from Abdel Rahman Bair. Most of these, are, however, so fully in view of our guns, that we should be able to prevent them taking much advantage of them in a fight.

Note.- Interpolate after, "The most disturbing factor is, however, this health of men," -- "and the very large numbers who are being invalided daily, Both regimental C.O.'s and regimental medicos tell me they are invaliding only the absolute minimum, and many men who are kept at duty are really not fit for work, chiefly owing to exhaustion and weakness from diarrhoea. Even then, however, the daily strain is very heavy as you have seen.

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RECEIVED  
RECORDS  
LIST  
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F

20th August, 1915.

Sir Ian Hamilton.  
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x   x   x   x   x

for  
Many thanks ~~about~~ your message about the canteen ship, which though expected has not arrived. I hear that we are to get only £3,000 of stuff and that the same has been allotted to Suvla and Helles.

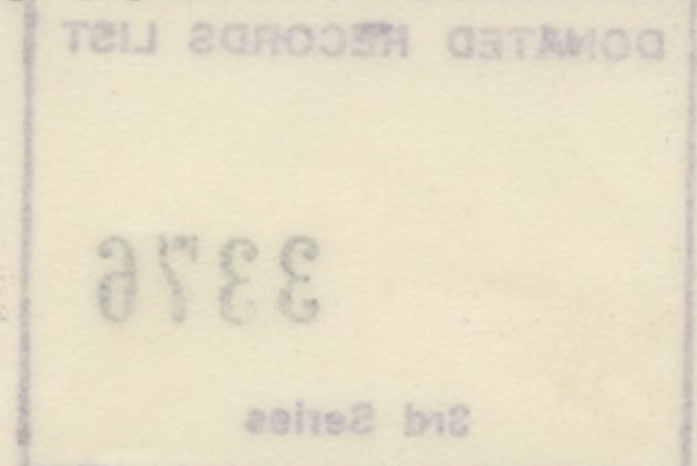
I am afraid this may get me into trouble with the 13th Division, as owing to their having been here such a very short time the extra <sup>did</sup> food ~~does~~ not seem to me to be anything so necessary for them, as for the Australians who have been here all these months, and I consequently have not allotted stores for them, and am hoping that they will not hear what the rest of their corps is getting at Suvla.

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23rd August, 1915.

Sir Ian Hamilton.  
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So many thanks for both your letters and for all you have done for us regarding canteen stores. After writing to you yesterday, I, too, heard that none had gone to Suvla, but I found that out of some 2,400 cases, 800 only had been sent here and the balance to Helles. I at once wired to this effect to Ellison, and as a result of your kind instructions, we have now had a telegram to say that further supplies beyond the 800 cases are being sent up from Helles. We hope it may be a fair quantity, but Helles will naturally have taken their share.





I quite agree with you that the War Office do seem to have mismanaged this whole canteen business very badly, for had they either arranged this, or let you run the arrangement, so as to give us regular canteen supplies three months ago, it would have just made all the difference in the world, and I believe our men would have remained fit. I am by no means a rabid teetotaler, and should be quite glad to see beer or porter sold at the canteen, but knowing what I do of the men it could be done only under the very strictest regimental control, for, after all these months, I really dread to think what might happen if they could get liquor at all freely. If it could be arranged for them to go to Imbros, I should certainly hope for them to get malt liquors there, and I am sure they would come as a real fillip, and probably a panacea of very many troubles.

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