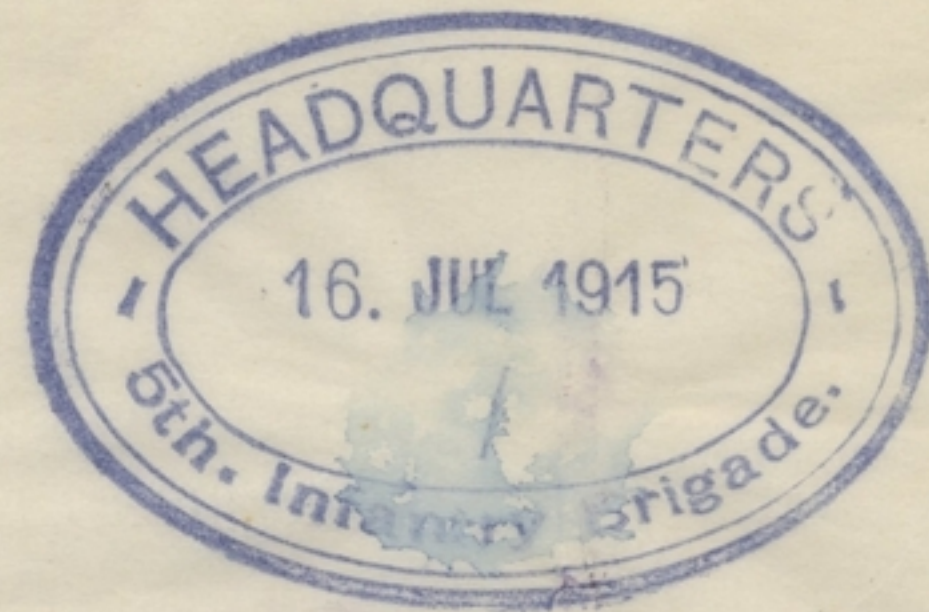


AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE:



C.O.,

17 Battalion:

The Brigadier has observed a great slackness in the dress and manners of men in the Streets of Heliopolis and Cairo. Men have apparently got into the habit of ignoring Officers, and not one in a hundred salutes. It is evident that this is becoming a recognised practice, and as such is not only extremely detrimental to the reputation of the Unit, but a serious danger to discipline. The matter has been drawn attention to previously, but no improvement is noticed, consequently O.C. Units will take steps to treat each case of wilful neglect to salute, as a crime, and deal with it accordingly. Officers must return salutes correctly and punctiliously. The excuse is often made by soldiers that their salutes are not returned, and, therefore, they object to saluting. The main causes of this state of affairs are -

- (1) Men are not sufficiently instructed.
- (2) Officers and N.C.Os neglect to insist on the salute being given, generally because they fear being thought to be 'putting on side'. Officers and N.C.Os must acquire the moral courage to set this feeling aside. The salute is not personal, it is a duty which must be performed by Officers and Men, and no excuse can be accepted for its non-performance or for neglect on the part of Officers and N.C.Os to see it is carried out.
- (3) A few unmannerly soldiers deliberately neglect to salute, and as no attempt has been made to compel them to do so, others have followed.

As regards dress, men are seen daily in the towns in shirts, and even singlets and shorts. The correct walking out dress is as laid down in Brigade S.O., Para 20, which must be strictly adhered to. Men are also seen with long walking sticks, slouching along the streets - a most unsoldierly looking lot, contrasting unpleasantly with the native soldiers and police, whose smartness should put Australian soldiers to shame. A swagger cane adds much to the appearance of a soldier walking out, and it is suggested to C.Os that suitable canes be purchased and supplied to the men, who should be induced to carry them.

The Brigadier does not refer specially to any particular Corps or Unit; he is glad to see that the 17th Battalion is better in respect to both saluting and dress than most others, but considers that much improvement is necessary if the 5th Brigade is to maintain its reputation for discipline and smartness.

(1)

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE:

(Continued)

He is aware that this slackness can be generally traced to a few recalcitrants, and is determined that it shall be corrected. In this he feels he can confidently rely on the hearty support and co-operation of every Officer, N.C.O. and man who has the efficiency and welfare and reputation of the Brigade at heart.

Luan Aironson
Major,
Brigade-Major, 5th. Inf. Brig, A.I.F.

HEADQUARTERS
NINTH INFANTRY BRIGADE
24 MAR 1917
B.M. No. 70/10/11
A.I.F.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Headquarters
9th Australian Infantry Brigade.
24th March, 1917.

Lieut.-Col. H.A. GODDARD,
C.O. 35th Battalion.

I am very desirous of improving the relations between Battalions to such a degree that the criticism of other Battalions now current will become a thing of the past. This criticism is at present mainly directed against other Battalions in respect of work done in the line. Officers when in the line are finding fault with the work of the unit which preceded them and their remarks, which may or may not be justified, are heard by the men and the feeling between the units is not improved.

The best way to quell this harmful criticism, apart from instructing all ranks to refrain from it, is to remove the cause. The main cause is that the Company Officers when handing over their line to relieving Officers do not fully explain the position. If in handing over the Company Officer takes his opposite round the Company area and explains to him the condition of things much misunderstanding will be saved. He should show his opposite the work his Company has done and at the same time explain why, in certain parts, little or no work has been done. If both Officers come to a mutual understanding in this respect there should be no ground for criticism subsequently that the outgoing unit had not done its fair share.

The Battalion Commanders should in like manner confer with one another and the outgoing Commander should make quite clear to his opposite what work has been done and what work could not be done and why.

If this is carried out properly and in a spirit of compromise, there should not be any ground for subsequent criticism.

Much benefit will also accrue to both Battalions if the Officers in question fully discuss with each other the proper policy to follow in respect of works and maintenance. In this way a continuity of policy will be secured and greater efficiency gained.

I feel confident that you will redouble your efforts to bring about that spirit of helpful co-operation between all ranks in your Battalion with those in others which is so essential to the efficiency of the Brigade.

Alex. Johnson
Brig.-Gen.

Commanding 9th Aust. Infantry Bde. A.I.F.

77, GLOUCESTER PLACE,
PORTMAN SQUARE, W. 1

March. 3rd 18.

Dear Sir

I am writing on behalf
of a young girl of 18, in
my service, - named Beatrice
Strong.

In 1916 she was at
Salisbury & got into trouble
with a man in your
Battalion, called Alex. A. Ayerst
No. 1455

Her baby was born about
9 months ago, she has not
heard from the father
since, & the whole burden
of the child's keep falls
on her young shoulders. -
This means 6/- a week &
clothes -

I have tried to get the

baby taken into the Foundling
Hospital, but they cannot
do so until the father of
the child has been applied
to for help first.

I shall be so grateful if you
will find time to have the
case put before the man
Agnew.

Frankly, the child would
probably have a better chance

at the Foundling, but
suppose Ayerst should be
given a chance of making
good. The Foundling
will not take any child
unless under 12 months
old, so if Ayerst cannot
afford to help we must
make haste to get the
child admitted.

Apologising for troubling
you -
Yrs Truly
Mr.) G. Henning Belfrage

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Confidential

Divisional Headquarters,
24th May, 1918.

Brigadier-General W.R. McNICOLL, C.M.G., D.S.O.,
Commanding 10th Aust. Infantry Brigade.

Brigadier-General J.H. CANNAN, C.B.,
Commanding 11th Aust. Infantry Brigade.

Lieut-Colonel H.A. GODDARD, D.S.O.,
T/Commanding 9th Aust. Infantry Brigade.

Cases have lately come under the notice of the Corps Commander where men, who have had very long service with the A.I.F., and who have in the past performed very gallant services, have nevertheless latterly been guilty of conduct rendering them liable to be brought up for absence without leave, and desertion. Investigation, in certain cases, has shown that this is due to a quite natural lowering of the fighting spirit due to long service, and stress upon nerves and physique.

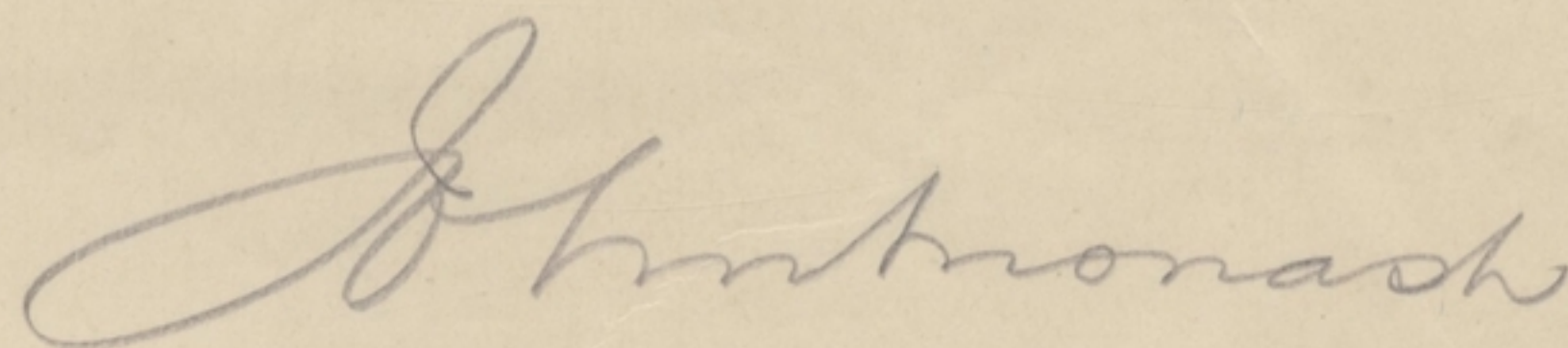
In bona-fide cases, where there is no reason to doubt that the arduous service which a man has rendered has operated to break down his capacity for further satisfactory service in the front line, one would of course regret very much to see men of this class rendering themselves liable to punishment and disgrace.

While it seems impracticable to issue any orders on the subject, it would, however, appear possible for Commanding Officers to exercise a certain amount of supervision and discrimination by quietly withdrawing thoroughly deserving men of this type from the rigours of front line work, and utilising their

24-5-18.

services in other capacities.

I should like you to talk this matter over quietly with your Battalion Commanders, with a view to encouraging them to bring under your notice special cases of men with a good record whom it may be desirable, for the reasons stated, not to subject to further severe fighting stress. - This would give you the opportunity of deciding in each individual case, on its merits, whether you would authorise your Unit Commanders to keep such men out of any severe fighting.



Major-General.
Commanding Third Australian Division.