

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

New Zealand Units

**Item number:** 35/22/3

**Title:** 1st Battalion, New Zealand Rifles  
Brigade

October - December 1915



AWM4-35/22/3

WAR DIARY

10-1  
Army Form C. 2118

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

or  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Wellington	10-10-15		Embarked H.M.N.Z.T. No. 30 Strength: 29 officers 984 other ranks	
	11-10-15		Convoy left Wellington Harbour.	
Lucy.	14-11-15		Arrived in Suez accompanied by H.M.N.Z.T. No 34.	
	15-11-15		Disembarked and proceeded to Helio polis Strength (Aerodrome Camp.)	
Helio polis	17-12-15		Received orders to join Western Frontier Force	
"	18-12-15		Entrained for Alexandria	
Alexandria	19-12-15	3am	Disentrained and proceeded to Gabarri Rest Camp. B and C Companies Embarked for Mersa Matruh on board H.M.S. Cleopatra and Trawlers Scouter, Remagio + Ocean Princess.	
	20-12-15		A Company and medical Section Embarked for MERSA MATRUH. B + C Coys arrived at Mersa Matruh.	

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ALEXANDRIA	21/12/15		D Company less 1 platoon Embarked for MERSA MATRUH. A Company arrived at MATRUH	
"	23-12-15		Machine Gun Section Embarked for MERSA MATRUH. D Company arrived at MATRUH.	
"	25-12-15		1 platoon D Coy, Stretcher Bearers, Pioneers and Signallers Embarked for MERSA MATRUH	
MATRUH	"		<u>ACTION</u> at JEBEL MEDWA 1st NZRB Casualties { 6 OR. Killed. 18 OR. Wounded.	Appendix #1
	26-12-15		Battalion returns to MATRUH after action of JEBEL MEDWA. Funeral of 5 of Battalion killed.	
	27-12-15		Orders received to form part of Column to operate in direction of BIR ZAKA	
	28-12-15	2pm 7pm	Marched with mobile Column under General The Earl of Lucan Arrived JERAWALLA (14 miles)	
JERAWALLA	29.12.15	5am	Marched for BIR ZAKA : Enemy retired Southward	

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997

WAR DIARY  
or  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
JERAWALLA	29.12.15.	1 pm.m	Arrived point 17 miles from JERAWALLA : Halted for 1 hour, returned 5 miles and bivouaced in WADI.	
	30.12.15.	5 a.m.	Marched for JERAWALLA.	
		10.a.m.	Arrived at JERAWALLA.	
		2.a.m.	Marched for MATRUH.	
		7.30.p.m.	Arrived at MATRUH.	

(Original of above written on same sheet as entries for beginning of January 1916 and filed with volume for that month)

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Appendix

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1<sup>st</sup> Bn. W.Z. R.B.

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Action at WADI MERJID  
Christmas Day, 1915.

The Battalion formed part of the right column, the left column being composed mainly of mounted troops.

5 am. The right column, <sup>under Col. Gordon, 15<sup>th</sup> Sikhs</sup> moved out by the S.W. exit at 5 am immediately behind the 15<sup>th</sup> Sikhs, part of which Regiment formed the Advance Guard. A screen of mounted was out in front.

"A" Coy formed right & left flank guards to the infantry. The right flank guard eventually got too far out and was replaced by 2 platoons of "B" Coy and was then withdrawn.

6 am. At about 6 am the enemy gave warning of our approach by means of a flare on one of the hills seaward. The Column halted while the mounted cleared this up.

6.30 am. At about 6.30 am. the enemy's G pr. opened fire and the Sikhs opened out into artillery formation and moved forward.

I was ordered to conform to the movements of the Sikhs, and to bring in the flank guards. One platoon of 'A' Coy was detailed as escort to the guns, and remained with them all day.

The advance in artillery formation (our Battalion) was maintained for about a mile. 'A' Company was presently sent forward to prolong the firing line of the Sikhs on the left flank. As the attack developed 2 platoons <sup>of 'B' Coy.</sup> were detailed to guard the left flank of the gun position. Later these two platoons were sent forward to the left of the Sikh firing line, and then in the vicinity of the second gun position was transferred to the right of the Sikhs. The attack generally was swinging round towards the right as the enemy was being driven back.

At the second gun position 'C' + 'D' companies were brought in to a hollow and held as a reserve. Presently 2 platoons of 'C' Company were employed as flank guards to this position - one on the right and one on the left.

The whole of 'C' + 'D' Corps with 4 machine guns were <sup>presently</sup> sent forward through

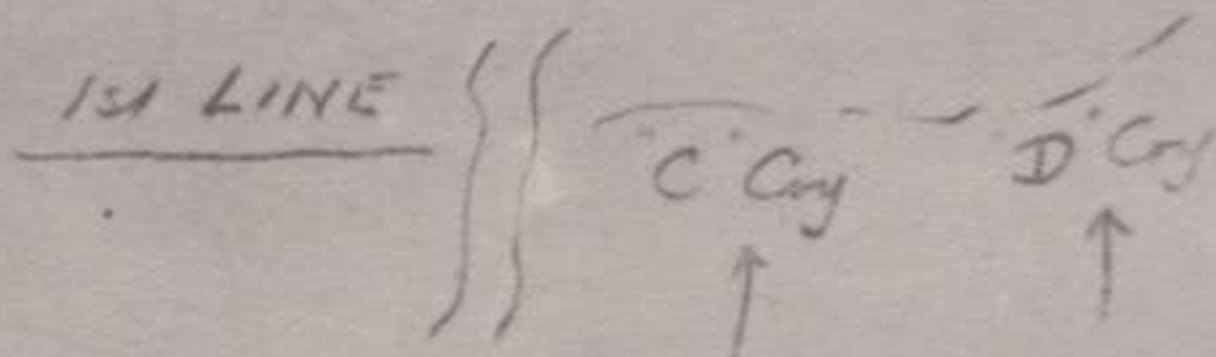
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3.

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at nullah on the right to join the firing line on the right flank. The machine gun advance was hampered by the shortcomings of borrowed transport & personnel.

2.30 pm. Our Battalion formed a long line and was held up by a hot fire from point (9) (see sketch) and flat ridge (4) and edge of wadi (1) and (10) at about 200 yards range. Our position was then on a line just north of wadi (7) marked



At about 2.30 pm. I was ordered by Col. Gordon to go forward to the firing line, withdraw part of the left of the line and push it forward into the centre. "A" Coy and 1 1/2 platoons of "B" Coy, were so changed. About 2 platoons of "B" Coy were left on the west of wadi (X) ~~marked~~  
~~marked~~

3 pm. At about 3 pm. the line moved forward ~~to~~ level with "B's 2<sup>nd</sup> position" and the Sikhs were withdrawn, apparently

so as not to hamper the movements of the mounted troops of the left column who had now come into action in their vicinity.

4 pm.

We then moved rapidly forward to wadi "enemy's stronghold" which was taken at about 4 pm., at about which time the Middlers came up in rear of "B" Coy.

The remainder of the time was occupied clearing out the wadi. Part of "B" Coy moved along the north edge with Australian Light Horse;  $\frac{1}{2}$  "C",  $\frac{1}{2}$  "A" and half of "D" Coy. moved along the south edge;  $\frac{1}{2}$  "A",  $\frac{1}{2}$  "C", and one platoon of "B" Coy moved through the wadi.

About 100 enemy were killed in the wadi, and about 80 camels and a number of asses, sheep, etc destroyed. A number of enemy, estimated about 150 cleared out through the seaward end of wadi.



5.

About 30,000 rounds of S.A.D. and 3 boxes of 9 lb shells were brought out of the wadi. We hoped to bring these in on the camels but their movements were too slow. The camels were destroyed and an attempt made to bring in ammunition on machine gun limbers and by hand.

5.10 pm.

Only 2 or 3 cases could be brought on the limbers and as the men were very tired we had to abandon the rest of the ammunition, which was broken open, scattered about, or buried.

34 prisoners - men women & children - were taken in the last wadi.

I was ordered to return to JEBEL MEDNA. This had to be carried out in the dark, and proved a difficult matter with no guide. In addition we were hampered by the slow movement of stretcher parties, prisoners, and machine gun limbers. Wounded and prisoners did not get in till about 2 am.

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6.

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25<sup>th</sup>/<sub>26<sup>th</sup></sub>

We bivouacked at JEBEL MEDWA  
and commenced the return march at  
4 next morning, reaching Camp at 7.30 am.

Our battalion had six killed and  
18 wounded.

The dead were buried at MATRUH at  
4 pm. The officer of the Battalion acting as  
bearer.

One dead was missed in the darkness.  
The body was brought in by a special  
party on New Year's day and was buried at  
5 pm.

Genl. Austin

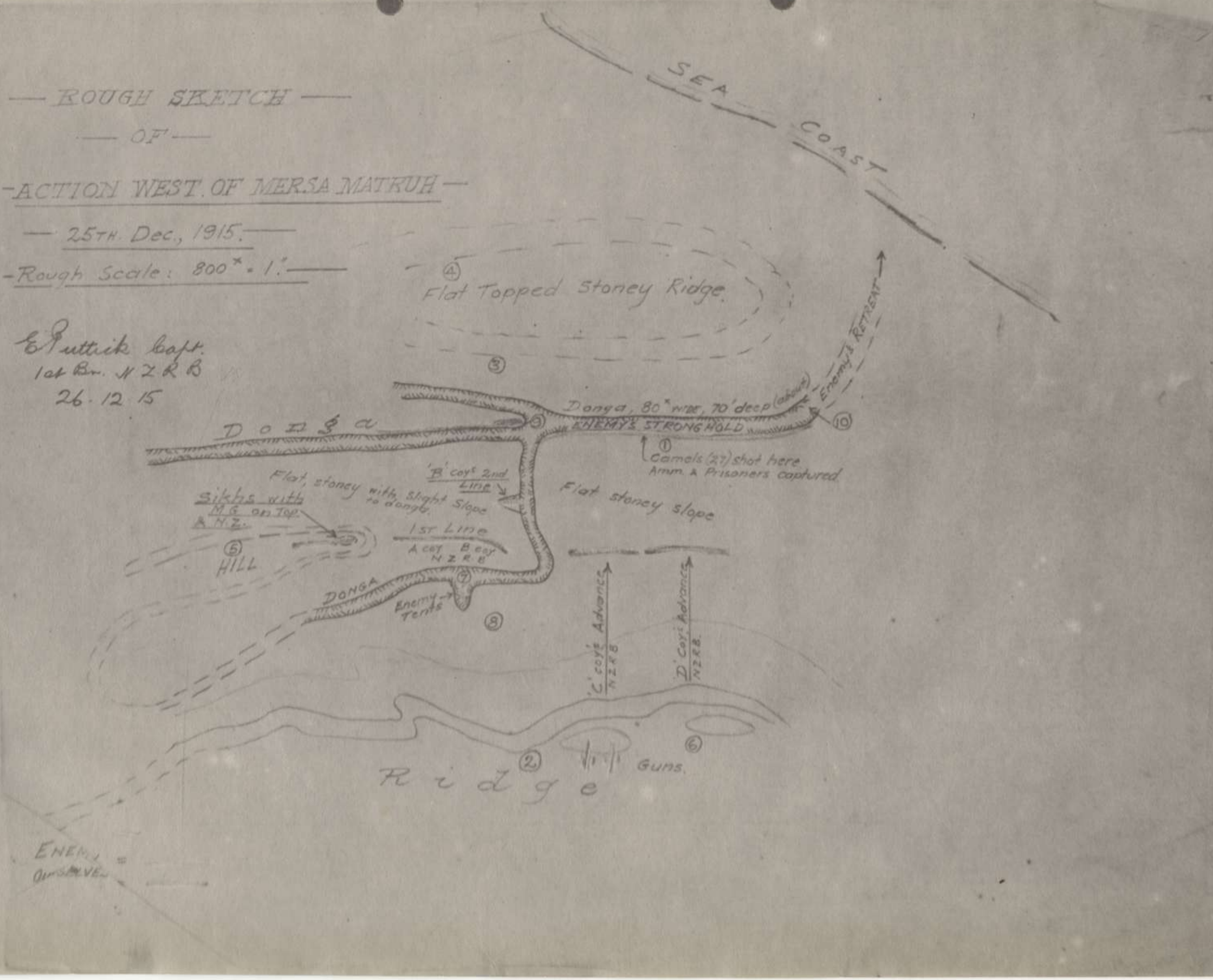
ROUGH SKETCH  
OF

ACTION WEST OF MERSA MATRUH

25TH Dec., 1915.

Rough Scale: 800' = 1"

E. Puttick Capt.  
1st Br. NZRB  
26.12.15



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