

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

Supplies & Transport

**Item number:** 25/20/11 Part 1

**Title:** Headquarters, Australian Mounted  
Divisional Train

May 1918



AWM4-25/20/11PART1

**CONFIDENTIAL.**

ORIGINAL.  
~~DUPLICATE.~~  
~~TRIPLICATE.~~



**Australian Imperial Force.**

**WAR DIARY**

OF  
*Australian Mtd Divl Train*

FOR  
*May* 1918

MAY 1918

Signature of Officer compiling *Whitty Lees.*

Signature of Officer Commanding *H. A. Saunders*

Major  
Commanding  
AUST. MTD. DIVL. TRAIN

WAR DIARY

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.)

E15/1

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
May	1918 1		<p>The Division which had moved out for the operations on 30<sup>th</sup> ult were provided with three days rations consisting of 2 days Special Emergency Rations for men and horses of 13oz Biscuit 9oz Preserved Meat, 4ozs Jam, 1/2oz Tea 3ozs Sugar and 9 1/2 lbs of grain, and one days Iron Ration of 1 lb biscuits, 1 tin Preserved Meat, 2oz tea, 3oz sugar, as it was foreseen that the difficulties of supplying the troops in the hills (5th P, 3rd Bde, 5th Bde) beyond NIMRIN would be very great owing to the poor roads and difficulties of transport. No vehicles being able to get past NIMRIN. Beyond NIMRIN to ES. SALT only pack animals could be taken and in most places in single file only.</p> <p>The 4<sup>th</sup> I L H Brigade who were watching the ED. DAMIEH crossing and protecting the left flank were in a much better position as far as the supply situation was concerned.</p> <p>So that supplies could be moved forward rapidly on fall of enemy position two days rations were loaded on Camels and one day on Train. Train &amp; camels being parked about 2 miles from West Bank of the Jordan on road to GHORANYEH Bridgehead ready to move out at short notice.</p>	

- MAY 1918

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E15/2

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1		<p>The first camel convoy for 4<sup>th</sup> A.H.H. Brigade moved across the JORDAN at 2000. At GHORANYIEH Bridgehead guides were to have met convoy and lead the way to the Brigade Area. The guides failed to turn up to time - so convoy moved out under charge of Supply officer (Lieut L. G. Cole) and an escort provided by Brigade to Brigade Area at WADI. RATEM. When within one mile of issuing point guides turned up.</p>	
	2		<p>The Brigade was reached at 0100. Instructions were received by Supply officer to have all supplies issued and camels out of the way by daylight owing to danger from enemy shell-fire. This was found to be impossible so camels were broken up into small groups and moved off - advantage being taken of cover by keeping in the WADI BED as much as possible. The Convoy was shelled but without any casualties resulting to personnel or animals. GHORANYIEH Bridgehead being reached at noon. At 2000 the second camel echelon with supplies again moved out under Supply officer. Brigade Area being reached at midnight. Supplies were issued under great difficulty, the night being extremely dark and owing to the proximity of enemy and</p>	

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E15/3

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	2		<p>probability of drawing shell fire no lights were allowed. All camels were unloaded and on <sup>the</sup> return journey by daylight 3/5/18.</p> <p>As it was doubtful if a road would remain open long to troops in hills - supplies were being got together to be packed on donkeys. A message was received however that fresh meat had been requisitioned by the above troops in the neighbourhood of ES. SALT, so one day's supplies of biscuits was sent forward. It was doubtful if this could be got through owing to the position of the enemy &amp; the nature of the tracks through the country it was necessary to take - eventually they succeeded and supplies were delivered to troops.</p>	
	3		<p>Some anxiety was felt about the rationing of the troops in the hills. As the position was getting acute, the troops having eaten their last ration on 2nd, pack horses were being got ready to take a supply of biscuits, jam, sugar, tea &amp; fruit when word was received that the withdrawal was ordered. The troops in the hills had not fared so badly as expected, fresh meat being requisitioned.</p>	

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E 15/4

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	3		<p>On looking around ES SALT a flour mill and three bakers shops were found; these were got going &amp; flour and bread turned out for the troops. Grazing was found for the horses.</p> <p>Supplies for 4<sup>th</sup> A.L.H. Brigade were drawn by Train and delivered across JORDAN near GHORANYIEH Bridgehead where they were reloaded on camels. At 2000 camels moved out under Requisitioning Officer (Lieut. L. V. Short) for Brigade. This convoy was met by the Staff Captain &amp; taken to a spot on the EAST bank of the JORDAN, about 4 miles SOUTH of line held by Brigade.</p> <p>Supplies were again taken by No 37 Coy of the Train to a refuelling point across the JORDAN near GHORANYIEH &amp; reloaded on camels for Brigade.</p> <p>Supplies for 3<sup>rd</sup> A.L.H. Brigade who were withdrawing from hills were taken by No 36 Coy of the Train to a spot on EAST side of JORDAN about 4 miles NORTH of Bridgehead and delivered. At 1830 the Train moved back to old camp site WEST of JERIKHO near JEBEL KURUNTUL (Mount of Temptation)</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	4 <sup>th</sup>		Supplies for 5 <sup>th</sup> Mtd Brigade, who were expected back from hills EAST. of JORDAN, were drawn at JERICHO dump by No 38 Coy of the Train & delivered to area occupied by 5 <sup>th</sup> Mtd Brigade before operations & to which they were returning, these supplies were waiting for the Brigade on their arrival.	
	6 <sup>th</sup>		The day began with a visit of 11 enemy bombing planes at 0445 which dropped between 50 and 60 bombs on Divisional Area. No damage being done to any units of the Train.	
	7 <sup>th</sup>		Heat is increasing daily. Thermometer reading 109° 3 at noon. To add to the discomfort, the air is filled with fine dust which rises up at the least breeze. Enemy planes again visited Divisional Area & dropped bombs. No damage being done in the Train Area.	
	11 <sup>th</sup>		No 34 Coy ANZAC TRAIN moved in and were attached to this Train. A very fierce, dry wind called by the inhabitants "The SIRROCO" blew all day - piling dust to such an extent that it was impossible in the least dusty places to see more than 200 yards away.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	11 <sup>th</sup>		The heat gradually increased till 1300 when the thermometer reached 125° in the shade.	
	12 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>o</sup>	Those moving about on animals or wagons suffered greatly - the fine dust covering everything, making it impossible to see more than a few yards ahead.	
	15 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>o</sup>	In addition to the ordinary day's ration an extra one third day's ration was drawn & issued to troops bringing the issue to over the breakfast meal.	
	15 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>o</sup>	Rations were delivered daily to Units in front line on Wadi FUJA. During the past ten days the heat has been very great averaging over 100° in the shade. The dust is so bad that at times it is impossible for the drivers of vehicles to see the lead animals in their teams.	
	25 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>o</sup>	Snakes, malaria carrying mosquitoes, not to mention flies in myriads and chawling insects of all kinds abound and the JORDAN Valley will always be remembered by the troops who lived in it these days as anything but a summer resort.	
		9 <sup>o</sup>	The Imperial Tropic Cavalry Brigade Train marched in & came under orders of Op. This train making total strength of the train with attached Companies; 28 officers 460 other ranks 370 natives, 1005 animals and 197 vehicles.	

MAY 1918

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E 15/7

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	27 <sup>th</sup>		An inspection of animals of the Train & attached Units was made by A.D.S.T., DESERT. MTD. CORPS. Animals were found to be in good condition and the harness in good repair, well-fitting & serviceable.	
	28 <sup>th</sup>		Wagons want daily attention & repairs, on account of the extreme heat affecting the wood work; this specially applies to the wheels, & was pointed out to A.D.S.T. An A.I.F. Canteen was attached to the Train this is of great benefit to all ranks; tinned goods such as milk, fruit also lime juice which was very necessary to this climate being stocked.	
	29 <sup>th</sup>		A new arrangement for drawing of Supplies came into force to day: Supplies being drawn between 0500 to 0700 instead of the afternoon as previously. It is not considered that this is an improvement as men and animals are working in the hot part of the day. With the afternoon drawing, the return journey, after issue of supplies, is made in the evening when generally a cool breeze is blowing. Under the present arrangement it is feared the evacuation of personnel & animals will increase daily.	

- MAY 1918

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E 15/8

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	31 <sup>st</sup>		<p>The number of Mules attached to the Division are daily increasing - making the transporting of supplies a big item. To day 197 tons of supplies were drawn &amp; issued - the feeding strength of the Division being:</p> <table> <tr> <td colspan="2"><u>Personnel</u></td> <td colspan="2"><u>Animals</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burksh</td> <td>13123.</td> <td>Horses &amp; Mules</td> <td>14659.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indians</td> <td>3604</td> <td>Camels</td> <td>680.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Egyptian</td> <td>429.</td> <td>Donkeys</td> <td>270</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><u>17156</u></td> <td></td> <td><u>15509.</u></td> </tr> </table> <p>This entails much extra work for the personnel of the Train &amp; extra responsibilities to the officers concerned. The supply &amp; transport arrangements however, run smoothly &amp; without a hitch.</p> <p>To-day temperature reached 123° in the shade and at 2000 (8 o'clock pm) it was 101° in the open &amp; 104° inside the bell tent.</p> <p>The average weekly attendance on Sick Parade was, Whites 113, Natives 62, and the evacuations for the month were,</p> <table> <tr> <td><u>Personnel</u></td> <td>White 21.</td> <td>Natives 9.</td> <td><u>Animals</u> 5</td> </tr> </table> <p>In addition the weekly average of white personnel under treatment and not doing duty was 106</p>	<u>Personnel</u>		<u>Animals</u>		Burksh	13123.	Horses & Mules	14659.	Indians	3604	Camels	680.	Egyptian	429.	Donkeys	270		<u>17156</u>		<u>15509.</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	White 21.	Natives 9.	<u>Animals</u> 5	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">- MAY 1918</p>
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