

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

Formation Headquarters

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Title: Intelligence, General Headquarters,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force

June 1918



AWM4-1/8/24

EXTRACTS FROM WAR DIARY
OF

INTELLIGENCE G.H.Q., E.E.F.,

JUNE 1918.

1918.
June.
3rd.

MORAL.

During the week ending 1900 3/6/18, 15 prisoners, (including 1 officer) and 13 deserters were taken.

5th.

ORGANISATION.

Enemy Defences.

An agent gives a description of what appear to be improvised "pill boxes" west of EL HELALI (127.U.27). There are ten of these, 4 metres by 2 metres, standing about 60 metres apart. The ground has been excavated, roofed with beams and covered with earth. There are two lines of loopholes, 7 or 10 in each, so sited that they can be used by men standing and kneeling respectively.

ABORTIVE ENEMY ATTACK.

A fairly credible prisoner from the 5th Coy 2nd Bn. 20th Regiment, captured on May 31st, gives the following account of an abortive attack on the night of May 30/31.

When 2nd Battalion was in reserve at HABLEH, it was lectured every day for 5 days by the O.C.Bn. who told them they were going to attack and regain the territory they had lost etc. On May 28th, the 20th Regiment went into line, relieving the 19th Regiment.

On May 30th at 7.30 p.m. the whole of the 2nd Bn. advanced to the attack in extended order (distance between each man being 2 yards) in three waves - the 5th Coy with 2 M.Gs, 1 automatic rifle leading, followed by the 6th and 7th Coys, 40 and 250 yards behind respectively.

At about 10 p.m. they captured some unoccupied trenches, and the Turks thought the British had fled. The Bn. commander immediately -phoned for the 3rd Bn. to get ready and for 2 guns to come up. On our troops opening fire, the whole of the 2nd Bn. retreated. P. of W. states that this was not a raid to get prisoners, but an attack with the aim of getting possession of our trenches. (Note:- the 3rd Bn. apparently came up in support.)

6th.

ASIA MINOR.

According to a report by a reliable agent dated 28th May, a gradual movement of the 21st Army Corps to the front was ordered by CONSTANTINOPLE on 17th May. The first unit to receive orders to move was a regiment of the 57th Division. The regiment on receipt of orders immediately deserted with offices guns and machine guns. A regiment was sent in pursuit but was forced to retire having lost 36 killed and 57 wounded. Further troop movements of this Army Corps have been suspended. A regiment from the 17th Army Corps has been dispatched for the purpose of dealing with these deserters.

/9th

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9th.

IDENTIFICATION.

An agent reports on hearsay that all German troops west of HABLEH moved eastwards about 1/6/18. In view of previous similar reports, it seems probable that either part of Pasha II or of the 146th Regiment has moved to the East. It is not clear whether movement was to VII of IV Army area, though reports received up to date indicate the presence of the force in the VII Army area, possibly en route for JISR ED DAMIE or the bridge at MAFID JOZELE. Further reports of this movement of Germans eastwards have been received from refugees during the last few days.

10th.

MORAL.

During the week ending 1900 10/6/18, 114 prisoners (including 5 officers and 1 German O.R. and 17 deserters) were taken.

11th.

HOSTILE AERIAL ACTIVITY.

Total machines observed this week 65, last week 63.

According to an agent's reports, supplies in large quantities are being despatched from the SMYRNA area to SYRIA.

On 16.5.18 an agent reported that the 47th Division was preparing to leave for PALESTINE.

ESSAD PASHA late O.C. 1st Turkish Army has succeeded Field Marshal LIMAN von SANDERS as G.O.C. 5th Turkish Army. (Agent)

14th.

Eastward Move of Germans.

Prisoner 3/77th Regiment states he heard about 2/6/18 that all Germans in the VIII Army area had been transferred to E. of JORDAN.

15th.

ENEMY DEFENCES.

East of Jordan.

The enemy has considerably strengthened his left flank; much new work is reported in the vicinity of TEL ER RAME (127.T.6) In the Eastern Sector, work has been below normal. In the Western Sector, the defences S.W. of Jawieh (C.4) N.15 have been considerably improved. Considerable work has been done by the enemy in strengthening this new front line on the coast since our attack on the 8th. The ET TIREH (D.3/T.23) to the coast reserve system has also been improved.

AERIAL.

Activity has increased generally over the whole front. 18 machines were observed on 10th instant astride the NABLUS road.

16th.

"MURETTEB" COMPOSITE CAVALRY REGIMENT.

An officer prisoner from the 11th Cav. Regiment taken E. of Jordan 14/6/18 states that a MURETTEB Cavalry Regiment has formed recently and is attached to the 3rd Cav. Div.

It is composed of Divisional cavalry and the Corps Cavalry of the VII Army Corps (sic. Probably an error for VIII Army Corps as VII A.C. is in the Yemen. It is about 400

/strong

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strong, and is on the west bank of the Jordan, north of the AUJA. This report requires confirmation.

20th.

ORGANISATION.

Drafts.

According to prisoners' and deserters' statements the total number of drafts that have arrived on this front (mostly East of JORDAN) during May and up to June 15th, amount to roughly 6000 men. Of these 1200 are reported to have come from the 14th Depot Regiment at CONSTANTINOPLE, about 600 from Labour Battalions at ALEPPO, and a small draft from the CAUCASUS. The remainder consisted for the most part of convalescents and re-captured deserters from BAALBEK (13th Depot Regiment) and DAMASCUS, and included 300 men released from the civil prisons at DAMASCUS.

22nd.

ENEMY DEFENCES.

The enemy has further strengthened his defences in the vicinity of ER RAME (127-T-6) EASTERN SECTOR.

A considerable amount of trench work is reported astride the JERICO-HEISAN road, extending from the JORDAN at UMM ESH SHERT to the foothills in C. 6/W - 19.W.25.

WESTERN SECTOR.

The enemy has strengthened his defences on the Coast and a considerable amount of fresh work is reported in his rear defences between TABSOR and BIRKET RAMADAN (084.S.14 15) ARTILLERY.

The enemy has employed long range guns for the shelling of JERISHO and WILHELMA

Reference report given in I.S.310 of 4.6.18, para. 3(iii) of the departure of Austrian troops for PALESTINE, contact has now been obtained with two battalions of the 31st HONVED Regiment, 41st HONVED Division, Italy. The transfer of the whole division to this front, therefore, becomes impossible.

24th.

PALESTINE.

Hostile aerial activity for week ending 23/6/18.

1. 28 machines observed in JERICO area as against 16 machines.
2. NABLUS road area 51 observed as against 36 last week.
3. Coastal area only visited twice during
4. WADI SUKEREIR reconnoitred on 16th inst.
5. Machines have come over in larger formations varying from 3 to 7.
6. H.A. driven down under control on 19th.
7. Total machines observed this week 101, last week 88.

MORAL.

During the week ending 1900, 24/6/18, 9 prisoners and 20 deserters were taken.

/28th.

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28th.

ENEMY INTENTIONS.

Prisoners heard that an attack would take place about 1st July. The main attack would be made by the VII Army on the NABLUS and W. of JORDAN front whilst a feint attack is made by the N. Army. The ostensible object of the main attack has been given out to be the recapture of JERUSALEM.

29th.

PALESTINE FRONT.

During the last week enemy activity has been much below normal in all areas. Trench work shows considerable decrease compared with the previous week. Artillery activity has been mainly directed against MUSALLABEIX and astride NABLUS Road.

30th.

HEALTH.

A German N.C.O. 703rd Battalion captured at C.5/Q.19 on 26.6.18 states that the Germans are suffering considerably from malaria.

MORAL.

During the month of June 1918, 3 officers and 85 O.R. deserted to our lines. Of these, half (3 officers, 41 other ranks) came into Desert Mounted Corps, 29 to 20th Corps and 15 to 21st Corps.