

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

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/8/26

Title: Intelligence, General Headquarters,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force

August 1918



AWM4-1/8/26

EXTRACTS FROM WAR DIARY
OF

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

AUGUST 1918.

1918.
August.
1st.

MORAL.

During the month of July 1918, 6 Officers and 164 other ranks deserted to our lines, 3 officers and 85 other ranks came over in June
TURCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

A deserter from 58th Regiment taken 30.7.18 states that during the attack on 14th July on ABU TELLUL his regiment deliberately opened fire on the Germans, causing them heavy casualties. This confirms complaints made by German prisoners that the Turks fired on them, mistaking them for English.

3rd.

SUMMARY OF ENEMY ACTIVITY DURING week ending 0800 3-8-18.

Work on the defences during the week has been about normal, with the exception of the JORDAN area where it has been below normal.

Aerial activity. Number of machines 21, the lowest yet recorded.

Shelling. From the NABLUS Road to FURKHAH the shelling has been the lowest so far recorded. From FURKHAH to KEFR KASIM shelling principally at long range continued considerably above normal up to 1st instant. The Coastal Sector was quiet and below normal. On two occasions the enemy registered barrages in front of and behind this line in the ROFAT area in C.4/N and V.

5th.

MORAL.

During the week ending 1900, 5-8-18, 8 prisoners and 47 deserters were taken. During 13 weeks, 7th May - 5th August, 10 officers and 410 O.Rs. have deserted from lines.

6th.

Relief of 19th Division.

Deserters from the 57th Regiment state that the 7th and 19th Divisions were to change places on nights of 5/6th August and 6/7th August. The move was necessitated by sickness in the 19th Division in whose area fever has been prevalent. The 46th Division will probably occupy the 7th Divisional Sector until the 19th Division arrives. Other deserters who came in from 57th Regiment on August 6th confirm that the relief took place on night of August 5/6st. This relief, which is now accepted, explains previous report of removal of 19th Division's heavy baggage.

Withdrawal of Germans.

1. A recent deserter who passed RAYAK with a draft some three weeks ago, states that he saw a train of 2 engines and 70 trucks moving north. 30 of the trucks were occupied

/by

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by Germans and the remainder by dismantled guns of various calibres.

7th.

MAN POWER.

The calling up of the 1318 (16 year old) Class is confirmed by a deserter from the 3/163rd Regiment from a letter he received. He adds that this is causing much dissatisfaction and that the people are refusing to let them go.

According to a Turkish Deserter who left DAMASCUS about middle of July, Arab boys of 15 are being called up and trained in DAMASCUS and then sent to replace Turks in CONSTANTINOPLE.

REPATRIATED PRISONERS.

An intelligent N.C.O. deserter from the 3/191st Regiment states that in Battalion orders of this unit a month ago appeared a notice stating that repatriated Turkish Prisoners from RUSSIA would be given leave, 4 months for NIZAM (active army) and 12 months for REDIF and IHTIYAT (Reserve). At the completion of their leave they would be enrolled in new Regiments composed entirely of repatriated men.

10th.

PALESTINE.

Summary of Enemy Activity.

Hostile artillery activity, East of Jordan and immediately west of the Jordan hostile fire has been entirely confined to 77 m.m. calibre, with the exception of a few 4.2" Howitzers on the 9th instant. Activity during the early part of the week was considerably below normal but it rose to normal on the 8th and 9th.

In the sector from the WADI SAMIEH (C.5/9) to the WADI MUTWY (C.4/A) hostile activity has again been below normal 1170 rounds being reported as against 1510 for the previous week. Our line in C.4/A.17 (S.W. of FURKHAH) received the most attention. On the 3rd and 4th instant the 24 c.m. Mortar Battery fired 51 rounds on C. 5/J.32.a. and b. and C.5/L.2.d. From FURKHAH to the coast, hostile artillery has been considerably below normal. In the coastal area, the 3rd and 4th instant were the only days on which there was even normal shelling.

ENEMY DEFENCES.

During the week very little work has been reported East of JORDAN. Immediately west of JORDAN, air photos, taken during the week, show that the high ground overlooking the WADI EL MELLAHAH from C.6/U.35 to X.36, is almost continuously entrenched, but only small portions have, so far, been wired, i.e., in C.6/X.17c, X.30.c. and X.36.b.

The defences of BIDSTON Hill (C.5/Q.14) have been considerably improved, as also have the defences of FURKHAH/C.4/B.2)

New work in the Coastal area is very slight, with the exception of 600 yards of trench in D.3/T.28. (S.W. of TIREH).

/HOSTILE

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10th.

HOSTILE AERIAL ACTIVITY.

Enemy aerial reconnaissance has reached a very low point and is still decreasing. This week only 16 machines crossed our entire front. Previous week 21.

A hearsay report by an agent states that some aeroplanes have recently been railed north from AFULEH and it is possible that some have been withdrawn but the report lacks confirmation.

11th.

RELIEF OF 7th and 19TH DIVISIONS.

The order of battle is now Sea to TABSOR 21, 20 and 19 Regiments, and RAILWAY REDOUBT to KH. KESFA 72, 57 Regiments with 77 Regiments in reserve.

12th.

MORAL.

66 deserters (including 2 officers) were taken in week ending 1900, 12/8.

15th.

RAID.

Prisoners of 33rd Regiment state:-
The raid on EL BURJ - KH. EL GHURABEH ridge on night of 12th/13th August was totally unexpected. 33rd Regiment had all three Battalions in line, except one Company, in support. 127th Regiment had 1 Company in line, 2 in support, and two battalions in divisional reserve. No supports came into action as raid was carried out too quickly, and all means of communication were cut. Turk is Artillery fire was erratic. 11th Division has four 77 m.m. Field gun batteries. Moral of 33rd Regiment was good. 33rd Regiment had 26 heavy and 8 light machine guns, an unusually high number. The usual patrols were out, but were cut off. Battalion strengths are given as 200-250 rifles, plus 50 machine gunners.

17th.

SUMMARY OF ENEMY ACTIVITY for week ending 0800 17th August.

More defence work than usual has been done east of UMM ESH SHERT; otherwise very little work done east of JORDAN. FURKHAH defences have been further improved, and new wire has been observed near the coast in C.3/A.1, 7 & V.5. 18 aeroplanes crossed our lines as against 16 during the previous week. Artillery fire has been quiet east of JORDAN and normal on the remainder of the front.

20th.

MORAL.

During week ending 1900, 19th August, 52 deserters surrendered, as compared with 66 the previous week.

PERSONALITIES.

HALIL Pasha, G.O.C. VI Army, has taken over command of the Caucasus Islam Army group and is believed to have been replaced by ALI IHSAN Pasha, formerly O/C XIII A.C.

27th.

MORAL.

49 deserters were taken during the week ending 1900, 26th August, compared with 52 the previous week.