

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

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/6/19 Part 5

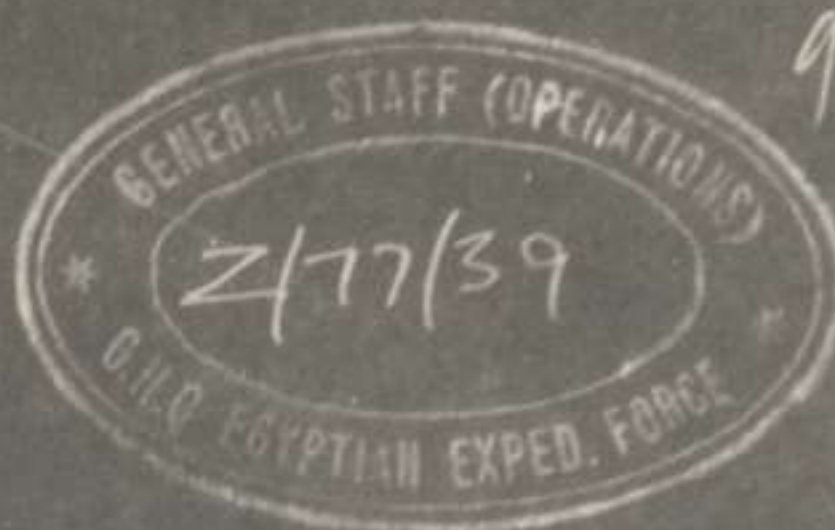
Title: General Staff, General
Headquarters, Egyptian
Expeditionary Force

November 1917



AWM4-1/6/19PART5

SECRET



Desert Mounted Corps.

XXI Advanced Guard north of Wadi HESI at mouth, attacking towards HERBIEH this morning. Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade from right of Advanced Guard to BEIT HANUN, where there are still some enemy. Aerial reconnaissance indicates considerable northerly movement by enemy forces from Wadi HESI towards Wadi SUKERIER this morning, especially from BUREIR area. Enemy retiring from in front of 53rd and Yeomanry Divisions.

You will push on, keeping concentrated as far as possible, towards MEJDEL, passing between BUREIR and TUMRAH, so as to co-operate with XXI Corps and to help to prevent the enemy standing behind the Wadi HESI. Get touch with XXI Corps troops as quickly as possible. Report progress every two hours by wireless and make use of pigeons.

Your dispositions last night are not quite clear, but in present situation it is not necessary to dissipate force by establishing a long protective line facing north-east, from which quarter there appears to be no danger as long as you operate rapidly and keep concentrated.

Your troops will have to water wherever possible in Wadi HESI and northern GAZA area this evening.

Acknowledge by wireless.

G.H.Q.

(Sgd) L. J. BOLS.

E.E.F.

8/11/17.

Major-General,
C.G.S. E.E.F.

To Palestine Bde. R.F.C. at 1015 for despatch by
aeroplane.

PRIORITY.

97 B

From G.H.Q.

To Barrow Detachment, repeated XI Corps and
Descorps.

O.A. 741.

8/11/17.

Desp. 1240.

You will move north-west as soon as possible with Feomanry Mounted Division on MEJILH. Right of Anzac Mounted Division at present about KH. UM KELKAN in H.35. Your division requires to assist in Descorps operations against eastern flank of enemy rear-guard and to prevent its escape by pushing on to BURAIR. You will come under command of Descorps as soon as you get communication with them during your movement. Camel Brigade will be withdrawn to BEERASHERA as soon as possible, watered and supplies replenished with supplies ready to rejoin Descorps. Instructions regarding 53rd Division and H.Z.M.R. Brigade sent XI Corps. Report if your division watered in KHUWHILFEN area and when moving. Addressed Barrow Detachment, repeated XI Corps and Descorps.

Copies to :-

G.C.S.
B.G.C.S.
O.(a) 1 & 2
O.(b).
Q.
M.E.H.A.
D.A.S.
File.
W.D.



From : G.H.Q.

To : XX Corps (Priority).
Repeated Descorps.

O.A. 742.

8th Nov.

Desp. 1240.

Reference O.A.741 to Barrow's Detachment repeated to you. 53rd Division with N.Z.M.R. Brigade attached reverts to your command. Necessary infantry and cavalry flank guard to be maintained astride HEMRON road. Remainder 53rd Division and N.Z.M.R.B. brigade should be withdrawn to BEIRSHEDA to rest and refit. Camel Brigade to be got ready immediately to rejoin Descorps and will be temporarily under your command in meantime.

Addressed XX Corps; repeated Descorps.

Copies to :-

C.G.S.
B.G.G.S.
O(a). 2
O(b).
Q.
M.G.R.A.
D.A.S.
File.
W.D.



WAR
DIARY

D

(Continuation of situation Report, 8th November, 1917.)

99

0018. XXI Corps orders issued for 8/11/17 - 52nd Division to continue operations on WADI HESI and to occupy position from HESI summit - RIDGETREE to the sea. 54th and 75th Divisions to remain in present positions. I.S. Cavalry Brigade ordered to join hands with Australian Mounted Division and close gap leading to DEIR SINEID. BEIT HANUN still occupied by enemy.

0020. Information from prisoners and deserters indicates that 7th, 53rd and 3rd Divisions did not leave GAZA defences until the night of the 6th.

0045. BEER trenches found unoccupied and held by us as outpost line. TANK REDOUBT in W.17.c. reported strongly held by enemy. Gaps out in wire by our artillery have been mended.

0052. Situation report for 1700. No change since last report. Anzac Mtd. Division say enemy appear to have gun behind TEL ABU DILAKH. Australian Division unable to progress beyond infantry line either northwards or north-west owing to machine gun fire. Following attack at 1600 was ordered. Anzac Mtd. Division on Wadi northward on WADI JEMMANEH. Australian Mtd. Div. less 1 brigade involved north of SHERIA north-west between left of Anzac Mtd. Div. and KH. ZUHEILIKAH. 60th Division objective, line going west due south of KH. ZUHEILIKAH. Result not yet known at 1840.

0052. H.M. Corps 1800, rec'd 1812, 8th. Horses had no water this morning and it is feared that some will not get any tonight owing to wide dispersion of force and restricted watering area. Please consider possibility of bringing up one or two Yeomanry brigades tomorrow morning.

100

Continuation Situation Report 8th November, 1917.

XXI Corps 0600.

Situation report. Copy attached.

Telephoned
0745.

XXI Corps report TANK Redoubt occupied by 75th
Division this morning.

Composite Force reconnoitring ATAWINEH. Plane
flying at 500 feet reports ATAWINEH all clear.

R.F.C. 0750.

Plane flying at 300 feet reports ATAWINEH,
TANK, HAIRPIN completely evacuated. No sign of
enemy movement in rear.

XXI Corps 0720.

At 0700 to-day I.S. Cavalry Brigade still on
high sand dunes west of BEIT HANUN, held up by
artillery fire. (by pigeon post).

XXI Corps
0600.
Recd. 0647.

10.1
(Tel.No.G.S.138). Situation as follows :- Composite Force holding MENDUR Sector from thence 75th Division holds line through ALI MUNTAR, FRYER'S HILL, JAFFA road (exclusive) at U.17.c. with outpost in BEER trenches which were found to be unoccupied but enemy still held TANK REDOUBT in strength. 54th Division hold line from JAFFA road (inclusive) at U.17.c. through G.18 thence to sea about G.11. 52nd Division captured high ground K.5 north of WADI HESI on evening 7th and report moving at 0530 in order to capture high ground about L.15, L.20 from the north. Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade at BEIT LAHI but advancing on BEIT HANUN at daybreak. Artillery carried out neutralisation of enemy's position at 1645 and 1845. Enemy 4.2 shelled OUTPOST HILL, SHEIKH ABBAS and BURY HILL. Our artillery sniped back enemy areas. Four deserters came in and five prisoners taken reported.

14

SITUATION REPORTS, 8th November (contd.)

- 0840 Barrow's Det. Situation 0730 quiet. 53rd Division 0650 states infantry patrols have found no enemy. No news from Yeomanry Division yet.
- 0850 Yeomanry Division report 0758. Troops pushing forward at 0600 as ordered. No opposition but enemy shelling our troops on our N.W. flank.
- 0930 XXist Corps telephoned I.S.C. Brigade to attack L.36 - L.20.D
- 0930 G.H.Q. to XXth Corps. telephone. Push reconnaissance along HAREIRA - GAZA road to clear up situation, and join hands with XXist Corps moving on ATAWINEH and TANK. Confirmed by wire to Xth and XXist Corps.
- 1020 XXist Corps wire Please inform Ausdiv that we are shelling Turks in N.19 from 1000 to 1200 with 6" gun.
- 1040 XXth Corps message from 60th timed 2015 7th. Hard fighting this morning and at intervals during day. Bridgehead considerably extended and one Brigade pushed on towards KH ZUHEILKA. 320 prisoners from 5 different regiments, 4 guns many machine guns and very considerable number of Turks killed.
- 1040 B.C.G.S. telephoned General Barrow that instructions were being drafted for Yeo. Div. to cease north-easterly movement and march for an objective to N.W. possibly with Camel Brigade. Would then revert to Desert Corps. Confirmed by wire later.
- 1045 G.H.Q. letter to Descorps by aeroplane. XXist Corps situation given. Aerial reports indicate considerable movement northwards from W. HESI towards W. SUKHEIR especially from BUREIR area. Enemy retiring from front of 53rd and Yeo. Div. Desert Corps to push on as far as possible towards MEJDEZ, passing between BUREIR and TUMRAH, to cooperate with XXist Corps and prevent enemy standing on W. HESI.
- 1115 XXist Corps. Our troops now in ATAWINEH and BEER trenches. Enemy concentration reported 1030 in W.6d. Engaged by our heavy artillery. Enemy shelled Tank and ATAWINEH redoubts.
- 1121 Descorps wire. Our outposts in position along line KH UM KELKAH 1000x N. of TEL ABU DILAKH and thence high ground N.E. of ZUHEILKA. 60th Division advancing on HUI, head in G.6. Enemy appears to be weakening in cavalry especially on right. Have watered all men and horses 3 Brigades last night. Hope to water men and horses of ANZACS, N.E. TEL ABU DILAKH where food supply captured.
- 1145 G.H.Q. wired Descorps. R.F.C. report 0740 HUI 700 men and considerable movement on roads to N. and S. KOFKAH 100 men and what appear to be 4 heavy guns. JEMAMEH 300 men.
- 1120 XXist Corps telephone to B.C.G.S. 52nd Division attaining ridge N. of DEIR SINEID and HERBIEH, trying to work round flank of Turks. Turks in DEIR SINEID AND HERBIEH, and holding BEIT HANUN. I.S.C. Bde. holding BEIT LAHI watering from JEBALIEH by regiments and ready to push on when watered. We hold TANK redoubt and are being shelled and shot at by Turks in V6 KL EL BIR. Our heavy guns shelling V6.

- 1120 D.A.S. telephoned 1100. Descorps H.Q. 2 miles S. of SHARIA moving shortly to ZUHEILKA.
- 1200 Barrow's Detachment wires 1035.
Ground N. of KHUWEILFEH reported clear of enemy.
No movement can be seen but a few snipers about.
Battlefield covered with Turkish dead.
1220. XXth Corps. Situation 1145.
10th Division 39th Brigade Group moving to clear trenches towards ATAWINAH. Remainder of Division concentrating HARRIRA area.
74th Division no change.
1233. Barrow's Detachment. One of our heavy batteries with 53rd Division reported 0920 to have excellent targets T.7d where 1 battalion infantry seen.
At 1025 enemy threatened to advance on HAS EL NAGB from E.

Continuation of Situation Report, 8th November.

1300.

R.F.C.

Report our cavalry on line KH. EL BAHLAWAN -
KH. ZEIDAN - HUJ (in flames) - V.16.
Turks on line KH. SUMMALY - E. of BUREIR railway - KH.
SUKRIYEH.

32 of our aeroplanes bombed aerodrome at ARAK EL
MENSHIYE obtaining a direct hit on a hangar. As 7 of the
hostile machines did not leave the ground, it is believed
that some of them were also damaged.

A two-seater plane of ours brought down a hostile scout in
flames over the WADI HESI.

The explosion at KH. EL BIR about 1130 appeared to throw
debris nearly 2,000 feet in the air.

105
Situation Report, 8th November, contd.

1240.
G.H.Q. to XX Corps,
Descorps and
Barrow's Det:

Orders for Yeomanry Division to join Descorps and move on NEJILE. I.C.Bde. to water and replenish at BEERSHEBA, and then join Descorps. 53rd Divn. and N.Z.M.R.Bde., less flank guard on HEBRON Road, to rest and refit BEERSHEBA.

1300
XXI Corps.

BEER, TANK and ATAWINEH trenches now in our hands with patrols out in front. One brigade of the 10th Division is in communication with our right.

75th and 54th Divisions hold line OUTPOST HILL - AUSTRALIAN HILL - to sea.

I.L.S.Cavalry Bde. still in front of BEIT HANUN, which is occupied by enemy.

52nd Division advancing east of HERBIEH along the right bank of Wadi HRSI.

Concentration observed in U.35. R.F.C. have been asked to ascertain who they are.

1320
XX Corps.

The two trains lent from XXI Corps, and heavy burden Camel Coy., can join XXI Corps when desired. After their departure 10th, 53rd and 74th Divisions cannot be supplied if they advance beyond present line. 60th Divn. could not be supplied if it moved beyond HUJ.

1422.
XXI Corps

XXI Corps wire: 2 batteries 77 and 2 battns. on ridge east of BEIT HANUN at 1200. Our cavalry about M.17. Turks reported retiring in disorder sq. U.25 at 1215. Large ammunition dump blown up in U.23 at 1230. We are in touch with 29th Bde. on right.

106

1454.
XX Corps.

XX Corps report 1405. 10th Divn. has
joined hands with Composite Force.

1540.

Barrows Det: wires 1500. Front of I.C.Bde.
At 1130 advance on ridge S. of W. FATTAS held up
by enemy apparently from W. FATTAS. Enemy
battery in action approximately at CHURCH in T.24.
53rd Division - no report. Yeomanry Divn. 1220.
Enemy battery in action approximately Sq. S.11 or 17.
8th Mtd.Bde. at approximately S.9.B. 200 Turks
seen 2,000 E. of them. 31 prisoners of 77th,
125th and 62nd Regts., also 200 camels.

1600.

XXI Corps wires at 1530 :- Turks evacuated
HANUN at 1315, and are being pursued by our
cavalry along BUREIR Road.

52nd Divn. were attacking high ground
L.20. at 1445. Repeated to XX Corps and
Descorps.

XX Corps 1630.

Wired that 53rd Divn., I.C. Bde., N.Z.M.R.
Bde. and Light Armoured Motor Bde. to come under
command of G.O.C. XX Corps at BEERSHEBA from
1600 to-day.

1615.
G.H.Q. to
Yeomanry Divn.

Move your division to SHERIA immediately
ready to move as ordered by Descorps as soon as
watered and supplied. Descorps H.Q. ZUWEILIKAH.
This cancels previous orders.

ob
Situation Report, 8th November, contd. 107

1815.

Descorps wire 1605: H.Q. Adv. Descorps HUI road south edge A.33 1 mile north of KH. MUNTARET.

1835
XXI Corps.

Composite Forces moves to ABBAS APEX to-night, relieving 234th Bde. which rejoins 75th Divn. 75th and 54th Divns. hold line OUTPOST HILL, AUSTRALIA HILL G.18 to sea. 52nd Divn. reaches its objective and is on line L.20, east edge of HERBIEH to sea. I.S.C. Bde. ~~passing~~ last heard of pursuing Turks and from its reports believed to be in DEIR SINEID and BURBERAH.

1840
XX Corps.

Situation 1800. 29th Bde. group on enemy trench line Z.11.A. to F.19.D., patrolling to north-east. Remainder 10th Divn. HAREIRA. 74th, 53rd, and I.C. Bde. no change.

1945- G.H.Q.

Wired Descorps: Chief wishes every effort made to get line TIME - BEIT DURAS to-morrow.

1950 G.H.Q.

Wired XX Corps: Bring 10th and 74th Divs. back to railway to-morrow and prepare train transport to move early as possible to XXI Corps or Descorps as required.

1930. G.H.Q.
wires Descorps
R.N.

Six damaged aeroplanes unable to fly on aerodrome ARAK EL MENSHEYE. Situation XXI Corps given.

XXI Corps 1935.
Telephone.

A fairly heavy counter attack was made just before dusk against the left flank of 52nd Divn. near the sea. 52nd Divn. still hold L.20 - HERBIEH from the north of which place the line runs about due west to the sea. Divl. H.Q. appear quite satisfied with the situation.

Descorps
situation
through R.F.C.

On line, forming semi-circles round HUI and NEJILE respectively.

XXIst Corps
1940

Orders for tomorrow. 52nd Division will consolidate position north of WADY HESY 54 and 75 Divisions remain on present line. 75 Div. is to be prepared to move forward if ordered. Composite Force takes over ABBAS APEX from 234 Bde. Instructions will be sent Imperial Service Cavalry Bde as soon as their position is reported.

XXIst Corps.
2000

One 5.9 howitzer Two 4.2" Howrs captured in NUZLE.

(In Opns Code)
Yeo. Mtd. Div.
2055

A.&.M.Z. Mounted Division has occupied well H.4.b B.6.a B.21.b.

Aust. Mtd.Div is occupying HUI. Wells and cisterns at HUI destroyed. Unlimited water is available at JEMMAMEH.

60th Division is south of HUI:

Your Z/77/39 received and understood. Am attacking tomorrow. DesCorps 2035

Des.Mtd.Corps
2400.

Operation Order No. 6. Enemy reported retiring N from E of JEMMAMEH, BUREIR and SIMSIN. They are still holding BEIT HANUN. Anzacs are on line WADI HESY - KH. UMM RUJUM.

Aust. Div. on line KHARBET HUI - N and W sides of HUI. 60th Div. S. of HUI. Yeodiv reverts to command of G.O.C.Descorps tonight.

XXI Corps have advanced guard north of WADI HESY at mouth attacking towards HERBIEH. Descorps will push on towards MEJDEL in order to cooperate with XXI Corps and prevent enemy making a stand on WADI HESI. Main body of Anzac Division plus 7th Bde will advance at 0600 with right on line KH. EL HUMMUM - KH. EL MARASHAN. First objective BUREIR inclusive SIMSIN exclusive. Second objective high ground northwest of EL HULEIKAT. Advance will be carried out without waiting for Yeodiv. Yeodiv will advance at 0730 from line through squares C5 and 2. Objective SIMSIN after which Division will probably be directed north west. AusDiv will be prepared to move

Des.Mtd.Corps
Continued.
 2400

as soon as watering is completed which will be reported. 60th Div. will be prepared to move after 1200 to support either of leading divisions. One F.A. Brigade including a How. Battery will be prepared to move as soon as watering completed which will be reported. 5th Mtd Bde reverts to command of AusDiv. 4th A.L.H.Rgt reverts to command of 4th A.L.H.Bde. Leading divisions will both establish a chain of relay posts from their H.Q. H.U.J. Corps report centre when changed will move in general direction H.U.J.-NEJED. (Despatched 1615 on 8th not received until 0217 on the 9th)

Des.Mtd.Corps

Situation as far as known is as follows. No news from Anzacs since 1000 when they were in line DIEJILA WADI JIMMAMA with considerable opposition on left. Water in Wadi estimated sufficient two divisions. Think division has advanced considerably since.

Ausdiv, 3rd A.L.H.Bde at 1400 on line B1 central Als central with right advancing to KH.EL MARASHAR to intercept retreating enemy.

5th Bde concentrated A.27 central and protecting right flank of 60th Div.

Worcesters and Warwicks charged very gallantly capturing 6 guns, 3 Vickers, 100 prisoners.

4th A.L.H.Bde on way to effect junction with I.S.Cav. Bde passing 2 miles S of H.U.J.

60 Div have advanced rapidly in spite of opposition and are about to attack H.U.J.

110
(Continuation of Situation Report, 8th/9th Nov.)

D.M. Corps.

2150.

Anzac Mounted Division reports enemy troops moving north with long convoys of wagons and guns. Large bodies of infantry in close formation. Impossible estimate numbers owing to dust. Enemy have strong right flank guard which has taken up in trench position opposite our right brigade about H.8 and 9. Troops in main formation at least 5,000.

0615.

XXI Corps
situation.

Situation as given in G.S.154 of 8th November. Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade held up at DEIR SINEID and TUMRAH by enemy in position with artillery. A few prisoners and one heavy howitzer captured at BEIT HANUN. 52nd Division captured objectives in L.20.b. meeting strong opposition. Position consolidated.

To General Allenby, Headquarters, E.E.F.
From H.M. The KING.

I heartily congratulate you and the troops
under your command upon the successful results of
your ably conceived plans which have been crowned
by the fall of GAZA.. I admire the spirit of
tenacity and endurance displayed by all ranks.

GEORGE R.I.

W.D.

117 A

From : G.H.Q.

To : Advanced XX Corps.

O.A.754.

9th November.

Desp. 2205.

Enemy may try relieve pressure by collecting shattered units with possibly one or two advanced units of 20th Division and making offensive diversion between ARAK EL MENSHEYE and NEJILE tomorrow or next day. He apparently only hopes gain time for broken 8th Army to reform front on WADI SURAR or WADI SUKEREIR. 60th Division and Camel Corps should be ready and might get opportunity for inflicting damage if enemy come on. Flying Corps making special reconnaissance early tomorrow, including BEIT JIBRIN, HEBRON and DHAHERIYEH, and will drop on 60th if necessary if their ground signal out.

Copies to :-

B.G.G.S.
O(a). 2
O.B.
File.
W.D.



From G.H.Q.

To Adv. XXI Corps, (Priority)
A.A. & Q.M.G. XXI Corps (Priority).
Descorps.
XX Corps.

O.A. 756.

9/11/17.

Depp. 2355.

You will direct two divisions tomorrow on ES SUAFIR EL GHABBIYEH - ESDUD. Advanced guards of these divisions should reach these places tomorrow. Every effort being made to hasten delivery of transport. End Heavy burden camel company will leave BIR SABA at 0600. 10th November, to ~~xxxx~~ join XXI Corps. Two trains and one heavy burden camel company left XX Corps before 1220 today for you. Addressed XXI Corps, repeated XX Corps and Descorps.

Copies to :-

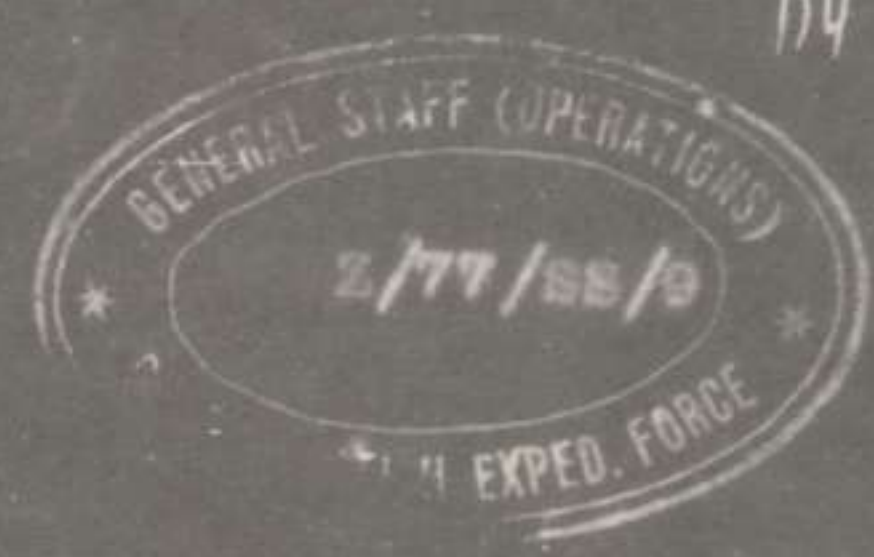
O.(a).
O.(b).
C.G.S.
Q.
M.G.H.A.
File.
W.D.



114.

W.P.

General Officer Commanding,
XXth Corps,
XXIst Corps,
Desert Mounted Corps.



114

C

The supply of field cable for artillery and infantry is very limited. The utmost economy must be exercised with it. As a general rule cables laid during an action must be reeled up by the unit which has laid them. Unless this is done, the supply of cable will very soon be exhausted. Will you please instruct all divisions and brigades to this effect.

(Sgd.) G.P. Dawney
13622
for Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

G.H.Q., E.E.F.
9/11/17.

Copy to :-
D.A.S.
Q.

For AS

115. D.

Headquarters,
Palestine Brigade,
Royal Flying Corps.

SUMMARY of EVENTS for 9: 11: 1917.

The morning was again foggy, which prevented an early start, except for local Tactical Reconnaissances.

Eventually, at 0930, 16 of our machines, with escorts, started and attacked the retiring Turks on a road running from JULIS to the N.E., with considerable effect.

All the machines returned except one, which was forced to land, through the engine over-heating, at ASKALON. The Turkish patrols were still in the town, and a British ship lying off ASKALON sent a boat ashore to rescue the pilot and observer. Just as they had embarked and were being taken over to the British ship, our cavalry galloped up the beach and saved the aeroplane from the Turks.

During this raid, no hostile aeroplanes were seen in the air, but no less than 18 were reported at EL TINEH Aerodrome. Apparently those from BEIT DURAS had been assembled there during the preceding afternoon.

At 0945 No. 67 Squadron carried out a very thorough and useful reconnaissance up to RAMLEH; in the course of which they bombed and obtained two direct hits on rolling stock in EL TINEH Station.

The hangars and Station at ARAK EL MENSHIYEH had apparently been destroyed by fire during the night, so it may be hoped that the aeroplanes seen there late on the evening of the 8th, could not get away and had been burned.

During the afternoon a reconnaissance was carried out towards BEIT JIBRIN, but no signs of hostile activity were observed. Our own cavalry and the rearguard of the enemy were, however, definitely located in the area between the railway and the mouth of the Wadi SUKEREIR.

At 1430, 22 of our machines, with an escort, attacked the Station and Aerodrome at EL TINEH. Only 9 aeroplanes could be seen on the Aerodrome at this time; 3 of these were severely damaged, so far as could be seen. Two direct hits were obtained on hangars, which were later observed to be burning. A petrol dump was set on fire and the troops around the Station were also severely bombed. All machines returned safely. Only one hostile aircraft was observed, which avoided fighting.

116.
9.11.17.

Hostile aerial activity throughout the day was practically negligible; and from the fact that during the 8th and the 9th, machines remained persistently on the ground while our machines were attacking, indicates that the enemy are probably short of pilots and that their personnel is so demoralised that they retire to cover on the approach of any of our aeroplanes.

Work has been heavy since October 27th; mechanics have been working many hours at night to keep machines serviceable, and engines are in serious need of overhaul. Our activities will therefore probably have to be curtailed somewhat to get a chance of overhauling engines and resting the personnel.

Situation Report, 9th November, - contd. 117 E

0800 XX Corps. Situation of 10th, 53rd and 74th Divisions unchanged.
Reports from I.C.C.Bde. and N.Z.M.R.Bde. will follow later.

0900 C.G.S. wishes you to consider moving up available
C.G.S. to G.H.Q. armoured cars along BEERSHEBA - GAZA Road to work on left
of Descorps.

0920, Signals. Descorps can only be got at by W/T. No communication
with Yeomanry Divn. Telegraphic communication with
Descorps obtained 1030.

1015. G.H.Q. Press on by shortest route with all available
to Descorps; forces to TIME - DURAS. 60th Divn. will remain at
aeroplane and HUJ and revert to command of XX Corps. XXI Corps will
wire. get troops forward towards JULIS and MEJDEL in support
and form pivot of manoeuvre for you as soon as they
can. Meanwhile, press enemy relentlessly.

1055 Supplementary situation 0930.
XX Corps
wire. 53rd Divn. 159th Bde: T.26.b.28 - T.25.a.108 - S.24.a.55 -
S.17.c.102 - S.22.b.108.
160th Bde: reserve at B.3.a.
158th Bde: A.4.d.
I.C. Bde: 1 squadn. N.Z.M.R. from R. of 53rd -
T.20.d. - T.21.d - T.22.d south through
T.23.d - B.4.d. - Pt. 1910 - Pt. 1790 -
I of KH. TATREIT - through Z of
KHURNET GHUZALEH to HEBRON Road. I.C.Bdes
now report occupied ridge running through
T.21.a.b. and T.22.a.b., and enemy
moved East, and are now shelling this
ridge.

1100 Turkish H.Q. moved North of RAMLEH. RAMLEH aerodrome
Intelligence being dismantled. HEBRON W/T Station closed down and
G.H.Q. moved north.

1120. Cav.
XXI Corps with I.S.C.Bde. reconnoitring BEIT JERJAH,
Telephone. and has occupied DEIR SINEID and BURBERAH.

Continuation of Situation.

9th November 1917.

1200.
G.H.Q. to
Admiral
XXI Corps

Shall probably require land next consignment supplies HESI mouth or ASKALON. Necessary reconnaissances to be made in next 36 hours. Information as to practicability to be sent H.H.Q.

1229.
XXI Corps
wires

Our patrols unopposed have occupied DEIR SINEID - BEIT JERJAH - ASKALON. Now moving East to MEMDEL. 232nd Brigade moving to BEIT HANUN.

1230.
XX Corps
wire

Trains detached from XXI Corps have been returned and should reach GAZA today. Heavy burden Camel Company left for GAZA today

1300.
XX Corps
wire

Situation 1200. 74th Division under orders to move IRGEIG. Turks still holding HEBRON Road about TOR EL ZADAN. Otherwise no change.

1300
R.F.C.

Strategic reconnaissance landed 1000. SIMSIM 3 troops cavalry about 2 miles West. Descorps say probable ours. BUREIR troops advancing across plain in N.W. direction in T.7 and T.8. Two bombs dropped on Turkish 4-gun battery: damage believed to be done and guns withdrawn. ARAK EL MENSHEIYEH. Station dumps burning. Parties of infantry and cavalry retiring towards FALUJEH. Two strong columns of our troops advancing N. along Wadi in Y.13.d. Aerodromes SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH evacuated and all hangars gone.

1350.
D.M.C.

Situation report 0800. No change.

1420.
D.M.C.

Message dropped by aeroplane. O.A.746 only received at 1015 this morning. Anzac Mounted Division ordered to advance with all speed on BEIT DURAS, and at 0900 was at EL HULEIKAT. Australian Division completes watering after 36 hours at 1800 at JEMMAMEH, where water has proved disappointing, and 60th Division horses have also had to be watered there.

Australian Division at 1800 is directed on EL FELUJE - ARAK EL MENSHEIYE in order to advance on EL TINE early tomorrow.

Yeomanry Division failed to get rations, but will be pushed on at dawn tomorrow.

Divisions have been instructed to spare no effort.

1430.. Two field guns taken by I.S.Cavalry Brigade near
XXI Corps JERFAH.
wire.

1445 R.F.S. ARAK EL MENSH IYEH. Hangars at Station destroyed.
FALUJEH. No enemy troops observed; our troops
approaching from the south.

EL TINEH. 18 aeroplanes on the aerodrome. Hangars
being dismantled. 300 to 400 H.T. scattered near town,
all facing north. Two direct hits with bombs observed on
rolling stock in station. 2,000 troops scattered round
station.

RAMLEH. 9 hangars. 3,000 troops on the road from
Junction, and much movement of M.T. and H.T.

BEIT DURAS. Aerodrome gone. Main road through SUAFIR
ESH SHERKIYEH, EL KUSTINE, MANSURA, RAMLEH Road is a mass
of mixed troops and transport all moving north. Roads
from FALUJEH to SUAFIR EL GHARBIYE are also packed with
mixed troops.

1520.. Wired "Pushing on, watering as we can. Advanced troops
D.M.C. well beyond BEIT TINA. Enemy surrendering easily. Some
opposition in front. 400 prisoners and 10 guns captured.

1545. Telegraphic communication with Desert Mounted Corps
interrupted. Resumed at 1642.

R. F. C.
1500

Bombing Report 0930 - 1100.

16 machines raided troops and transport N. of JULIS. Over 150 bombs dropped with destructive effect between JULIS and SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH. 8 direct hits on RS in JULIS Station, and bombs seen to burst among troops going N. between FALUJEH and SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH. 400 rounds M.G. fired.

Des. Mtd. Corps
1750

Wire timed 0010 of 9th states: Estimated captures today are 250 prisoners, 10 or 12 guns including 2 5.9's, also 4 Machine Guns and a large ammunition dump 2 miles S. of HUI. Details as regards HUI not yet known. Prisoners are from 58th, 72nd, 77th and 125th Regiments.

R. F. C.
1840

Bomb raid on EL TIME. 120 bombs dropped. Several direct hits on hangars two of which burst into flame. One direct hit on machine on Aerodrome. Dumps on railway and station buildings attacked with effect and troops disorganised by a number of bombs among them. Our pilots then descended and machine gunned them.

Reconnaissance 1500-1620. SIMSIM. 400 of our cavalry just north. BEIT TIME no movement. MEJDEL 700 cavalry 2 miles E retiring N with 2 guns. JULIS big dump by side of railway, 11 trucks and 400 enemy. Men loading trucks. BEIT DURAS no movement.

Signals.
1850

Telegraphic communication with DesCorps interrupted.

R. F. C.
1910

Strategical reconnaissance landed 1700. Our line appears to run from 2 miles N. of HAMAMEH due E. to where W. SUKEREIR crosses road N.E. of SUAFIR EL SHERKIYEH, thence S.E. along Wadi to railway 2 miles N. of ARAK.

Turkish rearguard appears to be taking up line on N. bank of northern branch of W. SUKEREIR for 2 miles on either side of KUSTINE.

Tail of Turkish main body passing through MESMIYEH. Disorganised rabble from here to RAMLEH.

Situation Report (Continued) 9th November 1917.

XX Corps.
Wire
1915

Situation 1845. Imperial Camel Brigade report some sniping and enemy battery shelling their left sector intermittently throughout day.

N.Z.M.R. No change.

74th Division IRGEIG.

10th Division No change.

XXI Corps.
Wire
1915

Later information shows 52nd Division had severe opposition in gaining their position on N. bank of W. HESI. Six determined counterattacks made, and our line forced back, but we ultimately recaptured trenches. We have occupied BEIT HANUN with a Brigade. A Brigade with artillery occupy DEIR SINEID tonight.

2 mountain guns, 1 howitzer, large quantities of gun ammunition and S.A.A. captured.

Occupation of ASKALON with infantry and artillery proceeding.

G. H. Q.
wire
2005

To XX Corps repeated DesCorps: Move I.C.Bde replenished for 5 days to TEL ABU DILAKH as soon as possible with orders to patrol thence N and E as far as KH.ZEIDAN, NEJILE and TEL EL MULEIHAH, and ensure good communication by visual with 60th.

XXIst Corps.
Wire
2135

ASKALON occupied 1935 by our infantry and artillery.

G. H. Q.wire
2200

To XX Corps. Enemy may try to relieve pressure by offensive diversion between ARAK and NEJILE tomorrow or next day. 60th Division and Camel Corps should be ready and might get opportunity for inflicting damage if enemy attack.

172

172

Continuation of Situation Report 9th-10th November 1917

Intelligence JERUSALEM W/T Station closing down.
G. H. Q.
2030

A.M.Q. Wire To Advanced XXI Corps. You will move 2 divisions tomorrow
2355 on ES SUAFIR EL GHARBIYE - ESDUD. Advanced guards to
reach those places tomorrow. Every effort will be made to
hasten transport.

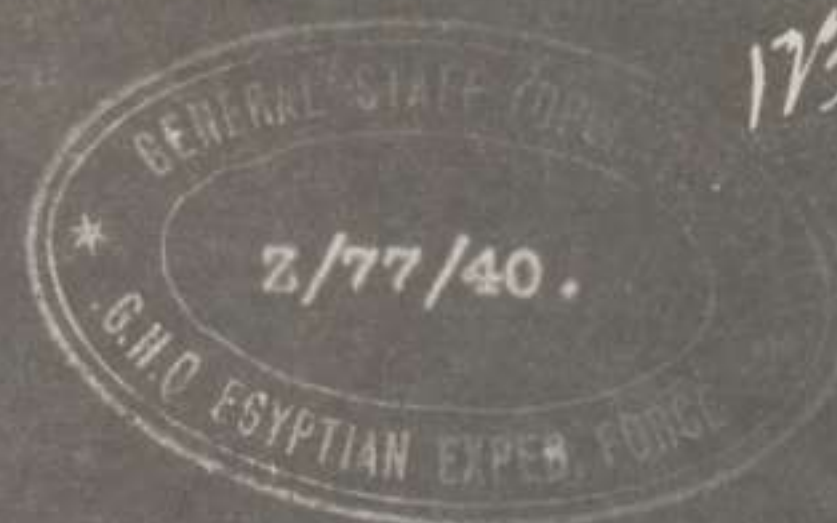
Also sent by telephone by B.G.G.S. Repeated A.Q.M.G.,
XXI Corps, XX Corps, Descorps.

0130) Situation reports 0840 and 1400 9th.

0212)

DesCorps wire At 0840 Australian Division outposts 2 miles N. of HUJ not
in touch with enemy. Patrols pushing forward. Total
guns captured 15, of which 13 by Australian Division.
At 1400 Anzac on line PT 331 - MEJDEL exclusive about to
move on BEIT DURAS. Considerable opposition from
direction EL FALUJE where prisoners say there was a
division yesterday. Australian Division should reach
FALUJE by dawn and will move on to EL TINE supported by
Yeomanry Division.

SECRET



General Officer Commanding,
Desert Mounted Corps.

Latest information shows that enemy Headquarters moved back yesterday to RAMLEH and that part of the VIIIth Army appears to be concentrating as far back as NABLUS. The enemy is evidently in the greatest difficulty about transport to get his material away.

The XXI Corps should have its advanced guards near BEIT-DURAS and ESDUD tonight, and will be ready to move on after you.

The moment we can get within striking distance of the railway at ~~or off~~ of Junction Station, the whole of the enemy force which was originally engaged against our right flank north of BEERSHEBA will be in extreme difficulties, and it would seem possible that in this case the defence of JERUSALEM might be ~~be~~ almost impossible.

G.H.Q.,
10/11/17.

For Major-General
Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

By aeroplane at 1120

W.D. 14 B

From Rear-Admiral & Senior Naval Officer, EGYPT.
To General Officer Commanding-in-Chief.

9/11/17.

ASKALON is on rocky ground with cliffs which overlook a very cramped foreshore and consequently is unsuitable as a place for landing stores. There are two beaches, one about half a mile and the other about three miles north of ASKALON, which will do for landing stores provided that the quantities required are not large. The approaches look from the sea as if they would be inadequate for large quantities. Both are inferior to the WADI HESI.

NAHR SUKEREIR appears to be very suitable. It has a cultivated and fairly flat hinterland extending a long way inland. The approach from the beach appears to be very good.

Copy sent to R 1223 10/11/17

115
C
H.V.I.

10th Nov 1917.

C.G.S., G.H.Q.

Your Z/77/40 received at HULRIKHAT 1230.

1. Anzac 0200 reported they were being shelled at ES SUAFIR ESH SHIRKIYE, evidently from the enemy's rear-guard position astride the road and railway at EL KUSTINE. This force is, or was when we last heard from Anzac 0200, holding them up, but it is hoped that the Australians, who are directed on EL TIME via TEL ES SAFI and BALIN, and who will be followed by the Yeomanry, will deal with the situation.
2. Australians have been ordered to reconnoitre to the Junction Station and to hold it if the enemy is not in strength.
3. Anzac hope to water all their horses today, but they have not all got supplies. They will probably have to rest till tomorrow morning, the pursuit being taken up by the other two divisions. Anzac will be pushed on again at the earliest possible moment.
4. Supplies and ammunition, and the disposal of prisoners are becoming very serious problems, and it is hoped that it will be possible to send lorries well forward along the DHIR SIKHID - KUSTINE road. Early information is required of this, in order that the distributing echelons of wheeled transport may be disposed accordingly.
5. Headquarters now moving to PT. 331, 2 miles south of JULIS. Communication by wire is now impossible, but we are using every other available means.
6. It is presumed you are making arrangements about maps? We have no map north of PALESTINE XX.

D.M. Corps, 1500.

(Sgd.) P.G. Howard Vyse, B.C.G.S.

By returning aeroplane.

176 D

SITUATION REPORT 10th November.

0620.
XXI Corps
wire.

ASKALON occupied by our infantry and
artillery last night. Cavalry patrols to
north of MEJDEL. Further captures include
200 rifles, large quantities of S.A.A. some
tents and medical equipment. Quiet night.

17

Situation Report (Continued) 10th November 1917.

0830
XXI CORPS.
Wire

In view of difficulty of supplying advanced troops (ordered to move last night) recommended that all available cars be collected BELAH for this purpose. I.S.C. Sde being withdrawn to ration dump as it is played out and cannot be supplied.

0945
R. F. C.

Our general line is from ESDUD to BEIT DURAS.
Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade in F.26.c.
Our cavalry moving from BEIT DURAS to ESDUD.
Our troops in force at MEJDEL.

JULIS on fire.

No enemy troops from B.14.a as far as D.16.c.

1000
XXI Corps
Wire

Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade report enemy rearguard all arms GHARBIYE at 1830 yesterday and large force retreating northwards.

1050
Signals

Telegraphic communication with Desert Corps broken down.

1110
Desert Corps
Wire

Situation 1000.

Line runs from N. of ARAK to 2 miles N.E. of SUAFIR EL SHERKIYE ridge 2 miles E.S.E held by Anzacs. Watering proceeding. Ausdiv will move through right of the above line.

1120
XX Corps
Wire

One L.A.M. Battery has been ordered to report to XXI Corps at GAZA as soon as possible.

1130
G. H. Q. by
Aeroplane.

To Descorps. Signs of enemy concentrating NABLUS. Enemy has great transport difficulties. XXI Corps should have advanced guards ESDUD and DURAS tonight. The moment we get within striking distance of railway at Junction Station enemy originally engaged against our right flank will be in great difficulties.

1200
R. F. C.

DesCorps Situation, despatched 1130.

Anzacs engaging enemy line YASUR - BURKAH to ESDUD. Heavy shelling H.25 central.

Ausdiv on march to EL TIME and KUSTINE.

Yeodiv. Corps reserve on railway E. of PALUJE.

Descorps Advanced H.Q. HULEIKAT.

128

Situation Report (Continued) 10th November.1917.

1245
R. F. C.

Strategical landed 1030.

EL TIMEH large scattered movement round station. 30 H.T and 100 infantry going N. 200 infantry going E.

3 machines on aerodrome. Most of camps and hangars burnt or removed.

From TIMEH to point 2 miles S.W. 6000-7000 infantry halted. Junction Station. 30 H.T. moving in from S.W. 160 R.S. in station. 2 bombs dropped in station yard.

Enemy appears holding line BURKA-YASUR-KUSTINE-TEL EL SAFI. Our troops at ESDUD-DURAS on a point 1 mile S. of HATTE and point 1 mile N. of MENSHIYEH.

1245
XXI Corps.
Wire

160 tons wheat and millet found DEIR SINEID. Considerable shell fire reported direction TIME. 12 prisoners taken near MEJDEL. 52 Div. Advanced guard passed MEJDEL 0945 and 75 Division main body passed DEIR SINEID 0815.

1105
R. F. C.

Contact Patrol EL KUSTINEH approximately 150 enemy to S. in line and about 50 horses in village.

1110

SUMMEIL Approximately 100 enemy on southern front of village.

1120

KH. ABU ARRAN 100 men 6-10 H.T. and 60-70 horses stationary.

Our line approximately 3 miles S. of EL KUSTINEH through IJSEIR to 1 mile S. of ZEITA.

R. F. C.
1410

Tactical. 0715 - 1045.

Our mounted troops 2000x W of railway ^{N. of ARAK} being shelled.

Large bodies of infantry on ARAK - BEIT JIBRIN road E. of our troops 900 in all halted. 2 miles W. of BEIT JIBRIN 200 infantry scattered on road E. of our troops between ARAK - JIBRIN and T.EL HESI - JIBRIN road 700 troops scattered. On HESI-JIBRIN road 700-800 cavalry and 300-400 infantry moving S.E. about 3 miles S.E. of JIBRIN.

124

Situation Report (Continued) 10th November 1917.

R. F. C.
1410
(Continued)

Reconnaissance then returned to report DesCorps and XX Corps.

On return, E of KUBEIBE cavalry reported moving N.E.
30 H.T. drawn by 4 horses moving N.E. at gallop 2 miles E. of JEBRIN.

JIBRIN very slight movement.

On HEBRON-BETHLEHAM road 700-800 infantry, 400-500 cavalry, 150 H.T. 50 M.T. moving N. from HEBRON.

HEBRON mixed troops, 1000 in groups in and round town.

78 H.T. entering HEBRON from S.W.

HEBRON-DHAHERIYEH Road 50 laden camels moving N.

YUTTA 100-150 cavalry moving N.

DHAHERIYEH no movement.

DURA 100-200 cavalry 50 H.T.

DAWAMIEH 2 groups 75-100 cavalry entering town from N.W.

200 cavalry in area 2 miles round DAWAMIEH.

XX Corps
1420.

Situation. 10th Division moving to KARM.

53rd Division One Brigade group moving to TEL EL SAKATY
N.Z.M.R. Bde ^{less 1 regt} at SABA.

60th Division no change.

74th moving to KARM.

Captures today include 5 5-inch Howrs, 8 guns, 700 O.R.

10 Officers, much transport, complete boring plant.

Prisoners from 47th, 165th and 54th D.A.C.

Prisoners state enemy retiring on EL TIME.

VON Kress passed EL HULEIKAT yesterday.

Reliable English-speaking prisoner says Von Kress orders to make a stand from WADI SURAA to HEBRON.

Man of 165th Rgt says his regiment ordered to form rear-guard to 54th, 26th and 16th Divisions.

A seventh army under Ferzli Pasha in formation at HEBRON, only nominal very few troops.

Guns etc are being got away with difficulty.

1310
DesCorps
wire
Dated 9/11/17

(Continuation of Situation Report, 10th November 1917.)

1445.

D.M. Corps by
aeroplane.

1230. Anzacs being shelled at SUAFIR EL SHERKIYE and held up by enemy from position astride road KUSTINE. Hoped that other divisions would push on and clear away enemy. Anzacs to rest tonight and move on as soon as possible.

Rec'd 1515.

A. & N.Z. Div.

To 52nd Division and transmitted to G.H.Q. 1st L.H. Brigade moving between ESDUD and WADI MEJMA report ridge E.S.E. of ESDUD on west bank strongly held. 2nd L.H. Brigade held up north and north-east of BEIT DURAS. Ausdiv co-operating on right. Men and horses suffering from thirst.

1600.

G.H.Q.

To Adv. Corps. 2500 infantry and 1000 cavalry seen in BEIT JIBRIN - ARAK - TEL EL HESI area. 2000 infantry and 1000 cavalry seen at HEBRON and moving north from there. HEBRON - DAWAIMEH - DHAHERIYEH area only few small scattered cavalry bodies. Movement generally north-east.

1800.

XX Corps wire.

Situation 1800. 10th Division and 74th Division KARM. 53rd no change. 60th 181st Bde. Group moved to JEMAMEH area this morning and will be followed by remainder of division tomorrow to protect JEMAMEH water supply. Imperial Camel Brigade moved to ABU DILAKH.

1900. R.F.C.

Bombing raid. 13 machines bombed station and buildings WADI SURAR (Junction Station). Several direct hits on station and R.S. on line. Damage considerable. Two machines bombed bridge over WADI SURAR, each machine carried 112 lb. bombs and descended to 500 feet under very heavy machine gun and rifle fire. One pilot wounded failed to observe result and other pilot not yet returned.

1930.

XXI Corps.

Wire.

Situation 1900. 75th Division occupying SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH with one infantry brigade and artillery. Remainder 75th Division BURBERAH, BEIT JERJAH and DEIR

/SINEID

131
SINEID. 52nd believed in ESDUD, MEJDEL and HERBIEH
but no report received. 52nd Division in touch with
Anzacs by visual.

1930. R.F.C.

Strategical landed 1600. JIBRIN no movement.
KUSTINE 50 infantry in and round village. MESMIYE 100
infantry. EL TINE 300 troops scattered, 10 R.S.,
aerodrome removed, 20 H.T. moving east between KUSTINE
and TINE.

WADI SURAR. 180 to 190 R.S. 400 infantry and 30 H.T.
scattered about station yard. Short open lengths of
trench on West, south and south-eastern sides of station,
and scattered troops. Enemy appear to hold line along
WADI SURAR from BURKA through KUSTINE to SUMMEIL. Our
line appears to be ESDUD, BEIT DURAS, SHERAKIYE, slightly
north of KERATIYA to point half mile north of ARAK station.
Column of our cavalry, 200 strong, moving north half mile
east of railway. A few shells bursting on ESDUD and ARAK.

137
SITUATION etc. November 10th 1917 (contd.)

2000 52nd and 75th Divisions will close up on their
From G.H.Q. to
XXIst Corps Adv. Guards ES SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH - ESDUD and be
Adv. Deacorps
Adv. XX Corps ready to support the cavalry in driving the enemy
Pal. Bde R.F.C. back from Wadi SUKERKIR.

2049 Flag Captain reports his port engine disabled
From owing to cracking of Intermediate receiver. Time
ENTERPRISE required to make good defects will be signalled
through later.
XXI Corps.

2215 Advanced guard holding village ES SUAFIR EL
XXIst Corps GHARBIYEH report Turks on higher ridge opposite.
estimated at 1 Battalion and 2 Field Batteries.
Squadron of Australians is protecting right of
Advanced Guard.

2355 Passing on message from PORT SAID saying that
XXIst Corps LADYKIRD is ready to sail and is awaiting orders.

SITUATION REPORT.

11th November 1917.

0430.
Desert Mounted Corps. Held up by organized opposition on line
ZEITA - SUMMEIL - NEBI - BURKA. Have
bridgehead North of latter place. Repeated
to XXIst Corps.
0545.
Signals. Lateral communication affected between 60th
and 75th Divisions.
0630.
XXIst Corps. 52nd Division concentrated in area ESDUD -
HEJDEL and report that on arrival they found
Descorps ^{held up on} ridge just North of BEIT
DURAS. 157th Brigade attacked and captured
ridge with bayonets taking 3 Machine Guns.
Turks hung on till position reached but
opposition only slight.
0630.
Desert Mounted Corps. 613 Prisoners have been captured. They
represent 19th, 20th, 31st, 32nd, 58th, 59th,
136th, 134th, 72nd, 134th, 138th, 165th, 81st
and 161st Regiments.

Situation Report, 11th November.

134

0730. From
Battle H.Q.
Descorps.

Eight Ford vans and one tender allotted to this Corps for Signals, R.F.C., and H.Q., now unserviceable. Position serious as only means of transport. Strongly urge that 8 cars, either Vauxhalls or Sunbeams, be sent immediately to replace. Roads now good. They should be sent via GAZA JULIS road to JULIS.

From XX Corps
0730.

10th Divn. and 74th Divn. no change.

53rd Divn. 158th Bde: TEL EL SAKATY.
159th " } KHUWEILFEH.
160th " }

1 Regt. N.Z.M.R. with 53rd Divn. will rejoin its brigade on relief by XX Corps Cav. Regt.

60th Divn. 1 Bde. at JENMMAMEH.
2 Bdes. move to JENMMAMEH.

0800
H.Q. wire.

To Descorps: Camel Brigade being sent immediately JULIS to come under your orders. N.Z.M.R. rejoining you as soon as possible ARAK. Two divisions XXI Corps will be up at noon SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH - ESDUD. Arrange vigorous combined action with XXI Corps troops to drive enemy from W. SUKEREIR and gain JUNCTION Station.

Repeated XXI Corps. XX Corps ordered to send I.C.Bde. and N.Z.Bde. accordingly.

0930 R.F.C.

Tactical 0600 - 0700. Observation very bad owing to sandstorm. No movement DHAHERIYEH or HEBRON road north of DHAHERIYEH.

1130 R.F.C..

Two parties of enemy of 1,000 each moving from ARAK EL MEMSHIYEH towards JUNCTION Station.

Indications of movement north of Wadi MEKENNA. Our troops moving from EL MEJDEL towards HAMMAMEH.

1200
XX Corps.

N.Z.M.R. Bde. ordered to move as early as possible through SHARIA and JEMMAMEH to ARAK EL MEMSHIYEH to rejoin Desert Mounted Corps.

1205
XXI Corps.

Adv. Corps H.Q. will open at DEIR SINEID (L.20.d) at 1830 to-day.

1240
XXI Corps.

Concentration of 52nd and 75th Divns. in progress.
Nothing else to report.

135

SUMMARY OF AERIAL RECONNAISSANCES

Strategical
1345

BEIT JIBRIN. Very little movement.

ZEITA 300 - 400 Infantry halted 2 miles northwest of village.

SUMMEIL 100 Infantry halted in village.

DHIKERIN On high ground 2 miles west of village on a front of 2 miles 1000 - 1400 Infantry apparently digging short lengths of trenches running east and west.

SURAR JUNCTION 200-250 rolling stock including 8 made up trains but no engines in station. Several small bodies of troops south of the station.

RABIEH 3 hangars on aerodrome. 82 rolling stock including 3 made up trains in station. Many small parties of scattered infantry throughout the area and much movement of H.T. and M.T.

Enemy line appears to be from B.14, B.27c., B.27.a., D.4.b., D.12.d., K.15.c., K.23.a. to SUMMEIL thence to ZEITA and BEIT JIBRIN with his main strength in B.14 and K.14.

Our line appears to be as reported yesterday except that Cavalry are to the east of the railway and appear to have forced the enemy back to the BEIT JIBRIN - ZEITA line.

XX Corps 1315.

Situation unchanged.

1430. Desert Mounted Corps.

Administrative H.Q. close at BEERSHEBA at 1000 to-morrow and re-open at the Road Junction 2 miles north-east of GAZA at the same time and date.

D.R.L.S.
Message from
XXI Corps.

Captures by 52nd Division in JERJAH, BURBERAH and HERBIEH area include :-

3 officers and 69 other ranks.
1 Field Gun.
1 damaged 4.2" Howr.
2 damaged A/A Guns.
2 small Howitzers with 30 boxes ammunition.
70 Limbers and Wagons in good condition.
Quantities of gun and S.A. ammunition.

1805 DesCorps
by aeroplane.

Situation 1045. Australian Divn. watching enemy on line ZEITA - SUMMEIL - Pt. 248. Anzac watching him on line KUSTINE - YASUR - Pt. 90 S. of BURKA. Left flank of Anzac occupying N.E. of ESDUD.

1815.
Telephone
Capt. Macdonald.

A ship has been torpedoed at BELAH. Further details later.

1915. XXI Corps
wire.

Situation Anzac Division 1815, transmitted through 52nd Division. Anzac less 1st Bde. now at ESDUD and post left by 2nd Bde. to connect up with 1st Bde. Australian Divn. will withdraw at once to HAMMEL. Brigades have been informed that all water in ESDUD and SUAFIR EL SHARKIYE is wanted for infantry. Also 2nd Bde. and 1st Bde. will remain in position until relieved by infantry.

1930. XX Corps.

60th Division concentrated at JEMMAMIEH. N.Z.M.R. Brigade and I.C. Brigade left to join Desert Mounted Corps. Our armoured cars machine gunned enemy this morning in R.21.D.

1930
XX Corps
wire.

DHAHERIYEH occupied by our cavalry.

137
SITUATION REPORT, 11th November (cont.)

From Adv. 20 Corps
1845

Situation report 80th Division concentrated at JERMAH, W.Z.M.R. Brigade left to join Desert Mounted Corps. Our armoured cars machine gunned the enemy this morning.

From Adv. 21 Corps
1918

Advanced 21 Corps now in L.20. Can you tell me where enemy left flank rests?

G.S.C. wire to
Descorps
1905

Employ Camel Brigade in sand dune area on western flank. If more convenient attach Brigade to 21 Corps by direct arrangement.

Adv. Descorps
Adv. 21 Corps
1930

Arrangements must be made for the demolition of bridge over WADI MERJUH north of station, immediately station is reached also for demolition of railway line to greatest possible distance northwards.

Capt. Macdonald R.E.
reptd. 21 Corps
2000

C-in-C does not consider Naval co-operation asked for by 52nd Division possible owing to shortness of time.

Adv. 20 Corps
2020

GABLI - KHASIF Decauville should be taken up and rails stacked at convenient places for shipment forward.

Adv. Descorps
1800
reptd. 21 Corps
2345

ZEITA occupied by Australian Division who think enemy have evacuated BERKUSIE. Patrols are reported to have approached TEL ES SAFIA. Situation at BALIE not clear. No change otherwise.

0-132
SITUATION REPORT 11th/12th November.

138

G.H.Q. wire to
Adv. 21 Corps
2300

In reply to 21 Corps No. G.S. of 11th enemy
left flank about BEIT JIBRIM.

From 21 Corps
Headquarters

General Bulfin will be at Advanced Desert Mounted
Corps headquarters at noon to-morrow.

0600

Wire re Imperial Camel Brigade operating in sand
dunes repeated to Desert Mounted Corps.

Wire from
DESCORPS
0600

Reported by Australian Division enemy evacuated
BARKUSIE. Anzacs have driven enemy from right bank
WADI BUKERBIR also TEL EL MURDE which they occupy.
Running water 80 yards long, 10 feet deep reported
by them.

134 B

SUMMARY OF EVENTS FOR SUNDAY 11th NOVEMBER 1917.

Flying was seriously interfered with by a sandstorm which prevailed since the early morning. Thus no bomb-raids were possible.

An important strategical reconnaissance was carried out to BEIT JIBRIN, SUMMEIL, SURAR JUNCTION, RAMLEH, YEBNA, &c. About 13,000 enemy infantry and 500 cavalry were located in this area. The enemy appeared to be taking up a line of defence on the high ground North East of the WADI MEJMA from JISR ESDUD to SUMMEIL, thence through BEITA to BEIT JIBRIN. Trenches were seen between YASUR and BURKAH where 6,000 to 7,000 enemy infantry were concentrated.

Considerable movement of transport was observed throughout the area mentioned, its direction of movement being in the main Northward.

Our line was reported to be much the same as yesterday, with the exception of the neighbourhood of ARAK EL MENSHIYE where our troops had apparently forced the enemy back towards BEIT JIBRIN.

No hostile aircraft were reported.

SECRET

146
Z/58/26D.
C

Brig.-Gen. G.F. Clayton.
B.G.G.S.,
Hedjaz Operations.

Your letter, re requirements for AKABA, of
10th November -

(1) A mountain gun battery cannot yet be
provided.

(2) The two 10-pdr. guns on cars from the
Western Desert have been stopped at ISMAILIA, and the
Officer in command is being instructed to report to
you at 2nd Echelon. The guns and cars will be
available for use at AKABA.

(3) You have the necessary authority to approach
the High Commissioner with a view to requisitioning
mules.

Neither camels nor lorries can be supplied by the
E.E.F. at present, though possibly some may become
available later, *but this must still be doubtful*

(4) You are authorised to approach the Egyptian
Telegraphs as you request.

(Sgd) G. P. Dawson

G.H.Q., 1st Ech:
11/11/17.

B.G.G.S.

W.D. 14/ A
From :- G.H.Q.

To :- Advanced XXist Corps, Composite Force, Defences
EL ARISH.

O.B.15.

12/11/17.

Desp. 1255.

The Composite Force including Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade but less any units already detached for special duties with XXist Corps will cease to form part of the XXist Corps from 0800 on 13th November. G.O.C., Composite Force will do what is possible without additional transport to clear south-western portion of battlefield and will use the Imperial Service Cavalry to police MEJDEL and JULIS Roads and villages as necessary North of GAZA up to East and West line through northern boundary of MEJDEL. Regarding latter duty he will concert measures direct with XXist Corps, Administrative Headquarters and Chief Political Officer GAZA.

Addressed XXist Corps repeated Composite Force and
Defences EL ARISH.

Copies to :- B.C.G.S.

O(a).

O(b).

I.

A.

Q.

M.G.R.A.

E in C.

D.A.S.

A.M.S.

Filed :- Z/77.

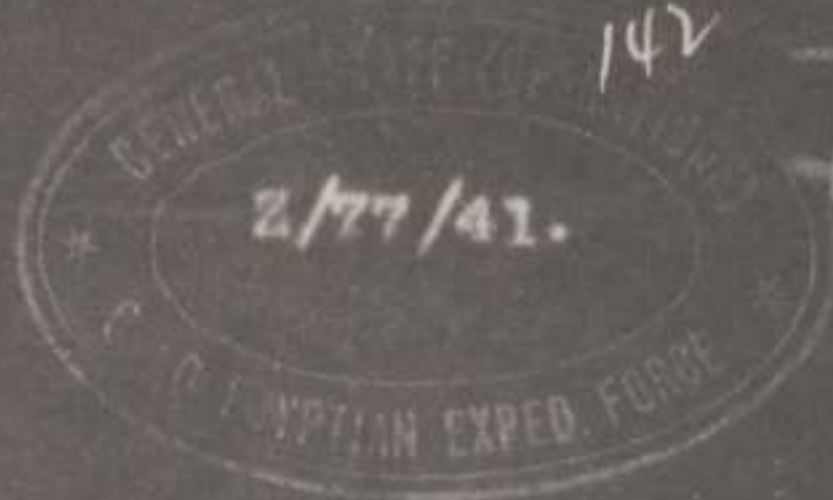
G.S.Cables.

W.D.

113



SECRET



General Officer Commanding,
Desert Mounted Corps,
21st Corps.

Desert Mounted Corps and 21st Corps will
attack the enemy 0700 tomorrow as follows :-

One mounted division of Desert Mounted Corps
to attack on right of 21st Corps. Right boundary of
21st Corps will be from present right flank to TEL EL
TURMUS inclusive thence to EL MESMIYEH inclusive, thence
along road to JUNCTION STATION inclusive.

21st Corps to attack between above line and a
line from ESDUD inclusive via BESHSHIT inclusive to
KATRAH inclusive, and thence to the railway east of EL
MANSURA.

Desert Mounted Corps, less one mounted division,
to attack on left of 21st Corps.

As soon as railway north of JUNCTION STATION
is reached all available mounted troops on north flank
of 21st Corps will move as quickly as possible to occupy
RAMLEH and LUDD, to take up position north of LUDD,
pushing forward strong patrols north over WADI SURAR and
along the JAFFA road, and as far as LATRON on the
JERUSALEM road. Railway north of LUDD to be
demolished up to WADI SURAR. 21st Corps will
immediately strengthen position astride railway north
of JUNCTION STATION, disposing his remaining troops for
defence from LATRON to YERMAH and the sea, forming
mutually supporting defended localities. G.O.C.
Desert Mounted Corps will push mounted troops from
division on right of 21st Corps to LATRON in advance of
21st Corps troops, and will leave there such mounted
forces as G.O.C. 21st Corps may demand.

Copies to
Adm. D.M. Corps
" XXI Corps
Sgt. Paul Bole R.A.
Q
Mikra
DAS.
A

(Sgt) R. J. Bole

May Gen. C.S. 887.

SITUATION REPORT, 12th November.

143

C

0300
Descorps
wire.

When may we expect armoured cars?

0830
XX Corps.

Situation unchanged.

0900
Britannia
wire

Destroyer H.M.S. STAUNCH and Monitor M.15 sunk off BELAH. This shows that further reliance cannot be placed on safety of transports inside nets patrolled by drifters and trawlers. Further landing of stores, BELAH, W.H.SI, or W. SUKERRIR cannot be depended on.

0900
G.H.Q. wire

To XXI Corps. The 2 armoured cars reserved for G.H.Q. reconnaissance are placed at entire disposal of XXI Corps to-day.

Prisoners officially reported to 11th 277 officers and 5150 o.r.

1130
Britannia
wire

No guns of sufficient range to reach RAMTEH owing to loss of M.15. Monitors have been withdrawn to PORT SAID and will not be off JAFFA November 13 until after light has failed. November 14th earliest date for demonstration. GRAPTON will not be ready for sea for 6 days.

1240
XX Corps wire

Situation unchanged. 1215.

1245
R. F. C.

Strategical 0730 - 1030.
YASUR 4 gun emplacements H.21, 8 infantry scrapes. BESMIYEH 20 shelters N. of town and trenches $\frac{1}{2}$ mile S.W. C.3 & 4 50 occupied shelters. Junction Station. About 50 R.S. in station. Train of 15 wagons going on line to JERUSALEM. 2 camps 50 T.S. each S. and E. of station. Many scattered tents and large dump N. of station. EL TIME 5 wagons in station, 50 shelters immediately W. SUMEIL 3 troops cavalry moving N. 2 miles N. of village.

Our line approximately ESDUD-B28cent- EL HAMBAM-SUMEIL

062
144
SITUATION REPORT 12th November (cont.)

1255
G.B.Q. wire

Composite Force will cease to form part of
XXIst Corps from 0600 13th. G.B.Q. Composite
Force will do what he can to clear S.E. portion
of battlefield and will use I.B.C. to police
MEJDEL, JULIS, and other villagen between
GAZA and MEJDEL.

1315
XX Corps wire

H.Z.M.R. Brigade arrived JERUSALEM 0800
to-day.

1330
Descorps pigeon

Situation 1215 unchanged. Last night Yeomanry
Division concentrated MEJDEL and I.C. Brigade
arrived JULIS. Yeomanry Division relieving
a Brigade ANZACS in front line. ANZACS
concentrating HAMAME.

1440
Britannia wire

Rear-Admiral's flag transferred to GRAPTON.

1315
XX Corps wire

Inform Descorps that Company I.C. Brigade
guarding ammunition dump at AMEIDAT Station
is being relieved by 60th Division to-morrow
and has been ordered to Point 331 2 inches
S.E. of JULIS.

1350
XX Corps wire

No change in situation.

1900
XXI Corps
telephone

75th Division reported 1300 enemy had
retired from KUSTINE and 76th Division were
moving forward to occupy village. No report
since that time. 52nd Division cleared BURKAH
and secured ridge in H.19. They were twice
counter-attacked and driven off ridge, but
each time re-captured ridge which they now
hold. Enemy in considerable strength with
20 guns.

List of above repeated Descorps, stating

145
that XXist Corps consider their left most
strongly opposed and ask for vigorous action
by Mounted Troops against enemy's right flank
to-morrow.

2010
XXist Corps
wire

75th Division reported 1220 TEL EL
TERRAH, and EL KUSTINE unoccupied and that
75th Division was going to occupy them.
Turkish Cavalry reported moving A.P. from
HESSEYEH. No further report received.
52nd Division met stronger opposition in
BURRAH than expected. 156th Brigade
occupied trenches in H.10 also first and
part of second line trenches immediately
N. of BURRAH. Enemy counter-attacked and
took trenches in H.10 but has been driven
out again by our counter-attack.

G.H.Q.
2115

Orders issued to Descorps and
XXist Corps for advance to commence at
0700 13th.

146
SITUATION REPORT. November 12th (cont.)

2115

Message to :- Adv. Descorps, Adv. 21st Corps,
Admin. Descorps, Admin. 21st Corps
re to-morrow's operations.

Adv. 21st Corps
2315

75th Division report they did not reach
TURMOS and EL KUSTIEM these places are estimated
to be occupied by 1000 and 1400 Turks respectively.

From 20th Corps
2330

53rd Division are carrying out road and
water reconnaissance to-morrow to N.E. of
DRAHRIYEH in direction of AL. DILMEH.
Please warn R.F.C.

147
SITUATION REPORT, 12th November, - contd.

2250
Descorps wire.

Australian Division attacked this afternoon from direction TEL EL SAFT and EL TIME. Number estimated at 5,000, and were forced to withdraw from BERKUSIE BALIN. Australian Division now on line SUMMIL - Pt. 248 with 75th Division $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile N.W. Australian Division thinks enemy entrenching opposite this position. Yeomanry Division on line from left of infantry to TEL EL MURRE Pt. 71.

148 A

From :- XXist Corps Battle H.Q.

To :- G.H.Q.

G.34.

13/11/17

Despd. 1947

Recd. 2159

Enemy retreating East from MUGHAR were seen collecting in Wadis between railway and their late positions also on East side of WADI MERUBBAH. Advance will be resumed 0700 to-morrow. 52nd Division will leave garrisons to hold YEBNAH, MUGHAR and KATRAH, entrenching these from attack from North and North-east. Remainder of Division will push forward and occupy SHAMEH and MANSURAH, garrisons being maintained in both these places, and these points entrenched. Parties will be pushed forward from MANSURA and railway line blown up from the word WADI in Square F.4.b. to UMM KELMAH.

75th Division will throw forward a right flank guard of one brigade to the 52nd Division, keeping touch with the 52nd Division until railway line has been reached, when this brigade will assist the 234th Brigade, entrenching JUNCTION STATION position, and will remain at that point until further orders. Remaining Brigade 75th Division will move to the best tactical position to support JUNCTION STATION from the North, North-east and East.

Corps reserve remains with one battalion in TEL EL TURMOS. rest of brigade in SUAFIR EL GHARBIYEH.

Battle Headquarters will be as follows:-

XXist Corps
52nd Division
75th Division

G.11.
BESHSHIT.
K.22.

Acknowledge.

149 B
(Continuation of Situation Report, 17th Nov. 1917)

0650.

75th Division unchanged. Quiet night.

XXI Corps.

52nd Division, quiet night. 156th Brigade have consolidated positions gained north of BURKAH. 155th Brigade have moved to T.28.

0700.

Situation unchanged.

XX Corps.

0815.

Situation normal. All quiet.

D.M. Corps.

0850.

It would take 9 days to move 52nd Division to JERUSALEM from receipt of orders, and would require 70 to 80 lorries in addition to transport at present with Corps. Tractors with Corps in a bad state. Require 2 heavy cars for Corps H.Q. and 1 per division.

B.G.S.S.

XX Corps
telephone.

Water. Can arrange in 4 days at JEMMAMIEH - TEL EL NESI area for 1 Division.

NEJILE

1 Division.

BUREIR)

SIMSIM)

NEJED)

HUJ)

1 Division.

Watering arrangements would take 4 days to organise owing to slow movement of tractor transport. XX Corps do not wish to commit themselves to this work before they know definitely that they are going to these areas. XX Corps are organising water in BEERSHEBA daily supply for 1 division, storage for 1 division.

0930

G.H.Q.

To Rear-Admiral. Proposed demonstration not considered needful at present.

1012. R.F.C.

No movement NEJILE - DIAHERIYEH - HEBRON.

110

SITUATION REPORT, 13th November.

1215 R.F.C.

Strategical 0545 - 0845. EL TIME: slight movement.
JAPPA - LUDD roads: only slight movement.
Our cavalry moving up on our left flank. Head of
advance appears to be within $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile of KH. SUKAREIR.
On the right cavalry on line reported last night.
Q.24 - Q.15 thence to railway L.24 where it joins
infantry.

1230. Signals.

Direct telegraphic communication with Descorps
established.

1230. Descorps
wire.

0915. Australian Division unchanged.
Yeomanry Division report enemy's right flank in
position W.22.C (YEBNAH). Enemy's left flank in
position 500 yds. S.W. of Y.16.c. (BESHSHIT).
Yeomanry Division all clear and will commence its
attack on W. 22.C.

1240. XX Corps
wire.

Situation unchanged.

1300 Descorps
wire.

YEBNAH captured 1125.

1345. XXI Corps.

Attack commenced at 0700, and by 1000 75th
Division occupied TEL EL TURMUS - KUSTINEH - YASUR
and 52nd Division BESHSHIT with only slight opposition.
MESMIYEH occupied, after considerable opposition from
artillery and M.G. fire, by 75th Division at 1200.
52nd Division now advancing against KATRAH, and
187th Brigade are sending troops to occupy high
ground north of YEBNAH (YEBRIAH?).
XXI Corps Battle H.Q. on high ground S.W. of SUAFIR
EL GHARBIYEH.

1400
78th Division.

Considerable hostile shelling during advance on
EL MESHIYEH by 77 mm. shrapnel.

At 1230 batteries starting to move forward to
positions of 2nd phase, but they are being spotted by
an enemy plane which is delaying them.

²
~~2~~ officers 57 other ranks and 1 Machine Gun
captured in MESHIYEH.

1400
Desert Mounted
Corps.

Administrative Headquarters close at 1800 to-day
at Road Junction 2 miles N.E. of GAZA, and re-open
at JULIS at same time.

1520 XXI Corps.

A hostile aeroplane reconnoitred the whole
of our line at 1130.

1520.

Telegraphic communication with Descorps. *interrupted*
restored later.