

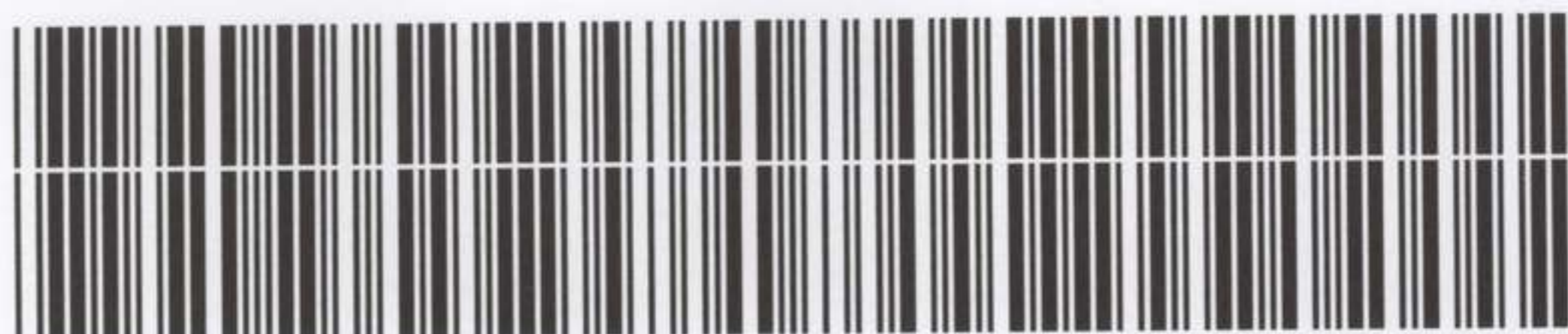
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/6/24 Part 2

Title: General Staff, General
Headquarters, Egyptian
Expeditionary Force

April 1918



AWM4-1/6/24PART2

Z/85/6.

General Officer Commanding,
XXIst Corps.

With reference to your letter No. S.G.113 of 1/4/18, I am directed to inform you that the Commander-in-Chief approves of your proposals for the operation to be carried out by the XXIst Corps.

The XXth Corps, as arranged at the Commander-in-Chief's Conference held at General Headquarters this morning, will not advance their line to FURKHAH, but will take over the defence of DEIR GHUSSANEH and BERUKIN on the 14th April.

A bombardment of the enemy's positions opposite XXth Corps will be carried out on the 15th April and following days.

The date selected for Z day is approved.

(Sgd.) L. J. BOLS.

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

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
5/4/18.

G.S.1080.

5-4-18.

121/Mediterranean/3164. (S.D.2.)

19th March, 1918.

Sir,

I am commanded by the Army Council to inform you that the question of the employment of PATHAN Squadrons of Indian Cavalry in Palestine against the Turks has recently been under their consideration in consultation with the Secretary of State for India and the Commander-in-Chief, India, and it was agreed that Cis-frontier Pathans were quite reliable, but that it was not advisable to employ any squadron which contained a larger percentage than 50% Trans-frontier Pathans against the Turks.

I am to say that as none of these squadrons contain so large a proportion of Trans-frontier men, the Council do not propose to restrict their employment in Palestine.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd.) B. B. CUBITT.

The General Officer,
Commanding-in-Chief,
British Forces in EGYPT.

Minutes of the Commander-in-Chief's Conference
held at General Headquarters on 5th
April, 1918.

1. Colonel Nugent reviewed the enemy's dispositions in the Near East.
2. The Commander-in-Chief stated that it would be necessary to modify his original plan of operations, owing to instructions having been received from the War Office.
It was still his intention, however, to advance to the NABLUS - TULKERAM Line.
3. General Bulfin explained his plan of attack on the TABSOR System and subsequent advance to the line AZUN - NAHR EL FALIK.
4. In order to assist the operations of the XXIst Corps it was decided that the XXth Corps
 - (a) Should take over the defence of GUSSANEH and BERUKIN from the XXIst Corps on the 14th April.
 - (b) Should carry out a bombardment on the morning of the 15th.
5. The Chief of the General Staff explained the future organisation of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
5/4/1918.

PRIORITY.

From: - DIAMILINT LONDON.

To :- CHIEF EGYPTFORCE repeated ARBUR CAIRO for
WINGATE.

55899 cipher.

7/4/18.

Desp. 1420.
Recd. 2140.

Question as follows for answer by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on Tuesday April 9th begins:- Whether he is in position to make statement about affairs of Kingdom of HEDJAZ SULTANATES RIADH and HAIL and countries adjoining - ends.

The following points are included in proposed answer:-

1. Declaration of Arab Independence July 1916.
2. Turks in HEDJAZ originally 20,000 to 30,000 strong
3. MECCA TAIF JEDDAH RUNFUDA seized.
4. Numerous tribesmen officers and men Prisoners of War volunteered to form organised permanent force.
5. This Army and HUSSEIN's 4 sons cleared RED SEA Coast for 500 miles.
6. Railway continually interrupted, MEDINA blockaded last 8 months.
7. FEISAL advanced 700 miles MECCA - TAFIL.
8. Recent AMMAN raid assisted ARABS to maintain position.
9. 10,000 killed and wounded and prisoners Turkish casualties to date; 47 guns 40 machine guns captured.
10. ARABS occupied (engaged?) or isolated 40,000 Turks and over 100 guns.

Any comments you may wish to make on above, please wire "PRIORITY".

G.O.C., Desert Mounted Corps.
G.O.C., XXth Corps.
G.O.C., XXIst Corps.

1. The Commander-in-Chief intends to attack the enemy between DEIR GUSSANEH and the sea and to gain the front, KH EL FAKHAKHIR - AZZUN - JIYITIS - KH IBREIKEH - MISKEH - NAHR EL FALIK.

2. XXIst Corps will carry out preliminary operations with a view to gaining positions from which to deliver this attack. When these positions have been secured the XXIst Corps will carry out the main operations according to the plan submitted by General Officer Commanding, XXIst Corps.

3. The following troops will be placed at the disposal of the XXIst Corps for this operation:-

Australian Mounted Division.
1/1st Stafford Yeomanry (less one Squadron).
Desert Mounted Corps Bridging Train.
One Brigade and One Field Artillery Brigade
of 53rd Division.

4. The XXth Corps will take over the defence of BERUKIN on the 14th April, and will carry out a bombardment of the enemy's positions opposite XXth Corps on the 15th April and following days.

5. The Royal Navy will co-operate under arrangements to be made by General Officer Commanding, XXIst Corps with the Rear Admiral, Senior Naval Officer, Egypt, and Red Sea Division.

A liaison officer has been detailed by the Rear Admiral to be attached to the XXIst Corps during operations.

6. The dates of the main attack have already been communicated to Corps Commanders.

7. Please acknowledge.

(Sgd.) L. J. BOLS.
Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
9/4/18.

Z/85/9.

General Officer Commanding,
XXth Corps.

In order to assist the Arab operations against MAAN, which are timed to take place on the 20th instant, under SHERIF FEISAL, the Commander-in-Chief directs that a demonstration be made against the enemy now holding positions about SHUNET NIMRIN, with a view to stimulating the idea that further operations against AMMAN are contemplated by us.

The Commander-in-Chief considers that the operations should commence on the 18th April and should continue for not less than two days.

The plan of the operations should be framed primarily to inflict severe losses on the enemy; a geographical objective is not considered necessary. In the event of the enemy retiring on ES SALT, he will be followed up, but the town is not to be entered by our troops, as it would create an opportunity for the Turks to ill-treat the inhabitants on our withdrawal to the bridgehead.

An outline of your proposals to carry the above into effect should be forwarded to these Headquarters for the information of the Commander-in-Chief.

(Sgd.) L. J. BOLS.

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

G.H.Q.,
13/4/18.

From:- TROOPERS LONDON.

To :- EGYPFORCE.

56296 cipher.

13/4/18.
14/4/18.

Desp. 1800.
Recd. 0450.

Reference War Office telegram 53896 / 10th March and War Office letter 121/Mediterranean/3031 January 5th. It is necessary that instructions contained in above should be varied as follows:-

2. The following decision has been arrived at on account of the situation in FRANCE:- From the personnel rendered surplus by substitution of Indian for British battalions your remaining British battalions will be brought up to War Establishment plus 10%. All personnel surplus to War Establishment plus 10% will be sent to FRANCE. It is anticipated that shipping will be available by May 15th for despatch of additional infantry reinforcements to FRANCE.

Reinforcements are so urgently needed in FRANCE that the making up to establishment plus 10% of the units remaining in EGYPT must be deferred till arrival of the units of the Indian battalions from INDIA.

Accordingly 1 British Battalion should be despatched as a unit to FRANCE for every Indian Battalion which has arrived by May 15th. By this date at least 8 British battalions should be available. As we do not know how the process of substitution is being carried out, we leave selection of the battalions to you.

3. It is expected that a further 15 Indian Battalions will reach you by the end of September thus allowing for the completion of dilution of the 10th, 53rd and 60th Divisions to 3 British and 9 Indian battalions.

4. It is now proposed to form another mixed division by utilising 3 British battalions released as in paragraph 3 with additional Indian battalions which should be available before end of 1918. We are asking India what she can do towards providing Divisional troops but it seems from the information available that the provision of artillery is the only serious difficulty.

5. This can only be done by reducing the scale of your divisions sufficiently to allow of 30 18-pdr. guns and 8 4.5" Howitzers for the new Division. It is calculated that including the new Division you will then have one division of 36 18-pdr. guns and 12 4.5" Howitzers, 2 Division of 30 18-pdr. guns and 12 4.5" Howitzers, 4 Divisions of 30 18-pdr. guns and 8 4.5" Howitzers.

6. It is not proposed to touch the 54th Division which will remain on its present establishment and is not included in the calculations in para.5.

/7.

7. As your L. of C. will not now be lengthened, you are receiving Jewish battalions and some additional French troops. Can any Garrison Battalions be spared from EGYPT? You have time to make plans as the existing programme of movements will fully occupy shipping till about the end of May. Every man you can send will be valuable.

6 Re substitution of British by Indian Battalions.

D.M.S.

1. The original scheme of reorganisation was as follows:-

10th Division	to consist of 6 British and 6 Indian Bns.
53rd	" " " " 10 " " 2 " "
	(both in 160th Brigade).
54th	" " " of 12 British Battalions.
60th	" " " " 6 British and 6 Indian Bns.
75th	" " " " 3 " " 9 " "

2. By May 7th at latest the following replacements will have taken place in the following order:-

- (a) 10th Division. All 6 Indian Battalions will have replaced all 6 British.
- (b) 75th Division. One Indian Battalion will have replaced one British Battalion in each of the 232nd and 233rd Brigades.
All 3 Brigades will then have 2 British and 2 Indian Battalions.
- (c) 60th Division. One Indian Battalion will have replaced one British Battalion in the 179th Brigade.

3. The date when the remainder of the reorganisation will be carried out depends on the date of arrival of the remaining Indian Battalions, but 1 Indian Battalion will replace one British Battalion in the 180th Brigade (60th Division) next month.

4. When the reorganisation in para. 1 is complete a further replacement will take place.

- (a) 10th Division will receive 3 more Indian Battalions
- (b) 60th Division " " 3 " " "
- (c) 53rd Division " " 7 " " "

All these Divisions will then consist of 3 British and 9 Indian Battalions.

5. Later still a new Division of 3 British and 9 Indian Battalions will be formed.

6. You have at present 6 Indian Field Ambulances recently arrived or en route from India, the 123rd Field Ambulance with the 75th Division.

7. Will you please say how many Indian Field Ambulances will have to be brought up when the reorganisation mentioned in para. 2 is carried out, and how many will be required from India with the 13 Battalions mentioned in para. 4.

(Sgd.) J. SPENCER.

Lieut-Colonel,
G.S.

G.S.(O).
15/4/18.

From:- Chief Egyptforce.

To :- Troopers LONDON.

E.A. 1118. Cipher.

18/4/18.

Dep. 2215.

Sanction is requested to proposals contained in the following, with which the High Commissioner concurs. The High Commissioner agrees with me that time is ripe for a reorganisation in staff of Hejaz Mission to meet altering conditions in my sphere North of line TEBUK - AKABA where Arab operations are developing northwards.

It is proposed to add small Arab Section to Operations Section General Headquarters, consisting of a G.S.O.3. This G.S.O.3. to come from Hejaz Staff in CAIRO.

By controlling Arab Operations in my sphere directly from General Headquarters, the establishment of a G.S.O.1. Hejaz Mission becomes redundant and is unnecessary, as operations based on WEDJ and YANBO can be controlled by Colonel WILSON.

Do not propose any alteration in Administrative Staff of HEDJAZ Mission at present, its functions being continued as heretofore. The proposal entails increase of one G.S.O.3. to G.H.Q. Staff with decrease of one G.S.O.1 and one G.S.O.3. Hejaz Mission Staff.

General Officer Commanding,

XXIst Corps.

1. With reference to your letter No. B.A.3/288, dated 10th April, after careful consideration the Commander-in-Chief is of the opinion that the failure of the company of the 98th Indian Infantry attached to 58th Rifles was primarily due to lack of training and experience.

2. The Company will therefore remain under the command of the Officer Commanding 58th Rifles, who will undertake its further training, and it is hoped that by placing the company in the line by platoons they may gradually become accustomed to being under fire and regain their morals.

Summaries of evidence, however, will be taken in the cases of such men as are known to have gone back without due cause, with a view to ascertaining whether sufficient evidence exists to obtain convictions for cowardice before a court-martial.

(Signed) L. J. BOLS.

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

G.H.Q.
19/4/18.

G.O.C., Desert Mounted Corps.
G.O.C., XXth Corps.
G.O.C., XXIst Corps.

Cases have recently become known of

- (a) Prisoners captured by the enemy stating the strength and composition of their own and other units.
- (b) Operation orders and marked maps being carried into battle and falling into the hands of the enemy.

Steps are to be taken to explain to all ranks how such conduct endangers the success of operations, and is often the cause of unnecessary casualties.

(Sgd.) A.B.ROBERTSON,

G.G.G.S.

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

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

19/4/18.

FORCE ORDER NO. 63.

by

GENERAL SIR EDMUND ALLENBY, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,
Commander-in-Chief, Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

General Headquarters,

20th April, 1918.

1. Desert Mounted Corps will take over the command of the right flank of the Force.

Dividing line between XXth Corps and Desert Mounted Corps will be:-

KURN SURTUBEH (112.M.17) - Point 830 (113.R.11.d.) -
EL KUSR (113.B.1.a.) - RAS ET TAWIL (113.C.14) -
Point (100.J.20.a.9.9.) - (EL AZIRIYEH to Desert
Mounted Corps), thence to mouth of WADI EN NAR
(114.Y.16.c.)

2. Headquarters Desert Mounted Corps will be established in the neighbourhood of KH. EL MESHRAH (113.G.11).
3. Desert Mounted Corps will be responsible for the front west of the JORDAN from the right of the XXth Corps, and for the whole of the front east of the JORDAN and DEAD SEA.

4. The following units are allotted to Desert Mounted Corps:-

Mounted Division.
Australian Mounted Division.
Anzac Mounted Division.
Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade.
20th Indian Infantry Brigade.
Imperial Camel Brigade.
Dead Sea Flotilla.
10th Heavy Battery, R.G.A.,
343rd Siege Battery, R.G.A.

5. 7th Mounted Brigade is allotted to XXIst Corps and will be concentrated in the SELMEH area after reorganization.
6. Date of taking over command relief of units of XXth Corps will be arranged between the Corps Commanders concerned and reported to General Headquarters.
7. Instructions for future operations will be issued separately.

(Sgd.) L. J. BOLL.
Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

General Officer Commanding,
Desert Mounted Corps.

Reference Force Order No. 63 dated 20th
April, 1918.

1. The Commander-in-Chief intends to gain control of the country east of the JORDAN contained in the area GIZR ED DAMIE, ES SALT, AMMAN, KISSIR Station, MADEBA, DEAD SEA.
2. In this area there are now about 6,000 enemy of all arms.
3. Preliminary operations will be carried out with the object of surrounding and capturing that portion of the enemy's forces now about SHUNET NIMRIN and ES SALT.
4. When the country between the JORDAN and the line MADEBA, ES SALT, JIZR ED DAMIE has been cleared, further operations will be undertaken with a view to gaining a secure hold of the railway about AMMAN.
5. It is probable that during all these operations considerable help may be counted on from the Arabs, and the closest touch must be maintained with them.
6. The harvest about ES SALT begins within a fortnight. This harvest is of great importance to the Turks, and it is therefore urgent that you should be in occupation of this district by the first week in May.

(Sgd.) L. J. BOLS.

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

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
20/4/18.

Z/85/12.

General Officer Commanding,
Desert Mounted Corps.

With regard to the instructions contained
in my Z/85/11 of 20/4/18.

During the operations East of the JORDAN
full value should be made of the mobility of the large
force of mounted troops under your command, and of
your great numerical superiority over the enemy.

Your plans should aim generally at surrounding
the enemy with superior numbers. This implies secret
concentrations of large forces, followed by rapid and
bold marches.

As far as is known at present, if the six
or seven thousand enemy fighting force East of the
JORDAN is destroyed the Turks have no means of replacing
this force except by withdrawing troops from their
front West of the JORDAN. It is unlikely that they
will risk withdrawing much from the main battle front.

Consequently a few well conceived and rapid
movements in which all your available strength is
employed will probably result in completely clearing
the area in which you are to operate.

As soon as your operations have gained the
front AMMAN - ES SALT, you will at once prepare for
operations northward with a view to advancing
rapidly on DERA'A.

(Sgd.) L. J. BOLS.

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

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
20/4/18.

G.O.C., XXth Corps.
 G.O.C., XXIst Corps.
 G.O.C., Force in Egypt.
 Inspector PALESTINE L. of C.

1. This office letter No. Z/81 dated 12/4/18 to XXth Corps is cancelled.

2. Indian battalions are allotted to divisions as follows:-

(a) 10th Division.

29th Infantry Brigade.
 1/101st Grenadiers in replacement of { 5th Connaught Rngrs.
 1/54th Sikhs { 6th Leinster Regt.

30th Infantry Brigade.
 38th Dogras in replacement of { 6th R. Munster Fus.
 1st Kashmir Rifles { 7th R. Dublin Fus.

31st Infantry Brigade.
 2/101st Grenadiers in replacement of { 6th R. Innis. Fus.
 74th Punjabis { 5th R. Irish Fus.

(b) 75th Division.

232nd Infantry Brigade.
 72nd Punjabis in replacement of 2/4th Somerset L.I.

233rd Infantry Brigade.
 29th Punjabis in replacement of 2/4th Hampshire Regt.

3. (a) The 154th, 165th and 166th Indian Field Ambulances and the 30th, 31st and 32nd Field Ambulances will form combined Field Ambulances in the 10th Division.

(b) The 145th, 146th and 147th Field Ambulances and the 123rd and 127th Indian Field Ambulances will form combined Field Ambulances in the 75th Division. The D.A.G., G.H.Q., will issue the necessary orders for the formation of combined Field Ambulances and for the disposal of surplus personnel.

4. The following moves will take place :-

(a) The Inspector PALESTINE Lines of Communication will arrange for the 1/101st and 2/101st Grenadiers to move by rail to LUDD. Move to be completed by April 29th.

(b) D.Q.M.G. will arrange for the move of 1/54th Sikhs, 38th Dogras, 1st Kashmir Rifles, 74th, 72nd and 29th Punjabis and the 154th, 165th and 166th Field Ambulances from TEL EL KEBIR to LUDD. Move to be completed by May 2nd.

(c) The Inspector PALESTINE Lines of Communication will arrange for the move of the 127th Indian Field

/Ambulance

Ambulance from KANTARA to LUDD. Move to be completed by May 3rd.

(d) General Officers commanding, 20th and 21st Corps will arrange for the replacement of the 2/4th R.W. Surrey Regiment (160th Infantry Brigade) by the 1/4th Wiltshire Regiment (233rd Infantry Brigade) to be completed by May 2nd.

The 1/4th Wiltshire Regiment will be replaced temporarily in the 233rd Infantry Brigade by either the 2/4th Dorset Regiment or the 2/4th Devon Regiment from the 234th Infantry Brigade.

The 1/4th Wiltshire Regiment will move with its first line transport and equipment complete.

On relief the 2/4th R.W. Surrey Regiment will move to SURAFEND. D.Q.M.G. will issue orders as to the disposal of its equipment and transport.

5. All British battalions mentioned in para. 2 will march to SURAFEND after relief by Indian battalions. D.Q.M.G. will issue orders as to handing over transport and equipment to Indian battalions.

6. Personnel attached to L.T.M. Batteries will remain with these batteries.

(Signed) A. B. ROBERTSON.

B.G.G.S.
for Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
20/4/18.

From:- Troopers, LONDON.

To :- Chief, EGYPTFORC.

56858 cipher.

21/4/18.

22/4/18.

Desp. 2320.

Recd. 0730.

To replace our casualties in FRANCE which now amount to 225,000 we have sent 180,000 drafts from ENGLAND and had 30,000 drafts in FRANCE on March 30th. Our total monthly income until August amounts to about 23,000 of all arms and we have to keep a pool in hand for further heavy fighting. We have therefore already to reduce six Divisions to cadres. A renewal of strong enemy attacks is expected in the near future and it is of vital importance to reconstitute these derelict Divisions.

The only possible means at our disposal is to call on you for battalions. It is therefore hoped that you can release a further 14 battalions in addition to the 9 mentioned in your E.A.1105 of 12.4.18, to follow as shipping comes available.

It is hoped these can be released on the following assumptions :-

1. For the present the proposal to raise a new Division in Egypt has been abandoned.
2. Indian Battalions will replace the extra ? 14 battalions to be released but if may be necessary to release some of the British Battalions before their reliefs arrive from INDIA, in order not to delay transfer to FRANCE.
3. The 30 battalions you require in EGYPT plus 10% reinforcements amount to 31,812 men. According to our latest return you will have 54,916 British infantry in Divisions when 3rd Division arrives. This leaves some 23,000 available for FRANCE which should account for the 9 battalions already earmarked plus 14 suggested above.

We fully realise that loss of efficiency and temporary reduction in strength in your force will be entailed by this but this is a risk which should be taken and which we are prepared to accept in view of the present situation and the fact that the Germans are concentrating every available man in the West.

We should be glad of your views and there is time to give matter careful consideration as all available shipping will be occupied by moves already ordered till about the middle of May.

MINUTES OF THE COMMANDER-in-CHIEF'S CONFERENCE.

Held at General Headquarters, 24th April, 1918.

1. Colonel Nugent reviewed the enemy's dispositions.
2. General Officer Commanding, Desert Mounted Corps, gave an outline of his plans for the operations east of the JORDAN.
3. It was decided to temporarily allot the following additional troops to the Desert Mounted Corps:-

60th Division, less one Brigade Group.
20th Corps Cavalry Regiment.
4. General Officer Commanding, XXth Corps, was asked to assist the operation by carrying out raids and by the display of tentage to encourage the enemy to believe an attack was being prepared on his front.
5. The Arabs now about MADEBA to be directed on NAAUR, the movement to commence on the 30th April.
6. General Headquarters undertook the control of such troops of the Desert Mounted Corps as were left at BELLAH in the process of reorganisation.
7. The Commander-in-Chief drew attention to the necessity for improving the defensive works, both in first and second line, and the erection of wire when considered advisable.
8. It was decided that the complete evacuation of inhabitants from the War Zone should not be carried out, but that all undesirables should be removed.

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
24/4/18.

From :- Commandant, AKABA.

To :- Eypforce, repeated Hedghog, CAIRO.

781 cipher.

24/4/18.
25/4/18.

Desp. 2358.
Recd. 1400.

From Colonel Dawnay the following begins:-

Operations. A.D.9. April 24th.
British Mobile Column. On 20/4/18 reconnoitring, discovered RAMLEH evacuated by enemy. Demolitions extend ---? Force moved to RAMLEH with intention attack MUDOWARA following day. On 21/4/18 reconnoitring in force confirmed by air reconnaissance found MUDOWARA reinforced by relief train from TEBUK. Estimated that garrison 400 to 500 with at least 2 long range Austrian guns and 2 Mantellis, making direct attack on strongly fortified positions impracticable. Demolished 10 arch culvert, and telegraph cut 5 miles South of MUDOWARA, troops returning at dusk to neighbourhood of SHHIM. Attacked WADI RETHM on 22/4/18 enemy retiring from Station to Redoubt on escarpment 1200 feet above railway. Station occupied and destroyed and more than a kilometre of line demolished. Action continued till 1730 when positions on heights were abandoned by enemy, who suffered heavy casualties from ----? -ing accurate artillery and machine gun fire. Precipitous nature of escarpment rendered pursuit impossible. On 23/4/18 systematical demolition continued. During 5 days operations, demolition, distributed over sections of 35 kilometres from WADI RETHM to within 5 kilometres of MUDOWARA amount to:- three stations completely destroyed together with rolling stock in sidings - 8 kilometres of track demolished - 20 bridges and culverts aggregating 81 arches blown up - and approximately 10 kilometres of telegraph poles burned and wire removed. Today Force is returning to GUWEIRA. Prisoners on April 19th should read officers 2, other ranks 52.

From :- Commandant, AKABA

Addressed Egypforce repeated Hedghog, CAIRO.

781 cipher.

24/4/18.
25/4/18.

desp. 2358
recd. 1400.

From Colonel Dawnay the following begins:-

Operations A.D. 9. April 24th.
British Mobile Column on 20/4/18 reconnoitring,
discovered RAMLEH evacuated by enemy.
Demolitions extend -?- Force moved to RAMLEH with
intention attack MUDOWARA following day.

On 21/4/18 reconnoitring in force confirmed by
air reconnaissance found MUDOWARA reinforced by
relief train from TEBUK. Estimates that garrison
400 to 500 with at least 2 long range Austrian Guns,
and 2 Mantellis, making direct attack on strongly
fortified positions impracticable.
Demolished 10 arch culvert, and telegraph cut 5 miles
south of MUDOWARA, troops returning at dusk to
neighbourhood of SHHIM.

Attacked WADI RETHM on 22/4/18 enemy retiring
from station to redoubt on ESCARPMENT 1200 feet
above railway. Station occupied and destroyed and
more than a kilometre of line demolished.

Action continued till 1730, when positions on
heights were abandoned by enemy, who suffered heavy
casualties from -?- accurate artillery and
machine gun fire.

Precipitous nature of Escarpment rendered pursuit
impossible.

On 23/4/18 systematical demolition continued.

During 5 days operations, demolition distributed
over sections of 35 Kilometres from WADI RETHM to
within 5 Kilometres of MUDOWARA, amount to:-

Three Stations completely destroyed, together
with rolling stock in sidings.
8 Kilometres of track demolished.
20 bridges and culverts aggregating 81 arches
blown up.
and approximately 10 kilometres of telegraph
poles burned and wire removed.

To-day force is returning to GUWEIRA.

Prisoners on April 19th should read Officers 2,
other ranks 52. Ends.

Z/85/15.

General Officer Commanding,
Desert Mounted Corps.

With reference to your S.G./658/4 of April 26th, the first stage in the operations east of the JORDAN is to clear the country between the JORDAN and the line MADEBA - ES SALT - JISH ED DAMIE (vide my Z/85/11 of April 20th).

The Commander-in-Chief does not intend at present to fix any date for the further operations against AMMAN or the enemy at JISR ED DAMIE, and the factors mentioned by you in paragraph 6 of your letter quoted above will all be taken into consideration before any further advance is ordered.

(Sgd.) W. H. BARTHOLOMEW,

B.G.G.S.

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

G.H.Q.,

29/4/1918.

Subject: OPERATIONS - JORDAN.

Headquarters,
DESERT MOUNTED CORPS.
26th April, 1918.

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

1. During the offensive operations which I am about to undertake the rations will be reduced to mobile scale for men and 12 lbs. for horses.

I find that the transport placed at my disposal will just suffice for this purpose, so long as I do not go beyond the line AIN ES SIR - Pt. 2900, 5 miles East of ES SALT.

2. This will, however, impose a severe strain on the camels, which will have to accomplish 20 miles daily, a performance which I do not consider they can carry out for more than a few days. Nor does it seem advisable to keep men and horses for more than 7 days on this reduced ration.

3. I understand that it is the intention of the Commander-in-Chief to withdraw 60th Division and Imperial Camel Corps Brigade when the Indian Cavalry Regiments arrive. The feeding strength will then remain approximately the same, not taking into account the increased strength during the transition period.

4. I shall of course, so soon as my objective is gained, take steps to withdraw as many troops as possible to reserve positions nearer to lorry head; but I do not consider that I shall be justified in reducing the Force East of the JORDAN below the equivalent of six mounted brigades.

One mounted brigade and 20th Indian Infantry Brigade would be in the line West of the JORDAN; one mounted brigade and Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade in reserve near JERICHO; one mounted brigade in reserve at TALAT ED DUMM.

In arriving at this estimate I have allowed for such help as the Arab forces will provide, and for the probability of inflicting very severe losses on the enemy now opposed to me.

5. With the transport and road situations in their present state I shall barely be able to maintain, on mobile scale of rations only, my force disposed as suggested in the preceding paragraph; and, this will entail all transport working at very high pressure.

6. I should be glad therefore if the Commander-in-Chief would consider the advisability of postponing operations against AMMAN and JISR ED DAMIE until it has been possible to improve the existing communications to provide additional transport and to complete the reorganisation of the Mounted Brigades.

Presumably no additional transport can be provided until the broad gauge railway reaches JERUSALEM

7. I am extremely anxious to maintain a hold on the line AIN ES SIR - Pt. 2900; and shall make every effort to do so. But it is possible that transport difficulties may ultimately force me to draw back my right flank so as merely to cover the SHUNET NIMRIN - ES SALT road.

(Sgd.) H.G. CHAUVEL.

Lieutenant-General,
Commanding Desert Mounted Corps.

G.O.C., XXth Corps.
 G.O.C., XXIst Corps.
 G.O.C., Desert Mounted Corps.
 G.O.C., Force in Egypt.
 Inspector, PALESTINE L. of C.
 Commandant, I.S.I., ZEITOUS.
 Commandant, S.O.S., HELIOPOLIS.
 Commandant, B.S.I., EL ARISH.
 Commandant, A. & N.Z.T.C., MOASCAR.

1. The appointment of a Brigadier-General (Training) and a staff consisting of a Brigade Major and a Staff Captain has been authorised by the War Office.
2. The Brigadier-General (Training) will -
 - (a) Command the Training Centre at ZEITOUN, including the Senior Officers' School, HELIOPOLIS; the Branch School at EL ARISH, and the Gas School at RAFA.
 - (b) Be responsible for the training at all -
 Command Depots.
 Base Depots.
 - (c) Act as the representative of General Headquarters in an advisory capacity regarding the training at the Australian and New Zealand Training Centre, MOASCAR.
 - (d) Arrange for the training of units arriving in EGYPT from the time of their arrival till they join formations in the field.
3. In the case of Command and Base Depots he will advise Officers Commanding Depots on the nature and scope of the training to be carried out.
 He will not be in any way responsible for the command, discipline, or administration of these Depots.
4. He will be responsible for the training at the various Schools and will advise General Headquarters as to the best method of coordinating the training throughout the Force. For this purpose he will visit Corps from time to time, and will correspond direct with them on details of training.
5. The allotment of vacancies at the various schools will be made, as heretofore, by General Headquarters.
6. Demands for training stores and material for the various training establishments will be met in the same manner as demands made by front line units. They will only referred to General Headquarters if compliance with them will prevent the demands of front line units from being met.

7. The Headquarters, G.O.C., Training, will be established at the Savoy Hotel, CAIRO, as soon as accommodation becomes available. Telegraphic address will be "Trainer".

(Sgd.) J. SPENCER.
Lt. Col. G.S.,
for Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.,

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,
29/4/18.

From:- Eypforce

To :- Troopers, LONDON.

E.A. 1158. cipher.

29/4/18.

Desp.1215.

Your 56856 cipher 21/4/18.

May INDIA be asked by you to hasten despatch of battalions please.

1. Of the 8 battalions already arrived and the 2 Grenadier battalions 8 have been used to free the 9 battalions mentioned in my telegram April 12th No. E.A.1105.

Only 2 remain to replace the further 14 battalions to be sent to FRANCE.

2. The formation of the 6 line battalions mentioned in INDIA'S cable of 20/4/18 No. 30613 will not be completed till end of May owing to delay in arrival of 3rd Division. Even then these battalions will not increase number of rifles available, till drafts have arrived from INDIA for depleted battalions.

To enable me to replace all 14 battalions by June 1st it is important that at least 6 battalions should reach me during May from INDIA.

As they arrive without 1st Line transport drivers (who have to be trained) a considerable interval must elapse after arrival, before they will be able to take their place in the line.
