

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

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/6/10 Part 2

Title: General Staff, General
Headquarters, Egyptian
Expeditionary Force

January 1917



AWM4-1/6/10PART2

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

G.H.Q.
G.S.O. E.E.F.

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|--------|---------|------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Cairo. | 11.1.17 | 2255 | <p>Wire from Chief- London 27761. (Very secret)</p> <p><u>Policy for the conduct of the Campaign in Southern Syria -</u></p> <p>The general situation will not permit of reinforcements being sent to the E.E.F. before next autumn. No serious operations will therefore be undertaken in PALESTINE until then. During the summer preparations for the Campaign should be made, and also to be prepared to release one or two divisions for FRANCE. This will depend on the number of troops that can be sent from INDIA and E.AFRICA. No mounted troops will be taken from E.E.F. There is no intention of limiting the activity of the E.E.F.</p> <p><u>OPERATIONS on EASTERN FRONT.</u></p> <p>For the information of the Commander-in-Chief, 136 wounded arrived at KANTARA this afternoon. Remainder of British wounded should reach KANTARA tomorrow except very bad cases -</p> | |
| | 1920 | | Wire from Genl. Dobell | |

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| | 11.1.17 | | <p>Wired to Chief London - A.M. 1499 -</p> <p><u>Evening report</u> Total captures at EL MAGRUNTEIN - Turkish officers and 29 other officers - one German officer, 5 N.C.O's - 4 more total prisoners 1602 - 4 mountain guns - 4 machine guns - Enemy casualties about 600 (200 dead buried) - Desert Column casualties - killed, officers 3; O.R. 68 - wounded officers 31, O.R. 384 and one missing -</p> <p>Letter to - G.O.C. Middle East Bd - R.F.C. G.S. Z/58.</p> <p>Compass Appreciation communicated to R.F.C. for the excellent preliminary reconnaissance and those effected during engagement at MAGRUNTEIN and for the attack on the aerodrome at BIR SABA.</p> | |
| | 1915 | | <p>Letter to Genl. MILNE Genl. MAUDE A.M. 1496.</p> <p>Detailed account of the action at ELMAGRUNTEIN.</p> | A |
| | 1910 | | <p>Wired Troopers -</p> <p>The four 4" Mark VII Crabs offered on 3.5.16 from E. AFRICA are now urgently required for the defence of EL ARISH.</p> | |

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| | 11.1.17. | | <p>Letter to:- Eastern Force- G.S. Z/58.</p> <p>The plans for the defence of EL ARISH submitted to this office on 9.1.17. have been approved by the Commander-in-Chief, as far as it is possible to judge from the map. It is possible, however, that the position might be strengthened and the railway safeguarded more efficiently, if a series of supplementary works, extended and echeloned back on the right flank, perhaps as far as UTRET EL ZOL, were constructed. These works would also serve as a pivot for mounted troops to operate against the enemy's flank, should they try to envelop EL ARISH.</p> <p>Wired Eastern Force- Oas 1.</p> <p>12 officers & 100 O.R. Westminster Dragoons will be despatched to Eastern Force as soon as possible.</p> <p>2000 Wired Troopers- A.M. 1498.</p> <p><u>Weekly movement return.</u></p> | |

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| | 11/17 | 1020 | <p>Wire from Troopers to India. Repeated. Egyptian - 27755.</p> <p>Wire from Wilson to Atterbury - Cairo - W. 157.</p> <p>Wire from Wilson to Atterbury - Cairo - W. 184.</p> | <p>Offer of 123rd Rifles gratefully accepted - Please send to (This matter had previously been arranged with India by E.E.F.)</p> <p>Please arrange to meet two Indian deportees from JEDDAH at SUEZ. The internment of these men has already been approved by the Commander-in-Chief.</p> <p>70AD arrived JEDDAH today with a letter from the Sherif; - it is stated in the letter that; - It is not desired to have British troops in the HEDJAZ at present. If, at any future time troops are desired, an autograph letter and the proclamation required by H.M. Government, will be sent - It is understood that the brigade will be moved from SUEZ and that his requirements may be unable to be met at a later date.</p> |

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| | 11.11.17 | | <p>Letter to, Secretary War Office - G.S./452. Establishment for Staff School, MINA HOUSE, CAIRO, forwarded for sanction -</p> <p>Letter to, G.O.C. Delta District. G.S./452. Establishment for Staff School, MINA HOUSE, is forwarded for your information -</p> <p>Letter to, G.O.C. Delta District. G.S./126. The allotment of 20 dummy Mills hand grenades to all battalions in your command is sanctioned.</p> <p>Letter to, G.O.C. Eastern Force. G.S./490. Increase in establishment of by Six Sappers (visual signallers) and three helios of the Anzac Signal Squadron is provisionally sanctioned - The sanction of the Australian Government should be obtained by Genl. Chauvel -</p> <p>This increase in signal personnel for visual signalling, which has also been provisionally made in the Signal Co at Amman and in the Signal Co at Haifa, is necessitated by the position and conditions of work in the desert where visual signalling is extensively used.</p> | C |

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| CAIRO | 12.1.17 | | <p>Wire Eastern Force. Following message from H.M. The King to Genl Sir A. Murray, begins; - "I congratulate you and my troops on the successful operations, which have resulted in expelling the enemy from the SINAI PENINSULA - GEORGE R.I."</p> | |
| | 12.1.17 | 0730 | <p>Wire from Chief London to Chief Egypt force - 2718 -</p> <p>Congratulations of the War Cabinet on clearing the SINAI PENINSULA -</p> | |
| | 12.1.17 | 1444 | <p>Wire from Eastern Force - E.G.S. 88.</p> <p>Further details of captures at RAFA received - 6 machine guns all of 603rd German M.G. Coy.; from the mountain guns are all of Austrian make - 57 camels, 17 mules and 28 horses - Prisoners from 30th and 32nd Bty's, and also from 160th Regt. The latter was the relieving force from SHELLAL.</p> | |
| | 12.1.17 | 2030 | <p>Wire Chief London - A.M. 1501.</p> <p>Evening report. Everything all right - Hope to report final details of captures at RAFA tomorrow night.</p> | |

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| | 12.1.17 | 1350 | Wired Chief-London- A.M.-1500. When may the Trains, Ammunition Parks, and Lorries, which are required to put Eastern Force on a wheeled transport basis, be expected? If these could reach EL ARISH by the end of February, while the weather is still cool, pressure on the Sherif might be relieved. | |
| | 12.1.17 | 0700 | Wire from Troopers. The proposal to retain B ^r Genl. Young. R.E. as Chief Engineer is approved as a temporary measure. (Original has been submitted to the War Office that a Chief Engineer for the Northern Canal Section and Advanced Corps, and one for Eastern Force, would suffice. It afterwards became necessary to retain a Chief Engineer with the Southern Canal Section. | |
| | 12.1.17 | | Letter to Eastern Force- G.S. 212. To provide a Brigade Machine-Gun Company for the I.C.C. Bde, it is proposed to allot the machine gun Company of the disbanded 1 st Dismounted Brigade. | |

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|-------|---------|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | 12.1.17 | | Letter to Eastern Force - G.S. 212. | |
| | | | Approval is given for the regrouping of the Companies of the I.C.C. (nos 1 & 3 battalions to be composed of 4 companies each of Australian and New Zealand troops, no 2 battalion of companies of Imperial Troops) | |
| | 12.1.17 | | Letter to Commandant Staff School - MENA - G.S. 452/1. | |
| | | | Nominal roll of officers selected to attend the 1st course at the Staff School commencing on 15.1.17. | A. |
| | | | | O. Williams Capt. 81. |

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| Cairo | 13.1.17 | | <p>Proposals for the future Conduct of the Campaign were forwarded from Eastern Force on 11.1.17.</p> <p>"The maximum number of: enemy forces South of JERUSALEM appears to be <u>12,000</u> - They might possibly be reinforced by one division - Indications show that the enemy's main concentration is at AUJA and that he intends to defend the line of the WADI GHUZZEE.</p> <p>There are two main lines of advance open to us. one towards AUJA, and one towards RAFA.</p> <p>① <u>Towards AUJA</u> -</p> <p>Had the evacuation of SINAI by the enemy not been already accomplished by the occupation of EL ARISH, the capture of AUJA would have cut the enemy railway and accomplished this - Now, but one advantage for this line of advance offers, namely, to defeat the enemy's main concentration in the field.</p> | |

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| | 18.1.17. | | <p>② <u>Towards RAFA.</u></p> <p>A force operating in this direction should force the enemy to withdraw from AVJA by threatening his line of communications - He might accept battle - He might reinforce from other fronts - He might withdraw to a line further north -</p> <p>In neither case will our communications be seriously threatened, as we are nearer the enemy's line of communications than he is to ours -</p> <p>The proposal put forward by Eastern Force is to push forward ahead of the railway to RAFA with a force composed of ANZAC MTD DIVN. - ONE MTD BDE - I.C.C. BDE - ONE INFANTRY DIVN - also to establish supply dumps at SHEIKH ZOWAID - RAFA - KHAN YUNUS -</p> <p>Eastern Force Hqrs. would move to EL ARISH and keep two divisions under their command -</p> <p>By this plan either the enemy will be forced to fight with his present forces which is what we want, or to reinforce from other theatres which will weaken him in the Hedjaz - Caucasus in the latter case our mission will be fulfilled.</p> | |

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| | 13.1.17. | | <p>Letter to; Eastern Force -</p> <p>The general policy outlined in the foregoing memorandum is approved by the Commander-in-Chief - Attention is directed to the following points.</p> <p>① Great care should be taken in attempting purely cavalry action by the mounted troops in the event of another raid being attempted. The enemy may lay a trap, having had 2 experiences of such methods.</p> <p>② The principle of pushing forward a weak force, so that it cannot be supported by the main body is not recommended.</p> <p>③ A separate decision should be obtained for the establishing of each of the three proposed supply dumps, having due regard to the enemy dispositions in each case.</p> | |
| | 13.1.17. | 2015 | <p>Wire from Eastern Force - E.G.S. 103.</p> <p>Prisoners of War surrendered yesterday as follows; - From LAHFAN, 13 O.R.; from RAFA, 1 Officer, 9 O.R.; all Turks.</p> | |
| | 13.1.17. | 2015 | <p>Wire Chief, London - A.M. 1503.</p> <p><u>Evening report</u>: All well; Complete details of engagement at RAFA not yet to hand; 26 deserters from the 160th Regt. at SHELLAL were brought in today.</p> | |

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| | 13.1.17 | 0252 | Wire from; Troopers. Grading of Compensation officer at ALEXANDRIA as Staff Captain approved; dated 11.1.17. | A |
| | 13.1.17 | 1105 | Wired; Troopers. Weekly R.F.C. returns. | |
| | 13.1.17. | | Letter to; Eastern Force. The proposed establishment for the Field Troop with the I.C.C. Brigade is forwarded; which has been drawn up as near as possible on the lines of the Mobile Establishment for a Field Troop, with minor differences. | B |
| | | | <p><u>Note for week ending Jan. 13</u></p> <p>The 2 instructors for the staff school, who had been on board the Ivernia arrived in Egypt on the 12th. Arrangements had already been made to open the first course on Monday Jan. 15, and the list of outside lectures for the first week has been made. Meanwhile during the week the Commandant & the 15 officers from Salonica have been a short tour up to Mazar under the auspices of Eastern Force, to see something of desert conditions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">O.W. Ham Capt 85</p> | |

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| Cairo | 14.1.17. | 2135 | <p>Wired Chief, London. A.M. 1507.</p> <p>Evening report - All well - Ten more deserters from SHELLAL have come in today - Following are details of captures at RAFA - 7 machine-guns - 4 Krupp mountain guns - 43,000 rounds S.A.A. - about 1600 rifles - 32 pack saddles - 21 full belt boxes - 58 horses and mules - 102 camel saddles - 83 camels - a large quantity of miscellaneous equipment -</p> | |
| | 14.1.17. | 1600 | <p>Wired: Governor-General - Australia - Governor General - New Zealand - A.M. 1505.</p> <p>Account of the engagement of RAFA.</p> | |
| | 14.1.17. | 1330 | <p>Wired, Troopers. A.M. 1504.</p> <p>An increase in the staff of the Northern Canal Section Hdqrs and the Southern Canal Section Hdqrs, is now required.</p> <p>The Northern Canal Section reaches from KANTARA to MAZAR and will soon include EL ARISH.</p> | |

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| | | | <p>This area is administered by C.O.C. 20th Indian Inf. Bde and his staff. His total staff should be, one G.S.O. (2) - one A.A. & Q.M.G. - two Staff Captains - one A.P.M. graded as Staff Captain -</p> <p>The Southern Canal Section requires a fresh staff as the 54th Divn. is being withdrawn. Required - one G.O.C. (B3 Genl.) - one G.S.O. (2) - one G.S.O. (3) - one D.A. & M.G. - one Staff Captain - one A.P.M. graded as Staff Captain - one A.D.V.S. -</p> <p>Sanction by telegram is requested -</p> <p><u>Reorganisation of Transport on wheeled basis.</u></p> <p>① Trains of 42nd, 52nd, and 53rd Divns, and if necessary that of 54th Divn may be reorganised - Additional white personnel cannot yet be sent - Employ native personnel if possible - 1st Line Transport and Divisional trains should be on W.E. Part <u>XXI</u>. 1916.</p> <p>② It is understood that 42nd Divn. has D.A.C. on Part <u>XI</u>. and that 52nd, 53rd, & 54th Divns. have Bde A.C. on Part <u>XI</u> only - No artillery personnel can yet be sent to form these Ammunition Columns - Existing resources may, however, be utilised -</p> | |
| | 14.1.17. | 0905. | Wire from Troopers. 27917. | A |

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| | | | <p>③ Motor Ambulance Convoy will be sent - Only 200 lorries can be spared during the next two months for ammunition and supply - In what units should they be organised -</p> <p>④ Every effort will be made to send the lorries during February -</p> <p>⑤ Were any alteration of existing War Establishments -</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 14.1.17. | 0040. | Wire from Troopers - 27887. | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 14.1.17. | 1645. | Wired; Troopers - A.M. 1506. | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 14.1.17. | | <p>The four bogie railway trucks for the Siege Battery (2 6" Howitzers) and (2 8" Howitzers) cannot be supplied at present - will be required in six or nine months -</p> <p>Kindly order these bogie trucks -</p> <p>Renaming of Dismounted Brigades -</p> <table><tr><td>2nd Dismtd. Bde</td><td>becomes -</td><td>229th Inf. Bde</td></tr><tr><td>3rd " "</td><td>" "</td><td>230th " "</td></tr><tr><td>4th " "</td><td>" "</td><td>231st " "</td></tr></table> | 2 nd Dismtd. Bde | becomes - | 229 th Inf. Bde | 3 rd " " | " " | 230 th " " | 4 th " " | " " | 231 st " " | |
| 2 nd Dismtd. Bde | becomes - | 229 th Inf. Bde | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 rd " " | " " | 230 th " " | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 th " " | " " | 231 st " " | | | | | | | | | | | |

1875 Wt. W593/826 1,000,000 4/15 J.B.C. & A. A.D.S.S./Forms/C. 2118.

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1917.

January.

14th. 2nd Dismt'd. Brigade, M.G. Company, becomes
4th Brigade, M.G. Company.

3rd Dismt'd. Brigade, M.G. Company, becomes
209th Brigade, M.G. Company.

4th Dismt'd. Brigade, M.G. Company, becomes
210th Brigade, M.G. Company.

Re-organisation of Signal troops
as Brigade Signal Sections.

Re-organisation of Mtd. Brigade
F. Ambulances as Infantry Brigade Field
Ambulances.

Re-organisation and renaming of
the Yeomanry Regiments in the Brigades.

Letter to; It is intended that the
Eastern designation of the Imperial Camel Brigade,
Force, as given in Eastern Force Orders Nos. 23
G.S.212. and 25, as the 1st Imperial Camel Brigade,
should be adhered to.

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| Cairo - | 15.1.17. | 1711 | Wire from; Desert Column to East force, repeated G.H.Q. - H.I. 749. | No enemy aircraft activity today - |
| | 15.1.17. | 2045 | Wire; Chief. London - | <u>Evening report.</u> All well. Deserters still coming in - |
| | 15.1.17. | | Wire; East force - West force - Oas. 3. | No. 8. Coy. I.C.C. will move from SAMALUT to KANTARA as soon as train arrangements are completed. Marching out states. Should be addressed D.Q.M.G. by whom train timings will be notified - |
| | 15.1.17. | 1930 | Wire from; Chief. India - 3052. | The Calcutta Machine gun battery was originally intended for MESOPOTAMIA; and would have been armed with machine guns, on arrival in that country. Now that it is under orders to proceed to EGYPT, can it be armed there, as the only machine guns in INDIA are old ones, and, moreover, cannot, at present, be spared - |

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| | 15.1.17. | | <p>Letter to: Western Force -</p> <p>It may shortly become necessary to transfer the following units from Western Force to Eastern Force -</p> <p>one light armoured car battery -</p> <p>No. 17 Motor machine gun battery -</p> <p>one or two Ford Car patrols -</p> <p>No action should be taken at present; but plans should be formulated whereby these units could be withdrawn at short notice -</p> <p>These plans for the redistribution of motor units on on the Western front should be forwarded to G.H.Q.</p> <p>This day the Commander in Chief left for Alexandria to inspect the 201st Heavy Battery, the newly arrived Tanks and Prisoners of War Camp. He will return on Thursday 18th Jan.</p> | |

oc Williams
Capt 85.

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|-------|------|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | | | <p><u>First Line Transport of Fighting Units</u></p> <p>On the 15th January a letter was received from the General Officer Commanding Eastern Force on the subject of the reorganisation of the transport of divisions operating on the Eastern front.</p> <p>In this letter there were set out by the General Officer Commanding Eastern Force the advantages and disadvantages pertaining to a complete reorganisation of the 1st-line transport on a wheeled basis. The great advantage of not doing so and of retaining the 1st-line camel transport consists in the fact that this transport is completely interchangeable; <i>i.e.</i>, small arms ammunition camels can perform the work of water camels, thus giving greater latitude than is possible with wheeled form of transport.</p> <p>The opinion was put forward by General Dobell that the prospects of success in any operations likely to be undertaken in the near future are entirely dependent on a very high degree of mobility, and for this reason he expressed himself as being against the entire adoption of wheeled transport, which would mean the laying by of a large number of camels which could be very usefully employed in the country in which operations were likely to be undertaken.</p> <p>Realising that to equip the whole of the Desert Column with 1st-line camel transport would result in leaving no camels available for convoy purposes, the suggestion put forward by General Dobell was that all available wheeled transport should be assigned for trains and supply columns, and that camel 1st-line transport should be retained.</p> <p>On first consideration of this letter the D.Q.M.G. expressed himself against the proposals contained therein. He pointed out the difficulty in moving a division with camel 1st-line transport over a road, and stated that, in his opinion, if a country is reached where movements are more or less restricted to roads, units should be organised on war establishment with 1st-line horse transport, train transport and supply column.</p> <p>In view of the camel situation the D.Q.M.G. put forward the suggestion that if the use of camels was still considered essential it would be more politic to reduce the mobile force to four divisions, which would absorb 7 camel companies, leaving available 5 companies with 10,000 camels to give such a force radius of action.</p> <p>In reply to the D.Q.M.G. the C.G.S. stated that he considered an improvised system of mixed transport essential until such time as we are firmly established on the line of the Wadi GHUZZE. Everything points, in the opinion of the C.G.S., to the Wadi GHUZZE as being the locale of our next fight, and all information tends to the belief that the Turks are making strenuous preparations to strongly defend that line.</p> <p>There is every reason to believe that the country between RAFA and SHELLAL, in which</p> | |

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| | | | <p>immediate operations will take place, consists for the most part of hard sand broken by considerable patches of difficult country where only camels could be used. Over such country camel 1st-line transport would be indispensable, but at the same time it seems pretty certain that it would be possible to push up wheeled supply columns to selected points sufficiently near to the fighting troops for convenience of supply. The C.G.S. emphasised the point that the irregular reorganisation proposed is purely of a temporary nature, as, once we are established in the Wadi GHUZZE with the desert definitely in our rear, it would be possible to reconsider the situation with a more accurate knowledge of what is in front of us.</p> <p>In reply to the foregoing the D.Q.M.G. stated that his intention was identical with that of the C.G.S., and that he is in process of endeavouring to organise the trains of the 42nd, 52nd, 53rd and 54th Division.</p> <p>Under these circumstances the Commander-in-Chief decided that the 1st-line transport for all formations allotted to the Desert Column should be retained for the present on a camel basis; a letter was written on the 26th January to the General Officer Commanding Eastern Force to this effect, stating at the same time that the Commander-in-Chief approves in principle to the proposals for the utilisation of 1st-line wheeled transport of divisions, for the formation of additional trains and supply columns, provided that the brigade and divisional organisation of these improvised units is retained. The General Officer Commanding Eastern Force was further instructed to submit for the Commander-in-Chief's consideration his detailed proposals regarding the employment of wheeled 1st-line transport as indicated.</p> <p>G.S. 476 26.1.17</p> <p style="text-align: right;">note by Oa. Oleth. Williams Capt. Gp</p> | |

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|-------|--------|-------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Cairo | 16.11. | 1801. | Wire from; Desert Column H.I. 753. | |
| | | | <p>Enemy aircraft today dropped two bombs on EL ARISH - No casualties reported - No other enemy aircraft activity -</p> <p>Arrangements had previously been made, in the event of a hostile air raid, for instant retaliation - Eleven machines, therefore, were despatched to bomb BIR ES SABA - Camps and railway station were heavily bombed, the engine shed was hit, and casualties were observed -</p> | |
| | 16.11. | 1940. | <p>Wire; Chief. London -</p> <p>A.M. 1509.</p> | |
| | 16.11. | 1900. | <p>Wire from Troopers to brigade, repeated Chief. Egypt - 28015.</p> <p>Following establishment to deal with HEDJAZ operations sanctioned - one B.G.C.S. - one G.S.O. (1) - one G.S.O. (3) - one Staff Captain - one N.C.O. & two privates as clerks.</p> | |

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| | 16.1.17 | 0030. | Wire from Troopers, T. Egypt force - 27982. The appointment of one G.S.O. (2) in place of the above mentioned Staff officers, is sanctioned. He will be employed for intelligence work dealing with SOUTHERN PALESTINE. The four Staff officers mentioned in connection with the HEDJAZ operations are now ^{hereafter} on the Staff of the High Commissioner, as is the Arab Bureau. | |
| | 16.1.17 | 1000. | Wire from General BASRA x 304 - Account of the fighting at KUT EL AMARA on 9.1.17. and subsequent days, up till the date of despatch of this wire - | A. |
| | 16.1.17 | 1327. | Wire from Genl. Smuts - DAR-ES-SALAAM - Location return of R.F.C. and R.N.A.S. in EAST AFRICA | B |
| | 16.1.17. | | Letter to C.O.C. Australian & N.Z. Island Mtd Div - Arrangements have been made to supply six Lewis Guns and four Hotchkiss Guns to the Training Depot MOASKAR, as requested. | |

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Capt L.E.

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| Cairo - | 17.1.17 | 1716 | Wire from Desert Column - H.I. 955. | No enemy aircraft activity today - |
| | 17.1.17 | 2110 | Wire Chief, London - A.M. 1511. | <u>Evening report.</u> All well - |
| | 17.1.17 | 2050 | Wire Chief, India - A.M. 1510. | The Calcutta Motor machine-gun battery will be re-armed on arrival in EGYPT. |
| | 17.1.17 | | Letter to; Western Force - G.S. 2/28/1. | The proposal for the Corps of Native Guides, at present attached to Western Force, to be handed over to the Governor of the Western Desert, is approved. And it is noted that Guides can be supplied when necessary. |
| | 17.1.17 | | Letter to; Vice Admiral, Naval Comd. E India & Egypt - G.S. 13/3. | It is regretted that the W/T Stations at TOR and ABU ZENEIMA cannot be directed to accept messages 'en clair' from hospital ships - Last September it was |

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| | | | <p>decided that the SUEZ military WPT Station should receive such messages, and the medical authorities have thereby received ample warning of the approach of hospital ships. It therefore appears unnecessary to call upon the Stations at TOR and ABU ZENEIMA to repeat such messages; moreover, it should be noted that these are not strictly speaking, 'shore' stations, but probable military field stations.</p> <p><u>HOTCHKISS GUN PACK SADDLERY.</u></p> <p>A letter was despatched by the Director of Ordnance Services to Eastern Force on the subject of this pack saddlery. Sets of this saddlery were sent out to the E. E. F. from England, with the subsequent information that this particular type had not proved successful in FRANCE. Before issuing to the 22nd MTD. BDE for experiment, it was decided to alter it to suit it to existing conditions. These ^{tentative} alterations were made as the result of a Conference at the Ordnance Depot, CAIRO, to which representatives came from Eastern Force and Western Force.</p> | |
| | 17.1.17. | | | |

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| | 17-17 | | <p>A semi official letter, enclosing three load tables (A-B-C) as per appendix was sent to Maj. Ward G.S.O. (2) Eastern Force.</p> <p><u>As regards table A:</u></p> <p>The weights are practically the same as those of the pack saddles used in FRANCE - An economy of a few pounds weight has been effected by making a lighter gun case - This type of case is admirably adapted for getting the gun into action quickly; but it is unfortunately a sand-trap - The weights seem rather too heavy.</p> <p><u>As regards table B:</u></p> <p>A further half horse per gun has been introduced; otherwise there is no change.</p> <p><u>As regards table C:</u></p> <p>This is the same as B; but the ammunition has been reduced.</p> <p>The points to be considered are whether the loads in table A are not too heavy; and the question of increase of transport versus reduction of ammunition.</p> <p>A suggestion has been made that Major Harbord and Capt. Harvey of the Indian Cavalry might be present when trials are carried out by the 22nd MTD BDE.</p> | A |

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| Cairo- | 18.1.17 | 1733 | Wire from Desert Column - H.Q. 761. Two enemy aeroplanes flew over BITTIA BARDAWIL and EL ARISH this morning - No report has been received of any bombs being dropped - | |
| | 18.1.17 | 2030 | Wire Chief, A.M. 1516 - London - Evening report - all well - | |
| | 18.1.17 | | Wire, Eastern Force (attached) Western Force - Oas 4. The move of no. 8 Coy. I.C.C. from SAMALUT to KANTARA is cancelled - The Company will remain at SAMALUT pending further orders - | |
| | 18.1.17 | | Wire, Western Force - Oas 5. no. 8 Coy I.C.C. will proceed to ABBASSIA and rest there till further instructions are given - Arrangements will be made by Western Force with O.C. I.C.C. ABBASSIA - Train arrangements will be made by D.Q.M.C. and notified to Western Force - | |
| | 18.1.17 | 1850 | Wire, Troopers. A.M. 1513. Weekly movement return. H.Q. and C Squadron, Westminster Dragons from ZEITOUN to NORTHERN CANAL SECTION. | |

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
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| | 15.1.17. | | <p>Following incorporated in E.E.F.</p> <p>201st Siege Batty. R.G.A.</p> <p>811th Coy. A.S.C. M.T.</p> <p>B.S. Cable Section-</p> <p>61st & 62nd Motor Airline sections-</p> <p>Following unit ceases to belong to the E.E.F.</p> <p>68th Australian Squadron. R.F.C.</p> | |
| | 14.1.17. 1950. | Wed. Troopers. A.M. 1514. | <p>It is presumed that the stores held in reserve for the 42nd and 53rd Divs, in the event of their being ordered to INDIA, may now be disposed of-</p> | |
| | 16.1.17. 2005. | Wed. Troopers. A.M. 1515. | <p>The extension of the NORTHERN CANAL SECTION to EL ARISH necessitates an increase in the administrative staff-</p> <p>There are four areas requiring administrative staffs-</p> <p>① KANTARA. ② ROMANI - MAHEMDIYA ③ BIREL ABD - MAZAR ④ EL ARISH-</p> <p>Details as per appendix-</p> | A |

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| | 18.11.17. | 18.30. | <p>Wired, Troopers - A.M. 1512.</p> <p>Subject to War Office sanction - It is proposed to grant the rank of Lieut-Colonel to the C.O. of I.C.C. battalions, and to add a major as 2nd in Command to the establishment. Appointments would be filled by promotion in the Corps. A battalion has an establishment of 770 all ranks, with 922 Camels.</p> <p>A similar request is being to the Australian Government -</p> | |
| | 18.11.17. | | <p>Letter to Secretary War Office - G.S. 438.</p> <p>Experience has shown the necessity for a second officer in connection with the training of machine gun units in the Field -</p> <p>To ensure co-ordination of training and tactical handling of these units, they must be inspected at frequent intervals by an officer who is in touch with the latest ideas -</p> <p>In view of the fact that units in the E.E.F. are distributed over a 1,000 mile front, the duties of administration and inspection cannot be satisfactorily carried out by one officer.</p> <p>It is, therefore, submitted that a second officer, graded as a</p> | |

Note: The necessity for a second officer of this kind is concerned in Lt Col Nesbit, the officer sent out by the W.O. (A.G.G.) to report on H.G. requirements in Egypt and supervise the organisation. Lt Col Nesbit finds that the administrative side of the H.G. Corps work is too heavy at present to have him any time to inspect later on. When this is running smoothly it can be taken over by a D.A.A.G. at G.H.Q.

OC Williams Capt. G.S. G.S. 438

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| Cairo | 19.1.17 | 1706 | Wire from Desert Column H.I. 765. | |
| | 19.1.17 | 1945 | Wired Chief, A.M. 1519. London- | |
| | 19.1.17 | 1015 | Wire from Troopers- 28142- | |
| | 19.1.17 | 0040 | Wire from Chief, 3808 India- | |
| | | | No enemy aircraft activity today. | |
| | | | <u>Evening report.</u> All well- | |
| | | | With reference to the five 4" Mark VII guns offered by Genl Smuts last May, it is regretted that information was received since May that Genl Smuts wished to retain the guns. He is being asked again if he can spare them. He could however release four 12 pdr. 15 cwt. guns on carriages. If these are desired irrespective of the decision to be arrived at re the four inch guns, Cable Troopers. | |
| | | | The regiment relieving the 1/4 D.C.L.I. at ADEN will take over all their machineguns, machine gun mules, transport and horses- | |

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| | 19.1.17. | 1955. | Wired Troopers- A.M. 1518 | |
| | | | A D.A.D.M.S. should have been included in the establishment of staff for Northern and Southern Canal Sections, in A.M. 1515 of 18.1.17. | |
| | 19.1.17. | 2016 | Wired Troopers- A.M. 1517 | |
| | | | In addition to the increase in the establishment of the HQ & KONG and SINGAPORE BATTERY of European N.C.O's, an increase of six paid acting Naiks, four Naiks, and four havildars is submitted for sanction. | |
| | 19.1.17. | 1030. | Wired Eastern Force- 0ab. 309. | |
| | | | Should a 2nd Mtd. Divn be formed , A list of recommendations should for Commander and staff of a 2nd Mtd. Divn, should be forwarded to this office, should ^{in case} this division should be formed. | |
| | 19.1.17. | | Under Under authority delegated to him by H.M. The King, the Commander in Chief, conferred on Major Owston and Major Wells, the Distinguished Service Order and on Capt. Mangles and 2/Lt. Griggs the Military Cross. These four officers are in the Light Armoured Car Brigade, under Western Force. | |
| | | | He also conferred the Distinguished Service Order on Bt. Genl. Salmon, B.O.C. Middle East Bde, on Capt. Lloyd Arab Bureau - and Lt. Picard of the French Navy, liaison officer with the Royal Navy. | |

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| | 16.1.17 | | <p>A telegram from Col. Pearson at Jeddah has been received by the Arab Bureau to the following effect:</p> <p>Col. Bremond has received a telegram from PARIS.</p> <p>The French Government agree with the decision of the British Government that no troops should be landed at RABEGH until a written demand from the Sherif is received, also a proclamation to the Moslem world. As these would come too late to permit of European troops being landed in time to save the Sherif (as if he wanted assistance at all, he would want it quickly), the question of landing troops at RABEGH is considered closed. It is therefore suggested that a landing should be made at AQABA.</p> <p>The French Contingent at SUEZ and two Senegal battalions from JIBUTI are at the disposal of the British Government for this purpose.</p> <p>This message has been repeated to the High Commissioner.</p> | |

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| | 19.1.17 | | <p>Letter to Eastern Force - G.S. 331.</p> <p>Sanction is given to two proposals put forward by Eastern Force, namely, that the 4th A.L.H. Regt. shall retain their horses and that the two dismounted double squadrons of Light Horse, at present in the Southern Canal Section, should be organised in Hdgos and Companies with as an I.C.C. battalion.</p> <p>The sanction of the Australian Government should be obtained as soon as possible, in order that the reorganisation may be put in hand at once.</p> | |
| | 19.1.17 | | <p>Letter to Eastern Force - G.S. 8/13.</p> <p>The number of vacancies allotted to Eastern Force for the next course at the Imperial School of Instruction cannot be reduced. It is considered that the difficulties arising from the transport of the very considerable number of officers and N.C.O's (about 200 officers and 500 N.C.O's and every month) and the temporary loss of their services from their units, is more than compensated by the advantages gained from their instruction.</p> <p>In this connection, reports should be submitted, for the guidance of the Instructional Staff, by Commanders in the</p> | |

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| | 19.12 | | <p>Field on the following points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The value of N.C.O's. and officers as instructors after completing courses. (b) The system obtaining in units for turning to the best account the knowledge gained at the courses. (c) The value of the Senior officers courses. (d) Suggestions for possible improvements in any of the courses. | |

O.C. Williams
Capt. G.S.

2449 Wt. W14957/M90 750,000 1/16 J.B.C. & A. Forms/C.2118/12.

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| | | | <p><u>Notes for the week ending January 20th.</u></p> <p>During this week complete amendments to the <u>draft War Establishments, Part XI</u>, were sent to the War Office with the exception of those for the Imperial Camel Corps Brigade. It is hoped that these establishments will now be reprinted and a supply sent out to this force since, at the moment, a certain amount of difficulty is caused by there being no available printed copies of War Establishments, Part XI. At the same time, a request was made to the War Office for sanction for Headquarters Staffs for the Northern and Southern Canal Sections. Hitherto, since the re-organisation of the Eastern Force in November, the Northern Canal Section has been administered by the Headquarters Staff of the 20th Indian Brigade with some temporary assistance. Since this Section, which formerly only extended as far east as ROMANI, is now extended to, and includes, EL ARISH, it is obvious that some definite establishment for headquarters was necessary. It was also necessary to increase in that Section the number of Administrative Commandants. Sanction has already been obtained from the War Office for Administrative Commandants for KANTARA and ROMANI, since when the Administrative Commandant at ROMANI had successively moved forward with his Staff to BIR EL ABD, ROMANI and finally EL ARISH. Sanction has now been asked for the establishment of Administrative Commandants at KANTARA, ROMANI and EL ARISH and of Post Commandants at BIR EL ABD and MAZAR. Should the lines of communication advance eastward of EL ARISH similar Post Commandants will be necessary at SHEIKH ZOWAID and RAFA. As regards the Southern Canal Section, this has been administered by the Headquarters 54th Division which it is intended to move into the zone of the Advanced Corps. A new Staff is, therefore, necessary. All the appointments on the staffs of the Northern and Southern Canal Sections will be filled locally, the staffs of the 20th and 29th Indian Brigades respectively being utilised <i>temporarily for this purpose to fill J.S. & Staff Captain's places</i>. The formation of the 2nd Mounted Division is under consideration. It is proposed to reconstitute the 1st Australian & New Zealand Mounted Division with four brigades of Australian Light Horse, the fourth Brigade being made up of the 11th & 12th Light Horse Regiments and the 4th Light Horse Regiment - this latter regiment at present only consisting of two squadrons - being made up to strength by one of the Dismounted Squadrons, which has recently been mounted and employed in the SHARQIA Province. The 2nd Mounted Division will consist of the New Zealand Mounted Rifle Brigade, and the 5th, 6th and 22nd Mounted Yeomanry Brigades. The only difficulty about the formation of the 2nd Mounted Division is in the provision of its auxiliary units - Field Ambulance, Signal Squadron, Field Squadron and so on - the formation of these units, however, is well in hand. Sanction from the War Office for this has not yet been obtained.</p> | |

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| | | | <p><i>first</i></p> <p>The Staff Course at Mena House opened on Monday, January 15th, and outside lectures were delivered each day from the 16th onwards. A scheme has been made up by which 5 outside lectures are delivered by various officers of Headquarters Staffs during the week. 15 officers from the E.E.F., and 15 from the SALONIKA Army will be accommodated at each of the four courses which will last five weeks. Accommodation for the Staff and for the Officers under instruction has been found in a part of the Mena House Hotel, and arrangements have been made that officers obtain all lodging and messing for the sum of 12 piastres a day, their field allowance being deducted during the period they are at the School. The C.G.S. visited the School on Thursday - 18th instant - and found all the arrangements satisfactory. The Staff of the school consists of</p> <p>Lieut-Col. H. M. Biddulph, Rifle Brigade, Commandant. Major J.A.W. Spencer, Rifle Brigade, Instructor (graded as G.S.O.2) Major R.L. Macalpine-Leny, 16th Lancers, Instructor (" " D.A.A.&Q.M.G.)</p> <p>It is unfortunate that both of these officers were on board the "Ivernina" which was sunk on her way from England, and are not, in consequence, in the best of health. It seems necessary, therefore, that another instructor, both from the 'G.S.' side and the 'Q' side should be found in case of an emergency. Application has, therefore, been made by wire to General Gillman at SALONIKA to send an instructor on the 'G.S.' side from SALONIKA if such an officer can be spared, and arrangements are being made locally to find another instructor on the 'Q' side.</p> <p>In the next series of general courses at the School of Instruction, ZEITOUN, which commence on January 29th certain alterations have been made: (a) Instead of a tactical machine gun course and a tactical Lewis Gun course, each of 10 days, being held for officers, it has been found advisable to substitute a 3-weeks' tactical course in these arms, one such course in each arm being held during alternate general courses. On January 29th the tactical course will be in machine guns. (B) The 'Artillery Refresher Course' of N.C.O's has been revised owing to the fact that while some N.C.O's were fairly proficient, others - especially those from Base details - were backward, so that at a single course it was not possible to devise a standard of instruction suitable for both these categories of N.C.O's. The N.C.O 'Refresher' course will therefore be divided into two sorts of classes: Class 'A' for the higher battery staff; Class 'B' for Gun Drill. Classes 'A' and 'B' will be held at alternate General Courses.</p> | |

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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G.S.O. G.H.Q. - E.E.F.

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|-------|---------|-------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Cairo | 20.1.17 | 2130. | <p>Wind; Chief, London- A.M. 1525</p> <p><u>Evening report.</u> All well-</p> | |
| | 20.1.17 | 1340. | <p>Wire from General. 153. ADEN.</p> <p>1/4 D.C.L.R. will probably leave ADEN during the first week of February-</p> | |
| | 20.1.17 | 1920. | <p>Wire Troopers- A.M. 1524.</p> <p>The four naval 12 pdr. 18 cwt. guns from E. AFRICA are required - Will ammunition be sent with them? and can it be supplied from ENGLAND as there is none in this country. The four 4" Mark VII guns are also required if they can be released-</p> | |
| | 20.1.17 | 1250. | <p>Wire Chief. A.M. 1522. London-</p> <p>The present stock of Smoke Candles and phosphorus grenades in this country are sufficient only for instructional purposes - Operations involving the use of these articles will probably take place before the end of February, and it is hoped that the demands for 74,000 Smoke Candles and 24,000 phosphorus grenades may be met as quickly as possible-</p> | |

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| | 20.1.17 | 1140. | Mixed Troopers A.M. 1521. | Weekly return for Royal Flying Corps- |
| | 20.1.17 | | Letter to Eastern Force - The 935 metres of decauville line between BALLYBUNION and FERDAN may be retained pending the completion of the road. A certain amount of this type of line has gone to SALONIKA, and this particular stretch should have gone, as it is the only means of continuing the construction of the road between these two places, however, it has is to be retained for the present - A reduction of the garrisons at TOR and ABU ZEINIMAH having been decided upon, it has been arranged that when the withdrawal takes place the troops shall march to SUOI. Lt Col. Jennings-Bramley and Mr Speakman will accompany the force, as political officers. The objects of this move are to impress the inhabitants of this part of SINAI - It will serve to show them that their Turkish friends have now departed - It might also result in the rounding up of any Arabs belonging to the | A. |

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| | | | <p>following of SHEIKH MANSUR ABU GUROME, who have remained in the neighborhood.</p> <p>It is also hoped that the political officers may be able to persuade the tribes to recommence trading, and consequently, inter-tribal relations may be improved.</p> <p>The column marching from TOR will consist of 4 British officers, 3 Indian officers, and 114 Indian O.R. They will march for nine days to ABU ZENEIMA, where they will pick up 1 Indian officer and 75 Indian O.R. The march on to AYON MUSSA will be done in four marches. The first party will rest for two days at ABU ZENEIMA.</p> <p><u>COASTAL PATROLS</u></p> <p>The presence of small vessels has been off the Coastal Section, Western Force, is reported by the military authorities. They have no means of searching these suspicious vessels, and it seems clear that these vessels are engaged in smuggling trade. At present, if a suspicious vessel is seen by a land patrol, the information has to be transmitted to the S.N.C. Alexandria, who has at times sent patrol ships to investigate. He,</p> | |

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| | 20.17. | | <p>however, is not always able to send a patrol vessel, and in any case a serious delay is involved, so that he has never been able to catch a smuggling vessel. In order to discover a better system of keeping up the blockade, it has been suggested by the Naval Comd, E. INDIES & EGYPT that a conference with the Commander-in-Chief should take place. This suggestion has been concurred in, and it will take place on the return of the Vice-Admiral from the RED SEA.</p> <p>A letter from the High Commissioner, CYPRUS, to the Naval Commander-in-Chief was forwarded to the Command G.H.Q. It was suggested that greater care should be taken in extinguishing or screening the lights in CYPRUS, in order to prevent enemy submarines laying mines by night, or using the lights for purposes of navigation. The opinion that this course is desirable is concurred in, but it is pointed out that due regard must be had to the complete security of the Prisoners of War Camp, and that it may not be possible to leave this camp in complete darkness.</p> | |

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| | 20.11.17 | | <p>Letter to Eastern Force - With a view to gaining further experience in Co-operation with aircraft, it has been decided to allot 100 rounds of 16 pdr Q.F. ammunition to each battery of the ANZAC MTD. Divn. A similar amount, and also 80 rounds per howitzer battery, is allotted to the batteries of the 53rd Divn.</p> | |
| | 20.11.17 | | <p>Letter to Eastern Force - G.S. 6/13. It has been found that the N.C.O.'s of Artillery sent to the Imperial School of Instruction fall into two classes - The N.C.O.'s from units at the front have more knowledge and experience than the N.C.O.'s from the Base Detachments. For the future, therefore, there will be an 'A' course for N.C.O.'s employed on, or capable of being employed in, a battery, Staff or Munitions 1. and a 'B' course for N.C.O.'s employed in the Gun Detachments.</p> | |
| | 20.11.17 | | <p>Letter to Eastern Force - G.S. 502. As far as his duties as Commandant of the Imperial School of Instruction allow, Lt Col. Colston will be made available to assist in the training of the newly formed 229th, 230th, and 231st Inf Bdes. It is suggested that details should be arranged direct by Lt Col. Colston with the Brigade Commanders concerned.</p> | |

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| | 20.11.17 | | <p>Letter to Eastern Force. G.S. 488.</p> <p>Copies of telegrams sent to the War Office with reference to the Staffs of the Northern and Southern Canal Sections, and Administrative Commandants, are forwarded. And attention is drawn to the request for approval for a D.A.D.M.S. for each of the two Canal Sections.</p> <p>According to proposals, now under consideration by the War Office, all administrative officers, will be shown in the establishment of G.H.Q. (vide Letter to War Office. 4.11.17)</p> | |

O. Williams
Capt. R.F.