

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

Formation Headquarters

**Item number:** 1/56/1 Part 7

**Title:** General Staff, Headquarters Imperial  
Mounted Division

March 1917



AWM4-1/56/1PART7

page 1. Report on Operations | APPON 33  
of I.M.D 25<sup>th</sup> 26 & 27<sup>th</sup> March

The Div concentrated on The NW of  
DEIR EL BELAH about 1930 night  
25/26 March

Orders for the following days operations  
were issued etc Replacement of  
units at 2000.

The Division bivouaced NW of DEIR  
EL BELAH & left the bivouac at  
0300 via western outskirts of  
DEIR EL BELAH.

During the late arrival of the Division  
it was impossible to reconnoitre  
the route by daylight & some  
difficulty was experienced in  
getting clear of the cultivated  
enclosures in the vicinity of  
the village.

2

The Division passed across the ~~ANZ~~ ~~Wadi~~  
WADI GHUZZEE in rear of the ANZ  
Division and on reaching EL MENDUR  
about 09.30 it passed through the  
main body of the I.C.C. Brigade.

From EL MENDUR the following dispositions  
were ordered.

4 Officers patrols were sent out as follows:-  
A to reconnoitre the Turkish line about <sup>K.</sup>EL  
BAHA and if found unoccupied to work  
up as close to ABU MAREIRA and observe  
it from the South. The patrol to remain in  
observation and return to Div. H.Q. by 16.00.

B to turn the KHURBET EL BAKA trench  
line from the North and to get as near to  
TEL ESH SHERIA as possible, to observe the  
roads leading North and West from that place.  
To return to Div. H.Q. and report at 16.00

- C. A patrol to the railway about KH ZUHEILKA to observe any railway movements, and destroy any telephone ~~lines~~ or telegraph lines he might come across. To report to Div. H. Q. at 1600.
- D. An officers patrol to HUT to report on enemy movements from that place. To return and report about 1600.

The first three patrols were all hung up by parties of mounted troops supported by small bodies of infantry.

The fourth patrol did excellent work and was in close touch with the enemy columns leaving HUT from 13.10. till he with drew behind the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade in action at 1600.

After crossing the head of the WADI EL MENDUR two squadrons of the 5<sup>th</sup> Mounted Brigade pushed out towards KHURBET EL DAHA ~~on~~ <sup>astride</sup> the GAZA - SABRA road, and

4

and one Squadron pushed up towards HUS to gain contact with the right of the A+NZ Mtd Division. This regiment was in action with enemy mounted troops supported by small bodies of ~~casualties~~ <sup>infantry</sup> throughout the day.

A successful little mounted action was carried out <sup>during the morning</sup> when one Troop galloped a small Turkish post and took 67 prisoners without loss, of these 45 were unarmed.

G.O.C. 5<sup>th</sup> Mounted Brigade at 11.00 considered the ~~the~~ infantry before him were becoming more active so brought his guns into action against the infantry on the KH. EL THINAY ridge.

The guns fired ~~slowly~~ <sup>at that time</sup> and the infantry <sup>showed</sup> no intention of advancing further. <sup>on the guns opening fire</sup> ~~But~~ a large calibre gun firing at long range opened an accurate fire on the guns and led horses. The battery was forced to change its position, and a few casualties were inflicted on horses and men.

5

The mistake of opening fire with guns on a small target at this point was soon made apparent, as the enemy continued shelling the ridges where the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade were operating throughout the day at regular intervals, and the movement of enemy troops was considerably more active.

The role of observation, only, which was particularly impressed on all commanders at the Divisional Commander's conference the previous evening, did not appear to have been appreciated by the G.O.C. 5<sup>th</sup> Mtd Brigade.

At 12.00 a deserter from GARAGAOCH himself up in our lines, and gave a considerable amount of information re the enemy troops there, including the fact that Kelp had been wirelessed for from JEMMANEH at 10.00.

At 13.10 a message was received from HUT patrol stating considerable enemy activity was apparent on the roads leading

6

North and East from TEL EL SHARIFA.

At this time <sup>14.00</sup> orders were received from Desert Column for the A & N. Z. Divisions to assist the infantry in the attacks on GAZA, while the Imperial Mounted Div'n took over the covering screens. The I. C. C. Brigade moving to its left to support the right of the Imperial Mtd Division.

The Imp. Mtd. Div'n was then placed under orders of the Aust & N. Z. Mtd Div'n Commander.

At 14.30 orders were received from G. O. C. ANZAC Mtd Division to take over the following posts:-

1 Troop 2 miles East of BEIT SURDIS watching HUS.

1 Squadron watching NEJED.

1 Squadron at DEIR SINEID.

The 3rd Light Horse Brigade were also ordered to join the A & N. Z. Mtd Division

orders were issued to G. O. C. 6<sup>th</sup> Mtd

Brigade to send out the necessary detachments in relief of the above mentioned posts.

To the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade to leave a protective detachment keeping touch with the Camel Corps Brigade on his right and the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade HUF detachment on his left

To G.O.C. 3rd L.H. Bde to join the ALN2 Mtd Division.

Divisional Hd Qrs moved to a ridge about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile West of B.F. Dardis.

While these above detachments were proceeding between 14.45 and 15.15. to take up their positions & relieve the respective detachments from ALN2 Division, messages were received from HUF officers patrol reporting the presence of enemy columns advancing rapidly in the direction of GAZA.



These messages had had to be sent in by mounted orderlies, it being impossible to send signalling detachments with a <sup>small</sup> patrol whose mission was to observe without ~~being~~ attracting attention, but ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> information <sup>the B.C.</sup> and the manner in which ~~he~~ handled his patrol were both all that could be desired, and <sup>the conduct of</sup> this officer is worthy of special notice.

While the relief of the A.I.N.Z Div'n patrols were being effected, the enemy's advance from JEMMANEH became suddenly pronounced and before the detachments could get into position they were in action with the advancing forces who were forcing back the ANZ Mtd Div'n posts from the crest of Hill 405 which they were holding.

Lt Col. WIGAN D.S.O. with 2 Squadrons & 1 Troop Berks Yeo. then took over the command of the action on this front. It was impossible to

relieve the detachments of the N.Z.M.F. Brigade at that time, so Col. WIGAN placed his own troops in the line and assisted in their delaying action, at the same time sending back detailed information re. the strength and line of advance of the enemy, who had up to then shown only inf. and mounted troops with machine guns.

Seeing the situation at this front was becoming critical the G.O.C. ordered up the whole of the 6<sup>th</sup> Bde including the Berks Battery. Unfortunately a fairly good supply of water had just been discovered and the Brigade were watering, so there was some small delay in the start, and before they could come to Col. WIGAN'S support the enemy had pushed back his detachments over the crest of 405 and occupied it, This was about 17.15.

Insert A. →  
Unfortunately touch with the 5<sup>th</sup> Bde had been

10

lost during the move of Div Hq Qrs from  
KH. ER RASEIM to BEIT DURDIS and  
was never ~~actually~~ regained till after 20.00.

~~Insert~~ This loss of touch <sup>with the 5th Brigade</sup> and the withdrawal of  
the 3rd Brigade, together with the natural  
inclination of all the protective detachments to  
meet the enemy's main attack, left a  
considerable gap between the right of the

6<sup>th</sup> Brigade & the left of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade.

At 18.00 when it was becoming dusk,  
Efforts were made by mounted orderlies & officers  
to reach the GOC 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade which were however  
of no avail, and an appeal was consequently  
directed to GOC ANZ Div'n to allow the  
3rd Regt of Gen. Royston's Brigade previously  
detached to the other division to rejoin the  
Imp Hq Division in order to fill that gap  
on the right, which was done, and much praise  
is due to the 10<sup>th</sup> A.L.H. for the manner in which  
they found the Div Hq Qrs in the dark and

also gained their places in the line in the dark in an unknown bit of country scamed with deep & difficult wadi beds.

The Division was at this time about 20.30 ordered to hold its ground and to remain in its present position pending further orders.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade however had to withdraw their line  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile, though enemy activity had practically ceased and there were apparent signs that they were digging themselves in about quite close to the Brigade. The new line was taken up without incident and the Brigade was then in a better position.

0020  
At 20.20 news was received from ANZ MtD Division that they were withdrawing and the order for the concentration and withdrawal of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>

12

Brigades were then ordered messengers and lamp signals being used. Cable connection being interrupted by the passage of troops over the wires.

The withdrawal of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade was ordered through the Brigade Major who came in to Div. Hd Qrs to ask for orders at 23.30. Touch had previously been regained with this Brigade and they had been allotted a position on our right flank protecting the return route of the Division, slightly South of KHURBET ER RESEIM.

Div. Hd Qrs moved off when it was ascertained that the 6<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigades had received and were carrying out their orders.

13

The Artillery and all spare transport and wheeled vehicles were sent off earlier in the night as soon as the ~~orders~~<sup>orders</sup> for subsequent withdrawal were received.

The 6<sup>th</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigades came under long range Artillery & Rifle fire when crossing the WADI GHUZZEE but only 3 slight casualties were incurred during this phase of the action, and the Division was intact at DEIR EL BELAH at 08.10 on 27<sup>th</sup>. The total casualties of the Division during the day were under 40 of all descriptions.

I would like to record my appreciation of the work of the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade, the Berks & Notts Batteries, and particularly the handling of his Brigade by Brig Gen

14  
ROYSTON, and the work of all units  
of the 3rd L. H. Brigade

The communications of the Division  
were weak, but the Signal Squadron is  
an entirely new formation and the  
break down of inter communication  
between the Hd Qrs & Brigades at  
various times ~~may~~ can be accounted for  
by the sudden strain on this new unit.

Water was discovered in small quantities  
at various points, a separate report on  
which will be submitted. It was entirely  
surface water from recent rainfalls.

I wish to bring to special notice the  
work of 2/Lt J Edwards, Wrecker General  
whose handling of an officers patrol

15

in the direction of H U J was of the  
utmost value.

~~Has the ...~~

Sydney HW Hodgson  
Mrs Jem

and Imp M. A. B.

29 March 1913



A.

The action with the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade developed very quickly and the G.O.C. A & N.Z. Division sent the 3<sup>rd</sup> L.H. Brigade less the 10<sup>th</sup> A.L. H to operate on Gen. Pitt's left between 405' and the DELY SINEID road.

The ~~operation~~ handling of this Brigade was noticeable for its quickness and also for the manner in which the G.O.C. seized on the salient features of the country and utilized them to excellent advantage.

There is no doubt that Gen Royston's quickness in grasping the value of the high hill North West of 405' enabled the 6<sup>th</sup> Bde to hold on to the line to which <sup>he</sup> the ~~general~~ was forced back, and which would otherwise have been untenable.

This movement brought the North Battery into action on the left of the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade, and the Berks Battery were in action in the centre both these Batteries did

2  
A excellent work, the Notts being able  
to enfilade the infantry advancing  
directly against the 6<sup>th</sup> and doing considerable  
damage.

The situation became serious when more  
enemy guns, ~~arrived~~ <sup>arrived</sup> 6 were already in action, and  
enfiladed the Berks battery whose position  
then became untenable and they were  
forced to withdraw.

1830  
19/100  
It was however nearly dark so their  
withdrawal was not perceived by the  
enemy who made no attempt to push on,  
but remained in possession of Hill 405<sup>1</sup>.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> L. H. Brigade <sup>less 10<sup>th</sup> P.L.H. Regt</sup> were on the left  
with the Notts Battery covering the DEIR  
SINEID - GAZA Road.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade in a hollow in the centre  
about 1½ miles <sup>N</sup> from BET DURDIS, the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade  
echeloned back on their right. This at the

A

3

Time was unknown to the Div. Commander who had ordered back the 5<sup>th</sup> to Hd Qrs leaving 3 squadrons out to link up with the I.C.C. Bde on the right and the 6<sup>th</sup> Bde on the left. This order was apparently not received.

Not knowing the whereabouts of this brigade caused the Div. Commr considerable anxiety about the right of the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade and the G.P.C. RANZ Mtd Division was requested to send one Regt to support the right flank, which he did sending in the 10<sup>th</sup> Regt A.L.H.

Enemy activity died away about 2000 but owing to its exposed position the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade

go back to "insert a"

GOC 6<sup>th</sup> MED BDE

A35/31  
28<sup>th</sup>

Your NIGHT OUTPOSTS  
will be in position at 1700  
Today

The BERKS BATTERY  
will join you at your OUTPOST  
position.

Issued at 1330

John Lyne Major  
G.S.

Reference OM 3B

In GOC 117D

47

A35/31

WADI GHZZEE WADI ARUTIERIG  
and TEL EL JEMMI on both East and  
West banks, especially WADI EL MENDUR.

MAR 1917

The tracks leading due south from the  
village IMSEIRAT through hill 330 on the  
GOZ EL THARE ridge to Hill ~~330~~ 430 South  
of the ABISAN ELKERIR-TEL EL JEMMI  
Road.

6. These instructions are only in amplification  
of former orders.

A. C. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Col.  
G.S.

10<sup>th</sup> Mt. Divn.

28. III. 17  
16. 20.

OM 361

To G.O.C.

6<sup>th</sup> Mounted Brigade

28/1/17

121

1. Your outpost line tonight will run along the southern spurs of the GOZ EL TAIRE Ridge from INSEIRAT inclusive to the single tree inclusive.
2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse Brigade holds the line on your right from the single tree exclusive to the village ABBASAN EL KEBIR.
3. The Berks Battery will join your Brigade at 16.00 this evening.
4. You should take up a line for the night similar to that held by the A+NZ Htd Div'n for the night 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> shown you personally on the ground.
5. Particular care should be given to all tracks or branch wadis leading into

122  
The WADI GHUZZEE between ABUTIEBIC and TEL EL JEMMI on both East and West banks, especially the WADI EL MENDUR.

The track leading due South from the village INSEIRAT through hill 330 on the GOZ EL TAIRE ridge to Hill ~~330~~<sup>430</sup> South of the ABBASAN ELKEBIR-TEL ELJEMMI Road.

6. These instructions are only in amplification of former orders.

H. C. Sand Lt Col  
G. S.  
Imp Htd Div'n.

28. I.V. 17  
K. 20.

35/38  
HQ Desert Column about 1000 yards SW of present position, in front of the present right of the Imperial Mounted Brigade Division.

5. Picquets should be in position by 1730

6. Divisions will be ready to turn out at short notice, and will be saddled up by 0600 tomorrow unless otherwise ordered.

7. Communication will be maintained by cable, helio or lamp.

8. This may be lighted except on the picquet line

9. Acknowledges

27.3.17

W. J. G. Mason

Major  
Desert Column

Air reconnaissance 1515 puts about 2500 Infantry + Mounted men 5 miles E. of UM JERAR

43

W.O. 19

Ref.

Raf. 1/125000

1/250,000

35/37

appen 33 A.

a + N3 Mt<sup>d</sup> Division.

Imperial Mt<sup>d</sup> Division ✓

East force.

W.O.

&

Signals

1. The Desert Column Mounted Troops will hold the line IN SEIRAT<sup>PT 310</sup> - ABASAN EL KERBIR ON night 27/28<sup>th</sup>.
2. The line is divided into two sections.
  - (a) Left Section - As N2 Mt<sup>d</sup> DIV (less one Bde), Commander Major Gen Sir H. G. Chauvel KCMG, CB, from point 310 (inclusive) along GOZ EL TAIRE to North East end of Spur - with single tree at the I of GOZ EL TAIRE (inclusive).
  - (b) Right Section - Imp Mt<sup>d</sup> Div - under command of Lt Hodgson, CWO, CB - from single tree exclusive to ABASAN EL KERBIR inclusive.
3. Standing patrol will be pushed as far as the Wadi SHUZZE SHAWI EL IMRAN. A line of squadron picquets will remain saddled up & prepared to hold tactical points in the line till the main body can saddle up.
4. HQ Left Section will be on the westward slope of the GOZ EL TAIRE about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S of IN SEIRAT. The Right Section will be about SHEIKH HAMUDI

Ref. 1/125000  
1/250000

*copy*

A. & N.Z. Mtd Division.  
Imperial Mtd Division.  
Eastforce.  
D.D.M.S.  
Q.  
Signals.  
-----

1. The Desert Column Mounted Troops will hold the line IN SEIRAT pt 310 - ABASAN EL KEBIR on night 27th/28th.
2. The line is divided into two sections
  - (a) Left Section - A. & N.Z. Mtd Div (less one Bde) Comdr Major Gen. Sir H.C. Chauvel, K.C.M.G., C.B. from point 310 (inclusive) along GOZ EL TAIRE to North East end of spur - with single tree at the I of GOZ EL TAIRE (inclusive).
  - (b) Right Section - Imp. Mtd Div - Commander Major General W.H. Hodgson, C.V.O., C.B., from single tree exclusive to ABASAN EL KEBIR inclusive.
3. Standing patrols will be pushed as far as the WADI GHUZZE and WADI EL IMAAIN. A line of squadron picquets will remain saddled up and prepared to hold tactical points in the line till the main body can saddle up.
4. H.Q. Left section will be on the Westward slopes of GOZ EL TAIRE about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S of IN SEIRAT.  
H.Q. Right Section will be about SHEIKH HAMUDI.  
H.Q. Desert Column about 1000 yards S.W. of present position, in front of the present right of the Imperial Mounted Division.
5. Picquets should be in position by 1730.
6. Divisions will be ready to turn out at short notice and will be saddled up by 0600 tomorrow unless otherwise ordered.
7. Communications will be maintained by Cable, helio or lamp.
8. Fires may be lighted except on the picquet line.
9. Acknowledge.

Sd/ V.M. Fergusson, Lt. Col.,  
G.S.,  
Desert Column.

27.3.17.

Air reconnaissance/ 1515 puts about 2500 Infantry and Mounted men 5 miles E. of UM JERRAR.

**"C" Form**  
**MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.** No. of Message.....  
 Army Form C. 2123.  
 (In books of 100.)

Code.....	Words..... £ s. d.	Received From..... By.....	Sent, or sent out At..... m. To..... By.....	Office Stamp. <b>A35/49</b>
-----------	-----------------------	----------------------------------	---	--------------------------------

Charges to collect.....  
 Service Instructions.....  
 Handed in at..... Office..... m. Received..... m.

TO **(2)**

\*Sender's Number Day of Month In reply to Number  
**AAA**

in May 1950 19 for East  
 nights hold good for Regiments  
 and standing patrols kiasa  
 Divisions less free on  
 duty will move into bivouac  
 as soon as camping sites  
 have been selected  
 General Staff officers from each  
 Division will meet a staff  
 officer from Desert Column on  
 Hill 1130 DEIR EL BELA  
 at 0945 today to select  
 Camping Grounds. The  
 of the outpost line will  
 be in telephone and visual  
 communication with his division  
 commander until the situation

FROM **Contd.**  
 PLACE & TIME

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
 (B8.70) Wt. w. 743-M357 250,000 Pads. 10/15 H&S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.

31

**"C" Form**  
**MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.** No. of Message.....  
 Army Form C. 2123.  
 (In books of 100.)

Code.....	Words..... £ s. d.	Received From <b>WCP</b> By <b>KXL</b>	Sent, or sent out At..... m. To..... By.....	Office Stamp. <b>A35/48</b>
-----------	-----------------------	--	---	--------------------------------

Charges to collect.....  
 Service Instructions.....  
 Handed in at **WCP** Office **0902** m. Received **0931** m.

TO **Imperial War Div**

\*Sender's Number Day of Month In reply to Number  
**AAA**

The day outpost line will  
 be taken up by division  
 in rotation the duty division  
 today will be Imp. War  
 Div. By day 1  
 Brigade will be on outpost  
 duty the line of day  
 observation posts will be run from  
 ARASAM EL KEBIR to IN  
 SEIRAT both inclusive. aaa  
 will be pushed forward toward  
 TEL EL JEMMI KARIM ABU  
 EL HISEIA and SHELLAL aaa  
 By night 2 Brigades will  
 consist of tactical points on  
 that line aaa Orders contained

FROM **Contd.**  
 PLACE & TIME

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
 (B8.70) Wt. w. 743-M357 250,000 Pads. 10/15 H&S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.



"C" Form Army Form C. 2123.  
(In blocks of 100.)  
**MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.** No. of Message.....

Words..... g s. d.	Received From..... By.....	Sent, or sent out At.....m. To..... By.....	Office Stamp.  <b>1955/50</b> <b>MAR 1917</b>
Charges to collect			
Service Instructions.			
Handed in at.....		Office.....m. Received.....m.	

TO

\*Sender's Number      Day of Month      In reply to Number      **A A A**

<i>is</i>	<i>clear</i>	<i>divisions</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>be</i>
<i>ready</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>turn</i>	<i>out</i>	<i>as</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>hours</i>	<i>notice</i>	<i>AAA</i>	<i>Acknowledged</i>

FROM	<i>Desert Column</i>
PLACE & TIME	<i>0850</i>

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
 (B870) Wt. w. 7433-M857 250,000 Pads. 10/16 H&S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.

**"C" Form**  
**MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.** No. of Message.....  
Army Form C. 2123. (In books of 100.)

Prefix.....	Code.....	Words..... £ s. d.	Received	Sent, or sent out	Office Stamp.
Charges to collect			From.....	At.....m.	A 35/68
Service Instructions.			By.....	To.....	
Handed in at.....			Office.....m.	Received.....m.	

TO 2

\*Sender's Number      Day of Month      In reply to Number      **AAA**

to	water	as	soon	a.
the	situation	permits	under	orders
from	Desert	Column.	aaa	Acknowledge
via	addressed	Imperial & Arab	Regt	
Diwan	repeated	last night.		

*Handwritten signature/initials in purple ink.*

FROM Desert Column

PLACE & TIME

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
 (B 3070) Wt. w. 74-1-M357 250,000 Pads. 10/15 H & S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.

**"C" Form**  
**MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.** No. of Message.....  
Army Form C. 2123. (In books of 100.)

Prefix.....	Code.....	Words..... £ s. d.	Received	Sent, or sent out	Office Stamp.
Charges to collect			From.....	At.....m.	A 35/67
Service Instructions.			By.....	To.....	
Handed in at.....			Office.....m.	Received.....m.	

TO Imperial Regt

\*Sender's Number      Day of Month      In reply to Number      **AAA**

at	0500	tomorrow	patrols	will
be	pushed	forward	2	miles
from	the	outpost	line	aaa
of	and	when	they	report
that	there	is	no	sign
of	enemy	movement	from	the
direction	of	SHELLAL	towards	RAFA
KHAN	YUNUS	OR	DEIR	EL
BELAH	each	mounted	division	will
close	on	its	left	and
concentrate	withdrawing	outpost	squadrons	aaa
small	day	observation	posts	will
be	left	out	on	the
line	ABASAN	EL	KEBIR-	INSEIRAT
aaa	however	other	than	three
of	observation	posts	may	be
upgraded	aaa	divisions	will	proceed

FROM Continued

PLACE & TIME

A 35/67

\* This line should be erased if not required.

Charges to collect	£ s. d.	From.....	At.....m.	
Service Instructions.		By.....	To.....	
			By.....	
Handed in at.....		Office.....m.	Received.....m.	
TO <i>Imperial Mt'd Div</i>				
*Sender's Number	Day of Month	In reply to Number	AAA	
<i>W.D. 20</i>	<i>27</i>			
The	day	outpost	line	will
be	taken	up	by	division
in	rotation	the	duty	division
today	will	be	sup	mt'd
div	aaa	by	day	1
Brigade	will	be	at	outpost
duty	the	line	of	<del>the</del> days
observation	posts	will	run	from
ADASAN	EL	KEBIR	to	IN
SEIRAT	both	inclusive	aaa	Towards
TEL	EL	JEMMI	KARRIM	ADV
EL	HISEIA	and	SHELLAL	aaa
by	night	outpost	line	will
consist	of	2	brigades	which
will	hold	tactical	points	on
that	line	aaa	order	Continued
FROM				
PLACE & TIME				

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
 (B 3970) Wt. w. 7493—M857 250,000 Pads. 10/16 H & S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.

Charges to collect	£ s. d.	From.....	At.....m.
Service Instructions.		By.....	To.....
			By.....

Handed in at..... Office.....m. Received.....m.

TO *J*

\*Sender's Number      Day of Month      In reply to Number      **AAA**

<i>in</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>W.O.</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>last</i>
<i>night</i>	<i>hold</i>	<i>good</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>Prejuts</i>
<i>and</i>	<i>standing</i>	<i>patrols</i>	<i>aaa</i>	<i>aaa</i>	<i>mta</i>
<i>Divisions</i>	<i>less</i>	<i>force</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>Outpost</i>
<i>duty</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>move</i>	<i>into</i>	<i>into</i>	<i>bivouac</i>
<i>as</i>	<i>soon</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>Camping</i>	<i>sites</i>	<i>sites</i>
<i>have</i>	<i>been</i>	<i>selected</i>	<i>aaa</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>General</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Opin</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>Each</i>	<i>Staff</i>
<i>Division</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>meet</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Staff</i>
<i>appear</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>Desert</i>	<i>Column</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>on</i>
<i>at</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>DEIR</i>	<i>EL</i>	<i>EL</i>	<i>BELAH</i>
<i>Camping</i>	<i>at</i>	<i>today</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>select</i>	<i>select</i>
<i>grounds</i>	<i>0945</i>	<i>aaa</i>	<i>The</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Commander</i>
<i>of</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>Outpost</i>	<i>line</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>will</i>
<i>be</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>telephonic</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>visual</i>	<i>visual</i>
<i>Communication</i>	<i>with</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>divisions</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Commander</i>
<i>will</i>	<i>maintain</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>situation</i>	<i>situation</i>	<i>situation</i>

FROM \_\_\_\_\_  
PLACE & TIME \_\_\_\_\_

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
(B 3970) Wt. w. 7495—M357 250,000 Pads. 10/16 H & S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.

Prefix.....Code.....Words.....  
 £ s. d.  
 Charges to collect  
 Service Instructions.  
 From..... At.....m.  
 By..... To.....  
 By.....

Handed in at..... Office.....m. Received.....m.

TO

3

\*Sender's Number

Day of Month

In reply to Number

**AAA**

<i>is</i>	<i>clear</i>	<i>divisions</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>be</i>
<i>ready</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>turn</i>	<i>out</i>	<i>at</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>hours</i>	<i>notice</i>	<i>aaa</i>	<i>ack<sup>4</sup></i>

FROM *Desert Column*  
 PLACE & TIME *0850*

\* This line should be erased if not required.  
 (B 3370) Wt. w. 7493-M857 250,000 Pads. 10/15 H & S (E436.) Forms/C.2123/3.

APP 34

27/3/17

To. G.O.C.

3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse Bde

125

1. The Imperial MtD Div will take over the day outpost line from ABASAN EL KEBIR to IN SEIRAT both inclusive.

2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> L.H. Bde will carry out this duty during the day.

The line of observation posts should run from ABASAN EL KEBIR to IN SEIRAT both inclusive.

Patrols will be pushed forwards towards TEL EL JEMMAY, KABIM ABU EL HISEIA + SHELLAL.

3. By night the 6<sup>th</sup> Bde will take over the left of the outpost line, i.e. from the I M GOZ EL TAIRE inclusive to the INSEIRAT ridge.

Tactical points on the above line will be held at night, similarly to the dispositions carried out by 5<sup>th</sup> Bde on night 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> by the ANZ MtD Div HQs. & main body Imp. MtD Div will move into Beersheva in the vicinity of DEIR EL BELAH as soon as camp sites have been selected.

Telephone & visual communication between Brigades on Outpost duty with Div. HQs. will be established.

Until further orders the Div. will be ready to turn out at 2 hours notice.

You will report your dispositions when completed. Brig. Gen. Poynton OMB will command the whole outpost line.

Div. HQ. 27/3/17

10.15

A. K. [Signature]

Lt. Col. C.S.

Imp. MtD Div

Copies to:-

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Bdes

CRA

RE

Signals

Q

How of which will be respected later

~~COM~~  
OM 35.

To: G.O.C.

Happen 34

3rd Light Horse Brigades

A 35/35.

1. The Imperial Mounted Division will take over the day outpost line from ABASAN EL KEBIR to IN SEIRAT both inclusive
2. The 3rd L. H. Brigades will carry out this duty during the day.

The line of Observation Posts should run from ABASAN EL KEBIR to IN SEIRAT both inclusive.

Patrols will be pushed forward towards TEL EL JEMMI KARIM ABU EL HISEIA and SHELLAH.

3. By night the 6th Brigades will take over the left of the outpost line, i.e. from the 1st IN SOZ EL TAIRE inclusive to the IN SEIRAT Ridge

Tactical points on the above line will be held at night, similarly to the dispositions carried out by ~~5th~~ 5th Brigades on nights 26th - 27th and the A & N Z Htd Division

A 35/36

MAR 1917

Hd Qrs and main body Imp. Htd Division will move into barracks in the vicinity of DEIR EL BELAH as soon as camp sites have been selected.

Telephonic and visual communication between ~~by~~ Brigades on Outpost duty with Div. Hd Qrs will be established.

Until further orders <sup>the</sup> Division will be ready to turn out at 2 hours notice you will report your dispositions when completed

H. C. S. and Lt Colonel

G. S.

1. H. D. W. n

DW. H. Q.

27. III. 17. copies to 5th & 6th Brigades

10. 15.

C. R. A.

R. E.

Signals

P

by the 5th Brigade with 2  
squadrons supplying posts as follows

a. ABENI SELA with posts at ABASAN  
EL KEBIR

b. At first hill 320 near EL of ELTA  
with posts at cross roads EL IMAMIN -  
BENI SELA and ABASAN EL KEBIR  
Hill 320 near E of ELTAMRE.

4. The right of the 6th Brigade is  
on the broken ground S.E. of the 2nd  
Hill 320 of the GOZ EL TAMRE Ridge  
one half company Battalion, 52nd Div'n  
hold a support line from the first hill  
320 (mentioned in para 3. b. to BENI  
SELA both inclusive.

5. Standing patrols will be supplied  
on all tracks leading S. and E from ABASAN  
EL KEBIR, on track leading from EL  
IMAMIN to KARIM ASU EL MISSER, or  
on track leading — P.T.O

A 35/33

44

01195

Appen 34 A

A 35/32

MAR 1917

G.O.C.

3rd M. Brigade

1. Your outpost line tonight will  
run along the direct track shown  
in the R.A.F.A.  $\frac{1}{125000}$  map, commencing  
from ABASAN EL KEBIR to the  
cross tracks at hill 320 for  
about one half of its route, and  
thence along the valley south  
of the GOZ EL TAMRE ridge  
till the line links with that of the  
6th Brigade, who will <sup>take over from</sup> you at 1700.

2. The Notts Battery will join your  
Brigade tonight.

3. The line above noted was held



# 95/34

from EL IMAMIN to EL IZRA'IN.  
6 Divisional Hq Qtrs will be in its original  
location in DEIR EL BELAH  
H C 3rd Lt Colonel  
General Staff  
Imp Mtd Div.

27.3.17

~~Copy~~

Appen 35  
A 35/29

6<sup>th</sup> Mounted Brigade

Your outpost line tonight will run along the southern spur of the GOZ EL TAIRE Ridge from INSEIRAT inclusive to the single tree inclusive.

2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse Brigade holds the line on your right from the single tree exclusive to the village ABABAN EL KEBIR.
3. The Berks Battery will join your Brigade at 16.00 this evening.
4. You should take up a wire for the night similar to that held by the A.N.Z. Mtd Divn for the night 27-28<sup>th</sup> shown you personally on the ground.
5. Particular care should be given to all tracks or branch roads leading into

46

Appen 36

A 35/28

Ref. OM 31

5<sup>th</sup> MTD BDE

28<sup>th</sup>

MAR 1917

WATER immediately and stand by TO move to DEIR EL BELAH

Issued at 10<sup>07</sup>

J. J. O'Brien Major  
65

For  
GOC. 1170

CRA  
IMP. MTD DIVISION

APPEN 36 28<sup>th</sup> 27

The NOTTS BATTERY  
will report to GOC 3<sup>rd</sup> LH Bde  
at 1700 today for outpost duty.  
3<sup>rd</sup> LH Bde Headquarters will be  
at point 320 just W of E of  
GOZ E L TAIRE (ie present Div HQS)

The BERKS BATTERY  
will report to GOC 6<sup>th</sup> MTD BDE  
at 1700 today for outpost duty at  
The present HQS of 6<sup>th</sup> MTD BDE

Issued at  
1345

Reference OM 34

Bob Leary Major  
For GOC 1 M.D.

48

Ref OM 29

GOC 3<sup>rd</sup> LH Bde

28<sup>th</sup> 25/26

APPEN 36

As soon as your Bde  
has watered you will take  
over the outpost line from  
GOC 5<sup>th</sup> MTD Bde

GOC 5<sup>th</sup> Bde will  
explain dispositions necessary.  
Reports of any unusual  
occurrences should be reported  
at once to Div HQS

Only the Regiment  
in support of the outposts  
should keep at least one Squadron  
saluted up ready for immediate  
action

Remainder of your  
Bde should remain uncommitted

Issued 10820  
Copies to 3<sup>rd</sup> LH Bde  
5<sup>th</sup> MTD Bde

Bob Leary Major G.S.  
IN GOC 1 M.D.

6. GOC's work report to D HQ when they have taken over and handed over their sections of the line.

7. Field Troops, Field ambulances and mob bet Sects who remain at DEIR EL BELAH

8. No Batteries will remain at DEIR EL BELAH

9. 5<sup>th</sup> Bde will arrange to patrol the telegraph line which runs on poles from DEIR EL BELAH to KHAN YUNUS from 1800 30<sup>th</sup> to 0600 31<sup>st</sup>. The patrol will have a linesman with it who can mend the line if it is found cut. to have been cut

Acknowledged

29.3.17

A. H. A. H. A. H. A. H.  
Lt Col J. S.  
Imp. Int. Dir.

GOC. 5<sup>th</sup> Bde. APPEN 37. Ref. 1/25000 map RAFA sheet  
3 Bde. OC Signal Squadron p 35/24

- 49
1. At 1330 march 30<sup>th</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup> Bde will relieve the Bde of the A. N. Z. Div. which is holding the whole of the outpost line from ABASAN EL KEBIR to IM SEIRAT both inclusive. Before relief the GOC 5<sup>th</sup> Bde will send a representative to find out the pickets and patrols forward to be found. HQ 5<sup>th</sup> Bde will be at the I of GOZ EL TAIRE
  2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde will move up and take over the right section of the line, ABASAN EL KEBIR to I of GOZ EL TAIRE (exclusive) by 1730. The left section will be taken by the 5<sup>th</sup> Bde for the night. 3 Bde HQ will be at forked roads 1 mi NW of first E in GOZ EL TAIRE
  3. As soon as the morning patrols have reported all clear, the 5<sup>th</sup> Bde will withdraw to bivouac at DEIR EL BELAH, ~~handing over~~ the section of the line to being taken over by 3 Bde.
  4. At 1330 A. N. Z. Div. will relieve 3 Bde who will then return to DEIR EL BELAH.
  5. OC Signal Squadron will arrange cable helio and lamp communication between Bde HQ's and Div HQ, and between 5 & 3 Bde HQ's during the night

MAR 1917

500.3<sup>rd</sup> Bde.

5 "  
6 "

C.R.A.

O.A. 2.

123

The value of information from depends on how quickly it can be got to the Commanders Concerned.

Therefore the G.O.C. directs that such bodies of troops as standing patrols should whenever possible have a helio by day & lamp by night with them

All reconnaissance patrols should be informed before going out the location of the Signal Stations in their area of reconnaissance so that information may be got back as quickly as possible.

A Kawana Capt  
for Lt. Col. S.S.  
Imp. Mtd Div

29/3/17

3. Bde

5 "

6 "

C.R.A.

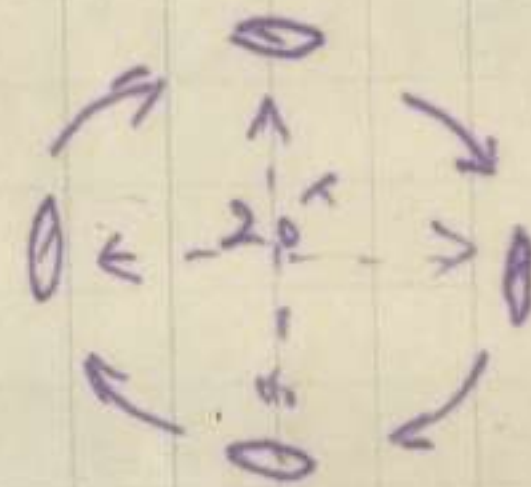
O.A. 3

124

Our aircraft have orders to use their machine gun on all enemy ~~subelements~~ troops whenever they can

Therefore our troops must inform the aircraft that they are not hostile bodies, when they are out beyond the outposts and where mistakes are liable to be made. This should be done by a few men circling round to the right when the aircraft appears over them.

Please take the necessary action to inform all under your command



29/3/17

A Kawana Capt  
for Lt. Col. S.S.  
Imp. Mtd Div

Report on country in neighbourhood of GAZA.

A35/22

GSZ/40

53

MAR 1941

WATER.

JEBALIEH. - Pools of water.

ALI MUNTAR - One well, good water.

In the Wadi S.W. of BEIT DURDIS there are many small pools of surface water. (WADI FUALLIS). In the WADI HALIB here are small pools of surface water. At the mouth of the WADI GHUZZEE  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile East of the caves to the sea there is running water (fresh) at a depth of 5 feet. There is no water on the beach S.W. of GAZA.

BEIT LAHI - one well.

ROADS.

GAZA - DEIR SINEID and GAZA - NEJED are good motor roads.

There is a stone bridge near BEIT HANUN on the GAZA - NEJED road.

There are two roads running East from GAZA to BEIT DURDIS with crossings made across the Wadis.

SHEIKH ABBAS - BEIT DURDIS good road along the top of the Wadi BENI KHAMIS. This road is overlooked the whole way, from ALI MUNTAR.

OBSTACLES.

The WADI FUALLIS is crossable only in places and forms an obstacle to movement on a broad front.

There are thick cactus hedges round JEBALIEH NUZLEH SHEIKH REDWAN. W. of SHEIKH REDWAN the country is open.

The sandhills S.W. of GAZA are either very sandy or else very crumbling. It would be difficult to make trenches in them without revetting material.

Guns could support an attack from the N. finding cover behind the ridges, but they could not move in the sandhills.

N. of the ALI MUNTAR ridge the surface is like "rotten limestone" and is only crossable in certain places.

Mouth of the WADI GHUZZEE. The Wadi near the sea is full of quicksands. The crossing on the main GAZA road is good, so also is the crossing near the waves.  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W. of main road there is another crossing. There is also a road crossing along the sand just clear of the sea, but just inside this is the worst part of the quicksands. Wadi can be crossed by the caves or sea shore without shewing up from ALI MUNTAR.

TEL EL JEMMI - there is no crossing for cars.

TURKISH TRENCHES.

(1) There is a line of trenches from EL MINEH EN NU ZLEH facing N.E. & N.

(2) There is a line of trenches about TEL EL TINEH.

(3) In front of this line there is a third line along the trees S. of TEL EL TINEH.

When GAZA has been taken by our troops, the best line to hold is among the cactus hedges just North of JEBALIEH.

Appen 38 5 G 524/40  
A35/21

REPORT on Topography and Water discovered during the course of operations on 26th. March, by Imperial Mounted Division.

MAR 1917

soil

The country throughout was hilly, chiefly clay, with loose stones appearing on the surface the further North the operations progressed.

The hills are grass covered and slopes gentle, a proportion is cultivated and covered with green barley or wheat.

The country is utterly featureless and very difficult to locate one's position in, even with the best map by daylight. At night without bearings it is extremely difficult, not to say impossible to find one's way from any one point to another, even though one may have just come from the first point.

The only obstacles met with are the deep steep sided Wadis with their small branches, negotiable by mounted men singly but impassable without preparation by for,ed bodies or wheeled vehicles

Preparation of banks for passage of troops on broad fronts would be an easy and quick task.

The chief of these Wadis are WADI EL SHERAI and WADI IMLEIH RUNNING INTO THE WADI GHUZZEE.

S. WADI EL HUMRA and WADI EL FUALLIS running into WADI BENY KHAMIS North of KH. KUFTIEH, and South of BEIT DURDIS.

These WADIS are similar in character to those met with at the Northern end of the GOZ EL TAIRE ridge, only the sides appear steeper and of stiffer clay.

The bottom or beds of the WADIS are also stiff clay or loam soil, and as the Division progressed North more water was discovered in pools in these WADI beds. Unfortunately these pools are small and widely separated, and seldom contain sufficient to water more than the horses of one squadron to one regiment.

The best pools found were in the branches of the WADI EL HUMRA and WADI EL FUALLIS, S.W. of KHURBET EL RESEIM and in the main beds of the above WADIS between KHURBET KUFTIEH and BEIT DURDIS and N.E. of the latter place.

These pools being shallow are liable to rapid evaporation as the weather becomes hotter, and cannot be depended on for any continued supply.

In addition to these pools, old stone lined cisterns are spread over most of the country. Several of these held an appreciable quantity of water, though several others were silted up.

The water contained in them was of excellent quality.

Several cisterns were found both N. and S. of the BIR SABA road, between KHIRBIT SIMON and KHIRBIT RISSIEM.

The cistern marked at KUFTIEH was destroyed.

The most noticeable features in the country passed through are:- The square building of mud and stone on Hill 467. A prominent landmark used by the enemy for registration, is on a hill which gives a commanding view to the North, West and South.

Hill 405 which commands the whole of the basin in which BEIT DURDIS is situated.

ROADS AND TRACKS.

Two tracks are in constant use and of sound bottom, though only of rough native construction. These are the GAZA - SABA and GAZA - DURDIS - LASEN roads, both these shewed signs of constant use by wheeled traffic, and appeared to keep hard and in good condition in spite of not being metalled.

Other tracks exist but would cut up very badly in a short space of time similarly to the roads West of the WADI GHUZZEE.

The country affords excellent opportunities for the operations of mounted troops and is particularly suited to their action, with the exception of the water supply which is very limited, and the

defiles caused by the WADI beds above mentioned.

During the operations of the 26<sup>th</sup> it was calculated that the horses of one Brigade and all the batteries were able to water.

Sgd H. W. Blodges on Major Gen  
Comdg Imp. Mt. Div'n.

quo in Wadi  
+ CRA

Insert in  
Fair copy.  
11020

30/3/17

*Copied*

130

G.O.C. 8th. Mtd. Brigade.	G.R.A.
8th. do.	O.C. Signal Squad.
3rd. Aust. L.R. Bde.	O.C. Field Squad.

*W.D.*

The following is an extract from a letter from General CHETWODE for your information :-

"Will you express to all ranks under your command my admiration of their splendid behaviour before the enemy. It was no light task to delay the advance of greatly superior hostile forces throughout one whole day on a front of nearly 13 miles, and at the same time to be able to put in a strong attack by two Brigades to assist the Infantry in the attack on GAZA. Two hours more daylight would have enabled the cavalry to finish the job, and it must have been most disheartening to your men after such a fine effort to have the prize snatched from their grasp by darkness.

"The harder the task I give to the mounted troops of the Desert Column the better they carry it out and no man could wish to command finer troops."

I wish to add my gratitude and admiration of the fighting qualities of the troops of the Division which was displayed on the 28th. Though the Division could not share in the brilliant exploits of the Australians and New Zealanders at GAZA, the task they had to perform of keeping off largely superior forces and the manner in which this task was carried out, so that the enemy advance of more than double our numbers was held up all day, made me realize what a fine fighting instrument the Imperial Mounted Division is, and made me proud to be the leader of such troops.

I should like all ranks to know my admiration of their fighting qualities, and my gratitude to them for the willing and cheerful spirit which animated them throughout the recent operations.

*Sgt. Hesward Lt.*  
*General Staff*  
*for* Major General.  
 Commanding Imperial Mtd. Divn.

30th. March 1917.



W.D.  
My Dear General,

I thank you for the letter in which you so kindly express your appreciation of the work of the Division under my command on the 33th.

All ranks will greatly value the good opinion which you have expressed of them, and which I know will act as an incentive to further endeavour in future operations.

30th. March 1917.

Yours sincerely,

Lt. Col. H. W. Hodson.

A35/23

52

5V

Headquarters,  
Desert Column.

GSZ/40  
A 35/23

In reply to your GG 8 dated 29/3/17.

Main road to HAREIRA was reconnoitred to within 2 miles of HAREIRA. It is passable for all arms and the wooden bridge over the WADI EL BAHA was crossed by an armoured car weighing 3½ tons. Cisterns on the side of the road were empty. The country in this neighbourhood appeared passable for all arms.

Round about HUI on the Western side, roads fair but passable. The country contains several Wadis which require reconnoitring for armoured cars.

Generally speaking, for armoured cars work or heavy traffic roads are fair, but cross country work entails a slow speed and great care.

All obstacles met with were overcome by using our running boards, tow ropes, spades etc.

31/3/17.

sgd. W.A. ARMITAGE. Major.  
Commanding 11th. & 12th. L.A.M. Batteries.

OC Signal Squadron with ensure  
communication between 3 Bde HQ and  
DHQ by cable, helio and lamp.

Acknowledge.

A 35/19

31/3/17  
1730

A. Kavanagh Capt  
fl.  
Imp into Div

A 35/19

54

Ref. 1/25000 map RAFA sheet  
GOC 3 Bde  
OC Signals  
AQ.

A 35/18  
Appen 39

MAR 19

at 1330. April 1st 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde will relieve 22<sup>nd</sup> Bde  
of A+M2 Div in the outpost line from the  
Right of the infantry line on Hill 310 WSEIRAI  
to the left of the 74 Div about the 1st E in  
GOZ EL TAIRE.

Before relief, GOC 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde will ascertain  
the posts and patrols to be found from GOC  
22<sup>nd</sup> Bde. and will ensure that his flanks  
join with the infantry during his occupation  
of the line.

HQ 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde will be at the 1 of GOZ EL  
TAIRE.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde will continue the trenches on the  
line which are being dug by 22<sup>nd</sup> Bde.  
As soon as the patrol reports are received on  
morning of ap 2<sup>nd</sup> a report will be sent to  
DHQ stating whether "all clear" or not  
As soon as this report has been sent 1 Regiment  
at a time may be sent to water.

The Bde will be relieved by A+M2 Div on  
ap 2 at 1330.

The Battery, FA + Mob Vet Sec. and Field Troop  
and ration pack horses will remain in  
Brouac at DEIR EL BELAH -

A 35/18

Goc to Bde

0a 19  
A35/20

A35/20

The telegraph line between DEIR EL BELAH and KHAN YUNUS which runs on poles has been cut lately.

50

Please arrange to patrol this line from 1800 April 1<sup>st</sup> to 0600 April 2<sup>nd</sup> to prevent its being cut again and warn patrols that our business may be at work on it during those hours.

Acknowledge

31/3/17  
1730

A Kawana Capt  
Supt. Intd Div

A35/20.

MAR 1917