

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

Light Horse

Item number: 10/9/31

Title: 4th Australian Light Horse
Regiment

July 1917

WAR DIARY
 or
 INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

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 Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II.
 and the Staff Manual respectively. Title Pages
 will be prepared in manuscript.

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|--|------|------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <p>WAR DIARY</p> <p>4th LIGHT HORSE REGT.</p> <p>Vol. VII.</p> <p>1st - 31st JULY 1917.</p> | | | | |

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| TEL EL FARA | 1 st | | <p>During the past 3 days the KHASIF area has been left open, with the result that the enemy has come forward in some cases as far as 2000 yards E of KARM. Point 630 has been occupied by the enemy each day in strength up to 100 men.</p> <p>This Regiment was detailed to to conduct a minor operation against the enemy patrols at KHASIF and the following is a copy of report submitted by Lt Col M.W. Bourchier:-</p> <p>The following are the particulars in connection with the ambushing of half a squadron of Turkish cavalry at KHASIF this morning:-</p> <p>The Regiment left TEL EL FARA at 0115, arriving at KARM at 0300. I then detailed one squadron under Major Rankin to take up the following positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 2 Troops with 3 Hotchkiss guns to proceed - dismounted from KARM to a stone building at KHASIF ruins (b) 1 Troop - dismounted - to remain in support at KARM (c) Remaining troop and led horses to take cover behind GOZ EL BASAL <p>The two troops at KHASIF were to lie in wait until a favorable opportunity presented itself, allowing as many of the enemy as possible to move NW of KHASIF in the hope of making it easier to cut him off from 550 (where two troops were hidden) and also reducing the distance from our mounted troops at GOZ EL BASAL.</p> <p>Major Rankin, in charge of the two troops at KHASIF reports that he arrived there at 0340 and concealed his troops in the ruins. No enemy were visible until 0700. When a squadron</p> | <p>BEERSHEBA 1-125,000.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">+ 2/6</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Alstair</i></p> |

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| TEL EL FARA | 10 th | | <p>of Cavalry approached KHASIF from the direction of 820 and passed half a mile N of KHASIF riding in direction of KARM</p> <p>Two troops of this Squadron attacked our outpost line on 550 north of 1 in IMSIRI at 0710. The remaining two troops of the enemy then returned along the BEERSHEBA road, passing within within 100 yards south of ruins (where our men were concealed) going in direction of BEIT ABU TAHA</p> <p>Orders were then given for men to file out of ruins and open fire. The enemy by this time were about 150 or 200 yards away riding in column of sections, and had no idea of our presence. When fired on, the enemy scattered and galloped over ridge about 600 yards due east of KHASIF without replying to our fire. Eight men and three horses were killed, and one prisoner, seriously wounded, was brought back. (This man has since died.) It is estimated that the number of wounded men was 25 - 8 of these falling from their horses but escaping under the covering fire of two of their own troops. Practically every horse was wounded but as they were galloping away it was more difficult to bring them down. Horses killed were hit 5 or 6 times before falling. A considerable force of the enemy then advanced from 720. I then pressed forward with the two Squadrons from GOZ EL BASAL and 550 and on their approach the enemy immediately retired over 720 in the direction of 810</p> <p>During the morning a machine gun opened fire from 630 on our post at 550</p> <p>The weapons captured consist of 4 carbines, 6 lance, 1 sword belts & bandoliers, equipment and ammunition of 6 men</p> <p>We had no casualties</p> | BEERSHEBA 1-125000 |

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| Tel el Fara | 4 th | | <p>A reconnaissance of the country and the defences contained in the area SHELLAL-BEERSHEBA-ASLUJ was carried out by the Aust Mtd Division with 1st A L A Brigade and N 3 Mtd Brigade attached.</p> <p>Officers patrols were sent out to reconnoitre the country to the BIR SABA-ASLUJ and BIR-SABA-TARA roads up to the line G. EL NA'AM-EL HATHIRA, the 4th Brigade being allotted the line HATHIRA-EL NA'AM to line HILL 970-BIR IBN TURKIA. Capt RAE was in command of the patrol from this Regiment and reported as follows:</p> <p>Reconnaissance report on country between area bounded by line drawn through A of HATHIRA and G EL NA'AM on NE boundary and Hill 970 to BIR IBN TURKIA on SE and between track running through A in AZAZIMAH and A in ABUSHAR on NW and track running through W in W EL NA'AM on SE:</p> <p>The country in this area is passable for mounted troops and infantry and for artillery and wheeled vehicles as far N as line drawn through A in ABUSHAR and B in RIDGE (E of ABUSHAR).</p> <p>N of this the country is passable for wheeled vehicles in W HALGON and road from KHALASA to BIR EL SABA and in most of the country in area on S.W side of that road. From line through A in ABUSHAR to B in RIDGE to North, the country is hilly and stony and is passable for Cavalry and infantry. Camels can travel anywhere in area.</p> | <p>BEERSHEBA 125000</p> |

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
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| TEL EL FARA | 4 th | | <p>Best tracks for movement of troops and wheeled vehicles is on KHALASA - BIR SABA road and track running through W in W EL NA'AM. Approaches to the enemy's defences from S.W. along these tracks are good but are open to artillery fire from Hill 1070.</p> <p>Good gun positions could be obtained almost anywhere in WADI to E of ABUSHAR and WADI to E of A in W. HALGAN</p> <p>Observation posts could be got on almost any position on contour 1000 to N of positions but view to NE of Hill 1070 is almost unobtainable. Enemy would not be likely to counter attack (if at all) towards Hills west of 1070</p> <p>Enemy guns were in position on 1070 (three guns) and one on top of 1070 which was afterwards moved by about 12 or 15 men to rear, when firing direction of one gun was changed from shelling W. HALGAN to direction 1160 N of G in G. EL NA'AM</p> <p>Observation positions were noticed on top of Hill 1070 and near O in 1070</p> <p>Redoubt was noticed near Z in AZAZIMAH and on hill 1070 (traversed trenches) and just N of D in RIDGE, also what might be a redoubt on hill W of G in AZAZIMAH. No wire was observed.</p> <p>Water was found in WADI N of H in ABUSHAR (slightly stagnant) and to E of R in ABUSHAR. Good water and good supply from springs. Water in latter being about 300 yds in length and about 1 foot deep. Breadth varying from 5 to 10 yds. Evidently a permanent supply.</p> | <p>BEERSHEBA 1 125000</p> |

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
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| TELELFARA | 4 th | | <p>About 150 enemy cavalry were seen in direction of G in RIDGE About 50 camels evidently transport, on road to E of HILL 1070 and travelling N.E. Infantry were noticed in redoubts near Z in AZAZIMAH and N of D in RIDGE. Positions seemed to be lightly held by infantry who kept firing at about 2000 yards range. Artillery ranges were marked on most hills by heaps of stones and immediately anyone appeared to obtain view they shelled the position. In many cases shells were bursting very high. One shell case picked up gave the appearance of being about a 12 lb shell. The ground around water in WHALGAN was searched by artillery fire and all hills from behind which clouds of dust appeared were shelled.</p> | <p>BEERSHEBA $\frac{1}{125000}$</p> |
| TEL EL FARA | 6 th | | <p>The Aust. Mtd Division was relieved by the A & NZ Mtd Division as Outpost Mounted Division and went into the reserve division bivouac area at KAZAR</p> | |
| KAZAR | 19 th | | <p>The Aust Mtd Division moved out to act as reserve for the A & NZ Mtd Division leaving bivouac area at 1200. returning to camp at 1430 on 20th. No engagements with enemy took place</p> | <p>$\frac{+}{6}$ $\frac{6}{6}$</p> |
| KAZAR | 21 st | | <p>The Aust Mtd Division moved onto the beach about 3 1/2 miles S.W of MARAKEB</p> | |

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|---------|-----------------|-------------|--|--------------------------------------|----|------|---------|----|------|---------|----|------|--------|-----|-------------|-------|---------|------|-----|-------------|---|---------|-----|-----|-------------|---|---------|---------|-----------------|-------|--------|---|------------|---|--------|---|-------------|---|--------|---|--------------|---|--------|---|-----------|---|--------|--|
| | | | <p><u>Strength</u> Reinforcements received during the month:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>8/7/17</td> <td>16</td> <td>opr.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11/7/17</td> <td>24</td> <td>opr.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24/7/17</td> <td>14</td> <td>opr.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Lieut Wilkie L.A. reported for duty 8/7/17. Capt Wellings J.D. embarked on furlough England - 20/7/17 Capt Chaplain Killian J attached to Regt as R.C. padre 22/7/17 Lieut Horan H.M. seconded to 4th LH Drng Regt 25/7/17</p> <p><u>Promotions</u> To be 2/Lieut to complete establishment</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>no 452</td> <td>Sgt</td> <td>J.D. Moodie</td> <td>dated</td> <td>21/6/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2414</td> <td>Spr</td> <td>W.H. Mackay</td> <td>"</td> <td>22/6/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>156</td> <td>Sgt</td> <td>J.J. Murray</td> <td>"</td> <td>23/6/17</td> </tr> </table> <p>To be Lieut.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>2/Lieut</td> <td>B.P.G. Meredith</td> <td>dated</td> <td>2/6/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"</td> <td>A.L. Hanna</td> <td>"</td> <td>3/6/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"</td> <td>L.A. Austin</td> <td>"</td> <td>4/6/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"</td> <td>M.J. Hemmons</td> <td>"</td> <td>5/6/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"</td> <td>R.W. Bowe</td> <td>"</td> <td>6/6/17</td> </tr> </table> <p>July 31 Strength of Regiment excluding 1 off + 2 opr., A.A.M.C. + 1 off. Chaplain 22 off 444 opr.</p> | 8/7/17 | 16 | opr. | 11/7/17 | 24 | opr. | 24/7/17 | 14 | opr. | no 452 | Sgt | J.D. Moodie | dated | 21/6/17 | 2414 | Spr | W.H. Mackay | " | 22/6/17 | 156 | Sgt | J.J. Murray | " | 23/6/17 | 2/Lieut | B.P.G. Meredith | dated | 2/6/17 | " | A.L. Hanna | " | 3/6/17 | " | L.A. Austin | " | 4/6/17 | " | M.J. Hemmons | " | 5/6/17 | " | R.W. Bowe | " | 6/6/17 | |
| 8/7/17 | 16 | opr. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11/7/17 | 24 | opr. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24/7/17 | 14 | opr. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| no 452 | Sgt | J.D. Moodie | dated | 21/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2414 | Spr | W.H. Mackay | " | 22/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 156 | Sgt | J.J. Murray | " | 23/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2/Lieut | B.P.G. Meredith | dated | 2/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| " | A.L. Hanna | " | 3/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| " | L.A. Austin | " | 4/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| " | M.J. Hemmons | " | 5/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| " | R.W. Bowe | " | 6/6/17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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|--------|---------|------|---|---|
| KAZAR. | 7/7/17 | | The Commander in Chief awarded the <u>Military Medal</u> to 1199 Corporal <u>S. J. Williams</u> for gallantry in action. | |
| | 13/7/17 | | The Commander in Chief has awarded the <u>Military Medals</u> to No 428 <u>Sergt Richard Hampton</u> " 411 <u>Cospl Joseph Gillespie</u> " 968 <u>Spr Henry Robertson</u> } for gallantry in action. | <p>Al Hammett apart</p> <p>Maj. Bourchies Lieut Colonel Co. 4 L.H. Regt.</p> <p>8/6</p> |