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1914-18 War

Camel Corps

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Title: 1st ANZAC Battalion, Imperial Camel
Corps

January - March 1918



AWM4-11/6/4PART2

Triplicate

Volume No. 1-2-3/18.

~~App~~ ~~1-30.~~

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE EGYPT.

WAR DIARY.

Unit 1st Anzac Batt. I.C. Bde. DUP

From 1-1-18 To 31-3-18.

CONFIDENTIAL.

~~ORIGINAL.~~
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TRIPLICATE.

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY



OF
1st Anzac Battalion, Imperial Camel Brigade
FOR
January - February - March 1918

Signature of Officer compiling *George Standley*
1st Col

Signature of Officer Commanding *George Standley*
1st Col

Yupacato

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Ferry Post	2.1.18		Advance guard 3rd. Anzac Battalion, I.C.C. arrived FERRY POST. Patrol from TOR arrived AYUN MUSA. All correct with exception of Major Schreiber, Survey Officer. The latter was injured by fall from a camel and was left at ABU ZENIMA and returned to SUEZ by boat. The report by Major Schreiber passed into Southern Canal Section. <i>insert</i>	See copy of orders for Move Appendix 1
Do	3.1.18		3rd. Anzac Battalion I.C.C. commenced taking over posts at SERAPEUM, KUBRI and BALLAH	
Do	4.1.18		Signal Office at Bn. H'Qrs taken over by 3rd. Anzac Bn., I.C.C. Relief of posts carried on during day. Division 1. (see Appendices 1 and 2) left with baggage for RAFA.	Appendix 2 Order to O.C. Div. 2.
Do	5.1.18		Division 2. (see Appendices 1 and 2) moved to KANTARA.	Appendix : Order to O.C. Div. 2.
	6.1.18		3rd. Anzac Bn., I.C.C. took over all post duties and patrolling from KUBRI to KANTARA from 1200. Division 3. moved to KANTARA to take over remounts.	Appendix : " "
Ferry Post	7.1.18		Division 1. of Nos 1. and 3. Companies arrived FERRY POST early morning. Division 1. left FERRY POST at intervals during afternoon. Passage of Canal was slow owing to breakdown of pontoon bridge, necessitating use of chain ferry. Half Battalion ordered to march to FERDAN and cross there. Same difficulty encountered. Battalion, less small detachment of No.1. Company concentrated at BALLAH by 2100.	App. 5 " 5a " 5b " 5c

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BALLAH	8.1.18		Detachment No.1. Company joined up at 0600. Battalion marched at 0800 and proceeded via KANTARA and HILL 40 to GILBAN. Remounts (620) taken over whilst passing Veterinary Hospital. Battalion halted for midday at HILL 40.	Appendix 6 7
GILBAN	9.1.18		Battalion moved at 0730 and arrived at ROMANI at 1300. Bivouaced for remainder of day.	APP. 7.
ROMANI	10.1.18		Battalion moved 0730 and proceeded via KHIRBA, where halt was made for midday, to ABD, which was reached at 1630. Bivouaced for night at ABD.	APP. 9.
BIR EL ABD.	11.1.18		Battalion moved at 1330 and proceeded via SALMANA to MOSEIFIG, which was reached at 1645. Bivouaced at MOSEIFIG for night.	APP. 11.
Moseifig	12.1.18		Battalion moved at 0730 and proceeded via TILUL to MAZAR which was reached at 1200. Bivouaced for night.	APP. 12.
MAZAR	13.1.18		Battalion moved at 1000 and arrived at Kilo 139 at 1700. During march weather was very incisterious. A distinct improvement in condition of camels was noticed during last two days' march.	APP. 13.
KILO 139	14.1.18		Left Kilo 139 at 0730 and arrived at EL ARISH at 1200	APP. 14.

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EL ARISH	15.1.	18	Left EL ARISH at 0730 and proceeded via EL BURJ, where halt was made for midday, to SHEIKH ZOWAAID, reached at 1645.	App. 15. " 16.
SHEIKH ZOWAAID	16.1.	18	Left SHEIKH ZOWAAID at 0730. Arrived RAFA at 1100, where Brigade was rejoined. Captain A.S. Houston, C.F. taken on strength.	App. 17. " 18.
RAFA	17.1.	18	Training carried on daily from this date forward.	
Do	20.1.	18	No. 3 Company isolated on account of case of mumps.	
Do	21.1.	18	G.O.C. Desert Mounted Corps, Lieut.-General Sir H. Chauvel, KCMG, CB, inspected Brigade.	
Do	29.1.	18	Capt. A.E.G. Campbell rejoined Battalion after Staff Attachment to Camel Brigade and Yeomanry Mounted Division.	
Do	30.1.	18	Lieut. J.G. Smyth to Imperial Camel Brigade as Staff Trainee. Notification of award of M.C. to Capt. A.E.G. Campbell and Capt. H.S. DeBoer, RAMC, attached 1st Anzac Battalion, I.C.C.	
Do	12.2.	18	Special parades for A.I.F. Official Photographer.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
RAFA	13.2.18		Patrol to KHALASA under Capt. H.R. Denson for purpose of salvage of R.E. material. Strength :- 7 Officers - including Intelligence Officer from 1st, 2nd., and 4th. Battalions and Capt. Truscott, R.E. - 85 Other ranks. Standard tests for all Lewis Gun Sections commenced on range.	App. 19.
Do	17.2.18		KHALASA patrol reported back. All correct.	
Do	18.2.18) 19.2.18)		Imperial Camel Brigade Sports. Flag (for highest aggregate number of points) won by 1st Bn.	
Do	20.2.18		Combined Musketry and bayonet fighting competition.	
Do	27.2.18		Scouts and snipers under Lieut. A.W. Gull, Intelligence Officer, for four days trek in region of BEERSHEBA. Signal stations erected at Pt. 510 and KHALAB to keep in touch.	
Do	1.3.18		Advance party under Lieut J.P.G. Cox marched to SHELLAL to arrange camp site.	App. 20. Copy of Order re Move.
Do	2.3.18		Battalion moved out at 0900 for SHELLAL on foot. Arrived SHELLAL at 1500. A small proportion of men showed signs of fatigue on this march.	

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SHEIJAL	4.3.18		<p>Demolition party formed under R.E. officer.</p> <p>A system of practice route marches was instituted at this time. Two Companies moved out at 0600 each morning to destination as ordered - in no case more than ten miles from starting point. During midday halt all camels were turned out to graze, and as much use as possible was made of grazing. Camel ration was reduced to 5 lbs 5 lbs of grain per day - to be given in one feed - morning or evening according to whether the Company was remaining in or going on trek. The trek, out and back, gave practice in all field operations and touch was maintained at all times with camp.</p> <p>These practice marches continued until March 8th.</p>	
Do	10.3.18		Advance party under Lieut. Hall left for DEIRAN.	App. 21.
Do	11.3.18		Battalion marched out 18 Officers - 511 other ranks - 779 camels strong (including newly formed demolition party) en route for DEIRAN. Bivouaced at HARBIRA for night.	Copy of Order re have.

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HAREIRA	12/3/18.		Bn. moved 0630 and marched via HULIEKAT, where halt was made for midday - to JULIS 1700 where Bn. bivouaced for the night.	
DEIRAN	13/3/18		Bn. moved at 0600, and marched via YAZUR, where halt was made for midday - to DEIRAN 1700, where Bn. moved into Bde Camp area.	
DEIRAN	15/3/18		Lieut. Gull and Scout N.C.O's marched to ZAKARIYA to make report on road and watering.	
DEIRAN	17/3/18		Bn. marched with Bde from DEIRAN at 0600 for ZAKARIYA via NAINI, and JUNCTION STATION. Weather was very bad and roads were almost impassable. Head of Bn. arrived ZAKARIYA at 1600. Last Company arrived one hour later. No halt was made during the day on account of the weather.	App. 22
ZAKARIYA	18/3/18.		Continued march to SOLOMONS POOLS. at 0600. Roads in very bad condition. First view of JERUSALEM. Arrived SOLOMONS POOLS at 1500. Rain continued right through night.	
SOLOMONS POOL.	19/3/18.		Weather cleared during day but move was cancelled.	
ditto	21/3/18		Bn. marched in rear of Bde at 1800 en route for TALAAT-ED-DUMM. Passed through JERUSALEM 2200.	
TALAAT-ED-DUMM	22/3/18.		Arrived Bivouac area TALAAT-ED-DUMM at 0400 without any mishap en route. Many camels suffering from injured pads etc, caused by rough roads on first two days trek. Bn remained in readiness to move off at one hours notice.	
ditto	23/3/18.		Bn. marched with Bde at 2015 en route for KASR HAVLAH	App. 23a " 23b
JORDAN VALLEY.	24/3/18.		Bn. halted on JERICHO PLAIN waiting for Mounted Division to cross JORDAN. Bn. crossed about midday, and halted further on in order to allow Bde to concentrate. One Section No.1. Coy sent as Escort to Div. Ammunition Column. One Section No.1. Coy sent as Escort to C.T.C. Convoy/	App. 24

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JORDAN VALLEY.	24/3/18.		<p>Bn. moved to TELEIL MUSLIM - passing through a heavy storm. No. 3. Coy detailed to picquet Southern Road and relieve Mounted Troops. Orders received for move at 1800. No. 3. Coy ordered to return to TELEIL MUSLIM, and to act as escort to Cars and Transport and Guns kept behind. No. 1. Coy less 2 Sections to remain also, Major Fraser R.F.A. in Command of Party left at MUSLIM.</p> <p>Roads found impassable for Transports - necessitating halt while all material being carried on limbers was transferred to C.T.C. The storm did not abate and the going was very bad. March was continued right through the night.</p>	<p>App. 24a " 24b App. 25</p>
ditto	25/3/18.		<p>No halt was called until Bde was reached early in the morning, when Column halted to allow rear to close up. The track had not improved at all and horses and camels were both faring badly. The Bde. moved as soon as 2nd. Bn. came in sight, and baring one very bad patch the going was better. Bivouac was reached at 1620, and orders were at once issued for a move in 2 hours time. Bn. moved as rear Bn. about 2230. The weather had continued bad and the roads now encountered were much deeper in slush.</p>	<p>App. 26</p>
ditto	26/3/18.		<p>Passed through NAAUR about dawn. Bn. halted to allow 2nd. Bn. to concentrate before moving off. Bn. moved towards AMMAN. Arrived AMMAN - ES SALT CROSS ROADS and bivouaced R. 32. Central about 1400. A hostile aeroplane flew over camp at low altitude and machine gunned troops and horses but no casualties in Bn.</p> <p>Outpost Line taken up by No. 2. Coy. Orders for attack issued at 1800</p>	<p>App. 27 App. 28.</p>
NEAR AMMAN.	27/3/18.		<p>The Bn. - less 2 Coys - moved out with the Bde at 0830 along AMMAN- AIN - ES - SIR ROAD towards AMMAN. Enemy opened fire at long range on Advance Guard of 2nd. Bn. who dismounted for action near KUSR, 142.Y.6.D. and deployed so that the road formed centre of line, with one Coy frontage on either side of the road. The enemy H.E. Artillery Fire was neutralized by the mud. 1st. Bn. Coys were not called till late in the afternoon, when the order was received for No. 4. Coy and No. 2. Coy less Escort to A.C.F.A. and 1 section, to move to Bde H.Q. An hour afterwards orders were issued for 1st. Bn. to move up, and form a reserve to 2nd. Bn. (Maj. R.V. ^{Station} Station, Commanding) and the A/C.O. (Maj. H.R. Denson) moved along the Wadi AMMAN to a point immediately behind the 2nd. Bn. H.Q. at the Castle, and 1st. Bn. H.Q. then joined with them.</p>	<p>App. 29.</p>

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NEAR AMMAN	27/3/18.		During the night this Hd.'Qrs was moved forward about 1000 yards half right to a ledge on the steep bank of the WADI, and on the right flank of the I.C.C. line, where joint dressing stations were also established. All through the night the men of No. 4. Coy were employed in carrying in the 2nd. Bn. casualties numbering 70 in all, and getting them back to the A.C.F.A. No. 2. Coy was brought into position as a reserve line with 4 Lewis Guns. The M.G. Sqdn. formed the remainder of this line to the left.	
AMMAN	28/3/18.		This day was comparatively quiet with only reciprocal artillery and Machine Gun Fire. In the afternoon at 1600, A/O.C. 1st. Bn. took No. 4. Coy forward to strengthen the right flank of the Bde line. Ground Scouts sent ahead - numbering 12 - received 5 casualties. The remainder when about half way across received orders from C.O. 2nd. Bn. to remain where they were and take cover. This was done, and at night fall the Coy was retired to the old position in the reserve. In conference with C.O. 2nd. Bn. the A/O.C. suggested a night bombing raid as the best means of dislodging the enemy from their position on the Bde front. The suggested plans of operations was made out and sent on to I.C.Bde H.Q.	
ditto.	29/3/18.		<p>Comparatively quiet. The enemy with held all artillery and Machine Gun fire and few snipers were at work. During the day the Brig.-Gen. Commanding I.C.Bde visited Bn. Hd.'Qrs and instructed Capt. Denson to place Lt. Matthews in command of No. 4. Coy. Orders and plans of attack for a night raid on enemy positions along the whole front were also received. During the afternoon 2 Coys of 180th. Inf. Brigade arrived to reinforce the I.C.Bde for the attack. The plan of attack decided on by C.O.'s 1st. & 2nd Battns, was as follows :- The attack to be made in two waves of two lines each. 1st. Wave to be commanded by Capt. P. Newsam 2nd. Bn., and 2nd. Wave commanded by Major Day 2nd. Bn.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">The first line of 1st. Wave under Capt. E. Deas</p> <p>2nd. Bn. to consist of 2 sections each from Nos. 4, 9, 7, 18, and 8 Companies each with 2 Lewis Guns and men armed with Hand Grenades. Second Line of 1st. Wave to consist of the remainder of each Company in same order.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">First and Second Lines of Second Wave to each consist of 2 half</p> <p>Companies of 108th. Inf. Brigade already referred to.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">On the right of I.C.Bde Line, the N.Z.M.R.</p> <p>were to attack, and on the left the 2nd. A.L.H.Bde. These attacks were to be delivered simultaneously along the whole line at 0200 on 30th. By 2200 on 29th. the Bde Line had worked quietly forward to within 50 yds of the enemy's position West of AMMAN.</p>	App. 3

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AMMAN	29/3/18.		The night was very dark and heavy rain fell until daybreak of 30th. No. 2. Coy of the 1st. Bn. and the M.G. Sqn, were kept in reserve on their old Line, and were employed up to 0200 on 30th. in improving their positions.	
ditto	30/3/18.		At 0200 the attack was delivered by a quick rush forward and the Bde Line captured the whole of their objective, consisting of 2 lines of enemy trenches. Units on either flank were not so successful with the result that, when daylight broke and throughout the whole day the new I.C. position received enfilade fire from both flanks. Casualties were afterwards found to be much less than expected, showing how efficient the work of consolidation had been after the taking of the position. Lt. Matthews with a party from No. 4. Coy penetrated right beyond the objective and actually succeeded in getting into the town, hoping to find the E.E.M.R. Bde up with him. Finding himself alone, he was forced to retire with his party. About 1600 30th. orders were received to retire the whole line back to the Led Camels as the G.O.C AMMAN FORCE had decided to not further pursue his efforts towards taking the town. As soon as darkness fell the C.O. 1st. Bn. and Capt. Tredennick 2nd. Bn. organized the retirement of the Companies. The rear was guarded by No. 4. Coy (Lt. Matthews). The retirement was effected without arousing the enemy's suspicions, although the lines were only 100 to 200 yards apart, and the night was still and fine.	
AMMAN	31/3/18.		As daylight broke on 31st. the whole of the I.C. Bde arrived back at the Led Camels and after a short rest the Battn marched off down the AIN-ES-SIR ROAD, arriving at SHUNET NIMRIM at 2100, where Battalion bivouaced for the night.	

Ferry Post, 2/1/18.

1. RELIEF. A. The Bn. will be relieved by the 3rd. Bn. C.C. on 2nd. and 3rd. inst. The 3rd. Bn. will be distributed as follows :-
 FERDAN.. 1 Coy, less detachments on KANTARA cordon under orders of P.L. of C., which will be stationed at BALLAH WEST and TABOUL as heretofore.

FERRY POST.. Hd.'Qrs and 1 Coy.
 SERAPEUM .. 1 Company.
 KUBRI.. 1 Company.

The detachments of 1st. Bn. Camel Corps at all posts other than above will be withdrawn without relief on dates according to Table issued herewith.

B. The camels which are being handed over to the 3rd. Bn will therefore, required to be distributed as follows :-

BALLAH WEST (for KANTARA cordon) ...	50
FERDAN ...	65
FERRY POST ...	10
SERAPEUM ...	75
KUBRI ...	100
	300

C. The detrainment of the 3rd. Bn. Camel Corps will take place as follows :-

BALLAH ... KANTARA cordon detachment and conducting party to take camels from BALLAH EAST to FERDAN.
 FERDAN ... One Company less above detachments.
 MOASCAR ... Hd.'Qrs and 1 Coy, (for FERRY POST).
 SERAPEUM ... One Company.
 KUBRI. ... One Company.

D. Tents, post stores and post reserve rations at the posts from which Camel Corps are being withdrawn, without relief, should be disposed of as follows :-

KABRIT. They will be despatched to Coy. Hd.'Qrs at KUBRI by the daily ration boat, before the detachemnt is withdrawn. The Officer Commanding 1/101st. Grenadiers, will send up a working party by the ration boat, IN DIRECT COMMUNICATION with the O.C. Company concerned, ti assist in loading the stores.
BALLAH EAST. They will be sent to Coy. Hd.'Qrs FERDAN as opportunity offers. At the remaining posts they may be handed to the detachment 101st. Grenadiers, or sent to Coy. Hd'Qrs concerned as is most convenient.

E. The Officers Commanding Companies, 1st. Bn. Camel Corps, are responsible that the A.S.C. concerned is notified in good time beofre detachments are withdrawn from the various posts.

F. 1st. Bn. Camel Corps will hand over all Maps of this area to the 3rd. Bn.

2. MOVE. The Bn. will move as far as KANTARA in three Divisions, thence in two.

Div. 1. will march mounted. This party will be as strong as possible.

Div. 2. will proceed by train to I.C. Bde. Strength will be all men not able to be mounted less Div. 3.

Div. 3. will proceed by train to KANTARA, where they will pick up camels from Remount Depot, they will utilize all spare Coy. saddlery, plus 50 sets forwarded from I.C.Bde, and join up with Division 3.

The strength of this Div will be notified to Coys by wire.

3. TIME-TABLE. Div. 1.
 Zero - 1. AYUN MUSA and GENEFE detachments will move to KUBRI.
 TOUSSOUN & DEVERSOIR detachments move to SERAPEUM.
 Zero. KUBRI detachment will move to GENEFE.
 TABOUL detachment moves to BALLAH WEST.

P.T.O.

(2)

3. TIME-TABLE (contd.)
- Zero + 1. KUBRI detachment moves to SERAPEUM, halting at KABRIT NORTH to pick up one days fresh rations, and KABRIT detachment. FERDAN detachment moves to BALLAH.
- Zero + 2. KUBRI detachment moves to BALLAH, halting at FERRY POST, to draw 1 days fresh rations and join FERRY POST detachment. ZERO day will be wired to Companies.
- Div. 2.
- Jan. 4th. Trucks will be at KUBRI and MOASCAR for loading baggage.
- Jan. 5th. KUBRI entrain at SERAPEUM entrain at about 0700. MOASCAR entrain about 0730. BALLAH antrain at about 0900. O.C. Div. 2. SERAPEUM, should arrange to have morning perishable train stopped.

Arrive KANTARA.

Orders for completion of journey will be issued later.

- Div. 3. Entrain of first train from KUBRI, ISMALIA and BALLAH, on ZERO + 2. Officer in charge of party will be given necessary instructions will carry usual 5 days rations, which will not be broken into until ordered. O.C. KUBRI detachment will arrange with A.P.S.C. as per instructions in wire C.C.A.867, of 1st. inst. O's. C. Coys will wire Bn. H.Q. strength of Div. 1. by 0900 on Zero.
4. RATIONS.
- Div. 1. will carry unexpended portion of days rations and 2 days reserve rations.
- Div. 2. Ditto.
- Div. 3. O's.C. Coys will arrange to have 5 days reserve rations in addition for this party to be sent to KANTARA in bulk by train. All Signallers must be in Div. 1.
5. SIGNALLERS.

6. AMMUNITION.

The 28 boxes of S.A.A. usually carried by Coys will be sent in bulk by train with Div. 3.

Issued at FERRY POST. at 0800.

Copy No. 1. S.C.S.
" " 2. Palestine L. of C.
" " 3. No. 1. Company
" " 4. No. 3. Company.
" " 5. No. 3. Company.
" " 6. No. 4. Company.
" " 7. FILE.

(Sgd) *J. Smyth* Lieut. & Adj. Lt.
1st. Anzac Battalion,
The Camel Corps.