

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

Camel Corps

Item number: 11/8/1

Title: 3rd ANZAC Battalion, Imperial Camel
Corps

January 1917



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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

3rd (Anzac) Battalion I.B.B.

FOR

8th 9th 10th January 1917. (Rafar)

Signature of Officer compiling

Keirhead

Signature of Officer Commanding

C. P. Donovan M.P.

*P 104
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Nº 1.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
EI-ARISH	1/12/14		4 Hostile aeroplanes flew over town & camp. No casualties	
	2/12/14		Nothing to report	
	3/12/14		Regrouping of boys Nº 14 & 15 went to 1 st Battalion Nº 12 & 14 joined this Battalion Nº 16 to join on arrival	
	4/1/14		C.O. Major H.J. HUDDLESTON, M.C. arrived and took command. Captain R.V. WRIGHT returned to Nº 1 boy	
	5/1/14		Nothing to report	
	6/1/14		"	
	7/1/14		"	
	8/1/14		Battalion paraded at 14.00 with remainder of Brigade (less 1 boy Nº 14 on outpost) joined Division (A+N.Z. Mounted) and marched for RAFA at 16.00 Strength 316 368 carriers	
	9/1/14		Reached position near RAFA 05.30. Observed TURKS manning trenches. Gun fire began 08.40. This Battalion, Bde Reserve, 1 st Battalion deployed 10.30 2 nd Battalion 11.30. Enemy found in well sighted trenches on rising ground above flat at plain. Nº 11 boy moved out to reinforce left flank & prolong line 13.15. Came under very heavy rifle & machine gun flanking fire. As left flank still held up and enemy holding up our whole line by flanking fire from his right Nº 12 boy ordered to reinforce left flank further after gaining fire superiority assault carried out at 16.32 position occupied about 17.00 Turks firing till our troops close to trenches. Positions captured by other Battalions immediately after. Captured 5 Officers & 219 OR. General retirement ordered & marched back 18.30	

M1071
 Capt. Adjutant
 Capt. Imperial Camel Corps

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WAR DIARY

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
E1 RAFA	9/1/14		Left large quantities of ammunition rifles behind Casualties 1 Officer (Captain G.A. SMITH) + 4 OR.	
E2 ARISH	10/1/14		Killed or died of wounds 13 OR. wounded.	
	11/1/14		Arrived Back in El Arish 14.30	
	12/1/14		Nothing to report	
	13/1/14		Inspection by General CHAUVEL commanding A.N.Z. Mounted Division under whose immediate command we cease to be, having been transferred to Desert Column	
	14/1/14		NO 14 Coy came in from outpost rejoined remainder of Battalion. Hostile aeroplane passed over at time of inspection	
	15/1/14		Nothing to report	
	16/1/14		Hostile aeroplane dropped two bombs near camp. no casualties in Battalion	
	17/1/14		Lieut MOYLAN took over duties of L.M. Lieut H A BROOK posted to S.A.A. column	
	18/1/14		Lieut H.C HEMPHILL arrived took over duties of adjutant. Capt A.J. TOD posted to 2nd Battalion	
	19/1/17		Hostile aeroplanes (2) passed over camp - no bombs dropped -	
	20-1-17		Battalion during morning, carried out attack practice, rally after the arrival - and lead	
	21-1-17		Camels up - Company's acting independently and was inspected by General Smith	
	22-1-17		Major Hueston left for Cairo on duty - wired for by G.H.G -	
	23-1-17		Nothing to report -	
	24-1-17		Watering Camels during morning. Brigade Boxing Tournament during afternoon -	
	25-1-17		Two Hostile Aeroplanes passed over camp. 29 sick Camels left for BIR-EL-ABD	

2/10/17
 3. B. Imperial Camel Corps
 Capt. Adjutant

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WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
EL-ARISH	25-1-17		Battalion became duty Battalion for week ending 1 st February. The 12 th Coy moved out - at 0800 to occupy Oupota - 3 Sections to MAADHAR. and 1 Section to MASMI	
	26-1-17		Reg. 2 M.S. left for ABBASSIA with 40 broken saddles for renewal. Two Hostile aeroplanes passed over Camp at 1500. Brigade spots during afternoon -	
	27-1-17		Nothing to relate.	
	28-1-17		Two Hostile aeroplanes flew over camp at 0830. One Turkish prisoner captured by the MAADHAR Post. attack practice under Coy arrangements, carried out - during the morning -	
	29-1-17		Hostile planes bombed camp at beach - over cover of clouds. 0930 -	
	30-1-17		watered Camels during day. Small supply of Australian Gipt-stuff arrived for distribution	
	31-1-17		Nothing to relate - strong sand storm -	

W. B. ...
3rd Bn. Imperial Camel Corps
Capt. Adjutant

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APPENDIX No

Report of the Operations

of the

3rd (Anzac) Battalion, I.C.B

on the

8th, 9th, and 10th January 1917.

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8. I. 17.

Orders received in reference to an attack on the enemy's position SW of RAFA (Squares D.6.,E.6.)

From aerial reports the position consisted of three redoubts. The A and NZ Mounted troops were to attack the right hand redoubt, the Yeomanry the left, whilst the task of reducing the Central position was entrusted to the Imperial Camel Brigade.

The Battalion at this time consisted of Nos II, I2, and I4 Companies, and in this operations were represented by Nos II and I2 Companies, No I4 being still on outpost duty at LAHFAN.

The Brigade moved out from its bivouac area at 1600 halting at SHEIKH ZOWAID at 2400.

Note :- The march throughout the night to Rafa was very trying to both men and animals on account of the cold and intense dew that was falling.

9. I. 17.

At 0200 the Brigade moved forward to a position in Square E, 7-8 and halted under cover of some rising ground waiting for dawn to break.

When dawn broke our Artillery opened fire on the enemy's position.

At 0900 the Brigade moved forward to a position in Square F 6, moving along the road running through Pt 210 to Rafa, and whilst on the march came under shrapnel fire.

The Brigade halted at 0920 and at 0945 the 1st and 2nd Battalions commenced their advance, a distance of Three miles from their objective.

The 3rd Battalion were Brigade Reserve.

At 1045 11th and 12th Companies occupied a position in extended order about 200 and 50 yards respectively W of the trees shown in square F.6 and waited in reserve

At 1100 the Battalion Commander was ordered to

bring

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bring up the reserve to the line occupied by Brigade
Head Quarters, the advance of the 1st and 2nd Battalions
having been held up by the enemy from a position on
Brigade's left front.

At 1300 the Battalion personally led by Lt-Colonel
(now Brigadier General) Huddleston, DSO, MC, advanced to take
up a position on the extreme left and in front of the
enemy's redoubt at a range varying from 600 to 900
yards distant.

The ground over which the Battalion had to advance
was only slightly undulating and well swept with rifle
and machine gun fire. For the majority of the men in No
12 Company it was their first experience under fire, but
the splendid example of coolness and courage shown by
Colonel Huddleston, who marched fearlessly and unarmed
at the head of his men could not have failed to steady
and inspire the most nervous.

The Battalion reached its position at 1400 and opened
a heavy fire, splendid work being done by the machine guns
of both Companies under Lieut (now Capt) Bell, and Lieut
Davidson.

Word was received that the Brigade would attack the
enemy's line at 1620 and watches were accordingly
synchronised. It was reported that strong enemy re-
inforcements from Shellal were hurriedly marching to
relieve the garrison at Rafa, and this coupled with the
fact that the light would only last about another hour
made it imperative for the enemy's position to be taken
without delay.

Hostile aircraft attempted to harrass the men with
bombs and machine gun fire. Bombs were dropped on the
led camels

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At the appointed hour the Battalion, with fixed bayonets, launched the assault and in the first rush Captain G.A. Smith and two men of No 12 Company were killed and four others wounded.

The machine guns, admirably handled, kept the enemy fire down and saved the Battalion from any severe casualties.

When within 200 yards of the redoubt the actual position of the enemy's front line was suddenly marked by the Turks fixing their bayonets, as these could be seen above the parapet of the trench.

With a deafening yell the Battalion charged over the final 40 yards, and as the men rushed on white flag after white flag appeared. A short sharp encounter with those who still showed fight and the battle was over.

The redoubt was in our hands at 1650.

Whether the fall of the Central redoubt shook the morale of the the enemy in the right hand position or not it is impossible to say but the fact remains that immediately after this the Turks came from it and surrendered.

Fighting continued on the left for another twenty minutes when that position also was captured, by the Yeomanry.

The Battalion secure 5 Officers and 219 other ranks unwounded prisoners, together with a great quantity of war material, which, for reasons that will appear later, could not be removed or destroyed.

Our Casualties were :- KILLED, 1 Officers **9**(³).0/ranks
WOUNDED **31**.

Word now reached us that the enemy reinforcements mentioned

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mentioned previously were pushing forward and that the N.Z. Mounted Rifles had gone out to check their advance so as to allow the remainder of our forces, hospitals etc with their wounded and prisoners, to retire.

Instructions were issued that all haste was to be made and on this account we were unable to do more than bury the equipment we had taken - this consisted of Rifles, S.A.A., Bombs, etc.

The camels were brought up in the dark and the Battalion, with the Brigade marched to a bivouac at Sheikh ZOWAID in square C.7. arriving there at 2300.

10. 1. 10.

Lieut. A.C. Campbell at 0300 returned to the battle field with a party of One Sergeant and four other ranks to bury Captain Smith and the other members of NOs II and I2 Companies who had been killed.

Left the bivouac at SHEIKH ZOWAID and marched to our own camping area at El Arish.

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