

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

Light Horse

Item number: 10/10/31

Title: 5th Australian Light Horse
Regiment

July 1917

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

5th Light Horse Regt.
2nd L. H. Brigade.

Month of July 1917.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Marakeb.	1-5.		Regiment resting on Beach. Musketry, Hotchkiss Gun and signalling training. <i>AW</i>	
UM URGAN.	6.		Regiment with Brigade moved from MARAKEB. to UM URGAN. <i>AW</i>	
	8.		Regiment with Brigade took part in forming covering party whilst C. in C. reconnoitred country from pt. 720. Regt. left camp at 0515 as Bde. Reserve Regt. halted at point on ABU SHAWISH Road near pt. 705. One troop escort to 60 pdrs. No casualties. Returned to camp at 2000. <i>AW</i>	
	11-12		Raid on Turkish trench on WADI IMLIEH opposite pt. 410. See report attached. <i>AW</i>	July 1917 A.
	14.		Regiment took over day patrols MABRUK, KHASIF, BASAL, and 510. Also five outposts by night of one troop each GAMLI to HISEIA. <i>AW</i>	July 1917 B.
	14-15.		Ambush for Turkish patrol at pt. 705. - see report attached. <i>AW</i>	
	16-17.		Regimental Enterprise at EL BUGGAR and reconnaissance to pt. 810. Report herewith. <i>AW</i>	July 1917 C.
			Day patrols as on 14th. <i>AW</i>	
	18-19.		Night patrols as on 14th. Patrol shelled while returning at dawn. <i>AW</i>	
	19.		Day patrols as on 14th. These patrols left bivouac at 0500 in heavy fog. Almost immediately on leaving the barbed wire they were shelled by enemy guns from direction of 705. The patrol on nearing basal BASAL noticed Turkish Cavalry at KHASIF. On reports being sent in the Bde. and the Division moved out across WADI GHUZZE at 0900. All troops were heavily shelled. This Regt. formed the left flank guard to the Division, holding line BASAL-GELEIB. The 510 day patrol under Lt. Broughton had good observation of the enemy and reported their entrenchments on pt. 705 and two of their guns on the northern slope of that Hill. At 1600 the remainder of the Regt. moved towards 510 and	+ 10



(2).

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

5th Light Horse Regt,
2nd L.H. Bde.

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Month of July 1917.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
UM URBAN	19.		<p>took up a position 1000 yds West of that point. From this position the enemy were seen evacuating 705. Instructions were received from Bde. to push forward parties to prevent them from doing this. 'A' Squadron were moved to pt. 550 and remainder of Regt. moved direct on 705. 'A' Squadron then moving to North of that last mentioned point, when it was found that the enemy had retired over the WADI IMLIETH. The Regt. was then shelled by the guns that had been on pt. 705 and another Battery from the direction of HAREIRA. The Regt. withdrew to GELEIB remaining there on outpost until relieved by a New Zealand Bde. Squadron at 0200. During these operations the Regiment was almost continually under shell fire from 0900 to 1900. We only had one casualty, slightly wounded by shrapnel. Formation adopted, the Regt. in Column of lines of Troop Columns at extended intervals and distances. Most of the shells used by the enemy were common shell and owing to the soft nature of the ground had very local effect. <i>for</i></p> <p>A report having been received that the enemy were evacuating BEERSHEBA the</p> <p>Regt. left Biranac at 0630 with the Bde. to East Bank of WADI GHUGGE. The whole Division was out. The N.Z. Bde. patrolled the line held by the Turks yesterday and found same all clear, but that BEERSHEBA not evacuated. <i>for</i></p> <p>Regt. returned to Biranac at 1100.</p> <p>'A' Sqdn. proceeded to ESANI as guard to survey party. <i>for</i></p>	
	20.			
	22.			



(3)
WAR DIARY

or
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(Erase heading not required.)

5th Light Horse Regt,
Ind. L. H. Bde.

Army Form C. 2118.

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Month of July 1917.

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UM URGAN	23.		Report having been received at D.H.Q. that BEERSHEDA had been evacuated by the enemy the Regt. with remainder of Division left Beirineac at 0630. This Bde. halted at KHASIF as reserve. On it being ascertained that BEERSHEDA had not been evacuated the Bde. moved back to Beirineac leaving KHASIF at 1130. <i>Mo</i>	
	23-24		Regt. supplied one troop outpost South of GAMLI. <i>Mo</i>	
	25-26		Ditto. <i>Mo</i>	
	26.		A" Squadron on Surveyors escort ESANI. <i>Mo</i>	
	27-28		Regimental operation at EL BUGGAR. Operation order herewith <i>Mo</i> Copy of Report herewith <i>Mo</i>	July 1917 D. July 1917 E.
	29.		C" Squadron at 0700 proceeded to take up position at ESANI as Surveyors' escort <i>Mo</i> Regiment with remainder of Division formed, moving party, while C. in C. reconnoitred country from pt. 510. Bde. took line from ESANI to 630. This Regt. in Bde. reserve at KHASIF. Bde. retired from there at Noon <i>Mo</i>	
	30.		Lt. Broughton and one troop sent out at 2310 to KHIRBIT IMLIEH to warn C.O. 6th Regt. of movements of Turks near IRGEIG <i>Mo</i>	+ 10 2/10



Mo
Lieut. Colonel,
Commanding 5th L. H. Regt. A. I. F.

John Henry
5th. Light Horse Regiment, A.I.F.

July 1917
A
X 10/4

Report on night enterprise; night 11th./12th. July, 1917.

Reference Map : Beersheba, 1/125000.

In terms of Brigade Operation Order, party left the Wadi GHUZZEE at 1900. Moved to EL IMARA. There left Sand Cart ~~and~~ with escort of Lieut. Webster and 12 other ranks. Remainder of party then marched to the A in ABU SHAWISH. The assault party, Lieut. Broughton with 20 other ranks and the supports, Lieut. Boyd with 15 other ranks here dismounted and left their horses with an escort under Lieut. Taylor. The assault party, followed by the supports at a distance of about 200 yards marched on foot on a 60° bearing to within 400 yards of the hut opposite 410, leaving at 2100, arriving there at 2200. The party then moved due South of the hut, the assault party then advanced in single file at 3 yards distance, two men in advance with fixed bayonets, followed by 4 and Lieut. Broughton with bombs. All had their bayonets fixed. The assault troop was followed by the supports. The hut was first examined, then a move was made to the trench which starts about 25 yards from the hut and runs East and West, 150 yards long, 7 feet 6 in. deep with fire step and 9 traverses. A party of 5 men were sent to block the communication trench which it was reported existed between trench and the Wadi, but it was found that no such trench existed. A party of bayonets and bombs then got into the trench and worked along it from East to West. Another party with bombs worked along the top of the trench, no enemy was seen. The trenches did not appear to have been recently occupied. A patrol was sent down to the bank of the Wadi, a distance of 150 to 200 yards, but no enemy was seen or heard. The assault troop and the supports then left the hut at 2250 and returned to their horses, arriving ~~the~~ at them at 2335, then picked up sand cart and escort at IMARA and reached bivouac at 0130. The night was cloudy and dark, no stars being visible.

An observation post of two N.C.O's. had been sent during the afternoon to HILL 510. They reported an enemy observation post of 6 mounted men on the high ground to the South of 630. This enemy post withdrew at dusk. These were the only enemy seen in the sphere of operations.

The officers with the party consider that there were no enemy posts ~~in the vicinity~~ within a mile of the hut on this side of the Wadi.

About the time the party were leaving their horses the enemy sent about 30 or 40 flares on the other side of the Wadi IMLIEH, but sent none up after 2125.

L C Wdr

12th. July, 1917.

Lieut-Colonel,
Commanding 5th. Light Horse Regiment, A.I.F.



5th Light Horse Regt. A. S. F.

July 1917
B

Minor Enterprise 14/15 July 1917.

+10/5

Reference

Map BEERSHEBA 1/25,000.

Intention

To capture Turkish patrol which has been observed on several occasions to occupy the high ground South of pt. 630 near the ABU SHAWISH Road.

A troop of "A" Squadron under Lt. Webster left camp at 2330 and proceeded to a pt. about 1 mile S. of Hill 550. Horses were left here under an escort of 8 men, the remainder 16. O.R. under Lt. Webster occupied the high ground about 2000 yds to South of pt. 630. This high ground is not marked specially on the map, it is the highest ground about there. A surveyor lately informed us that it was 705 feet high. The hill has several firing positions dug in it. Lt. Webster's party concealed themselves in these, being in position at 0345. At 0400 a movement was seen in the Wadi and at 0415 6 mounted men rode on to a pt. on the map 630, there they halted while 2 moved on 1/2 mile towards 550. They had a look round, went back to the remainder of the party, then all rode S.E. over the Wadi HANAFISH onto the ridge 730-770-810 where they remained until our party withdrew. Lt. Webster vacated his post at 0615 and withdrew seeing no one else in the meanwhile. In the meantime a troop under Lt. Graham left the outpost line at 0255 as a support to Lt. Webster. He arrived at the neighbourhood of 510 at 0357. He then moved due E. about 1 mile. Lt. Graham & 1 NCO. took up an observation post from which they saw the Turkish patrol of 6 abovementioned. He does not think the Turks saw him. He then sent a section towards BIR IFEIS to try and cut off the patrol. The Turks saw this section and at once withdrew. Lt. Graham then took his troop down to the crossroads S. of pt 520. From this position he observed KHIRBIT and noticed one small trench on the S. side of the Wadi near K in KHIRBIT, and a number of firing positions on both banks of the Wadi. There is a shallow Wadi running N.E. and S.W. for about 2000 yds from K in KHIRBIT. About 15 men fired volleys at Lt. Graham's party at 2000 yds range from last mentioned trench. The volleys (2) were very regular probably for ranging purposes. They then fired independently. Lt. Graham's party then withdrew. Lt. Graham noticed that the trenches on the N. side of the Wadi were much more heavily wired than when he last saw them some seven weeks before.

15/7/17.



J. E. O'Donoghue
Lieut. Colonel,
Command 5th Light Horse Regt. A.I.F.

5th Light Horse Regt. A.I.F.

July 1917

Report on Minor Enterprise 15/16 July 1917

Reference Map BEER SHEBA 1/125,000.



Intention. To ambush an enemy patrol which was reported to be in the habit of watering at well at EL BUGGAR and to make a reconnaissance of country East of hill 810, near KH. EL SUFI.

A party of 3 off. and 80 O.R. left Be'er Sheva at 1900 on 15th inst. They arrived at the Chalk Pits at KHASIF at 2130. All here dismounted, the horses were concealed in the chalk pits and left under an escort under Lt. Taylor. The remainder of the party under Lts. Boyd and Broughton proceeded on foot to EL BUGGAR. Lt. Boyd and 7 O.R. took cover in a hut there while Lt. Broughton and 11 O.R. concealed themselves in a washout a few yards away from the well. Shortly before 0300 Lt. Boyd heard a patrol within 100 yds. of his hut, but it was too dark to take action against the large body - one of them came within a few yards of the hut but was not fired on as it was hoped to catch the big patrol. At 0800 he saw through a small hole he had drilled through the wall of the hut a patrol of 38 all ranks at a distance of 900 yds. None of the patrols came near enough to Lt. Broughton's party to justify him firing at them. At 0425 a patrol of about 40 or 50 men came to KHASIF. 2 of them rode close up to Lt. Taylor's party - They were called on to surrender and immediately tried to gallop off. Their horses were killed, one man was wounded in the foot and both were taken prisoner. The remainder of this patrol kept well away from Lt. Taylor's party and sniped at it for a considerable time from the adjoining ridges. The remainder of the Regt. together with two troops of 2nd Aus. M.G. Sqn arrived at GOZ EL BASAL at 0400 to act as a support to the ambushing party. This party remained at GOZ EL BASAL till 0800, as arranged. They then moved up to KHASIF, drove off a patrol of about 20 that was sniping there, and then moved on to EL BUGGAR with the lead horses of the ambush party, handed them over & drove off a party that was sniping at the last mentioned place. At 0800 2 troops of 6th L.H. Regt. and two more troops of 2nd M.G.S. reported at GOZ EL BASAL. These were sent to occupy pt. 550 about 1 1/2 miles N. of KHASIF. The Regt. then moved on from EL BUGGAR to pt. 720 which was then occupied by enemy patrols. After exchange of fire these patrols retired. The Regt. halted at 720 and 'C' Sqn (Lts. Boyd, Broughton & Taylor) moved on to 810. These ridges were occupied by enemy patrols but they retired on the approach of 'C' Sqn. A troop of about 20 enemy cavalry were observed at TAWAIL EL HABERI. Two M.G.'s and a troop were pushed out against these, which caused them to withdraw into BEER SHEBA. 'C' Sqn on 810 were now subjected to shell fire from long range, but exact position of gun could not be located. To the East of 810 the country is much better than from 720 to 810, and gradually slopes down to the WADI SUFI. There are numerous tracks over it and it would be passable to wheeled transport. No defences were noticed between 810 and the telegraph

(2)

Minor Enterprise 15/16 July 1917.

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line and no military camps. A number of Bedouin encampments were noticed on the North side of the line. After observing the Country "C" Bn withdrew still under shell fire - The Regt. returned to camp without casualties other than one that took place at hill 630 during one of the ordinary day patrols.

L. E. White

16/7/17.

Commanding 5th L. H. Regt. A. I. F. ^{Lieut-Colonel}



OPERATION ORDER NO. 1

--by--

Lieut-Colonel L.C. Wilson, CMG.,
Command g. 5th L.H. Regt., A.I.F.

Copy No.

Reference Map. --- REERSHEBA 1/125000.

1. INFORMATION. --- Enemy patrol are known to come into the EL BUGGAR, KHASIF and KA RM district daily, in strength varying from 40 upwards.
2. INTENTION. --- It is intended to capture these patrols.
3. (a) A Squadron and 1 troop M.G.S. (Lt. PERROTET) will leave bivouac at 1800 and march to ESANI and leave that place in sufficient time to arrive at a point on WADI ESANI North of UM AJUA by 0330. The O.C. of this Sqn. will send out a small party to reconnoitre crossings over WADI ESANI this afternoon.
(1800)
- (b) B. Squadron with one troop M.G.S. (Lt. NIVE-SOH) will leave bivouac at 2200 and move to POINT 720, arriving there by 0330, moving via GOZ EL GELIB and PT. 705.
- (c) The Regt. (less A. and B. Squadrons) and 1 troop M.G.S. (Lt. OWEN-JONES) will leave bivouac at 0030 and proceed to GOZ EL BASAL, arriving there by 0330.
4. An aeroplane of the A.F.C. will co-operate in this operation. This plane will fly over the EL BUGGAR-KHASIF district at 0430. If any enemy patrols are visible one smoke bomb will be dropped. On this signal A. and B. Squadrons (with respective M.G. troops) will at once move on a n extended front as fast as possible towards EL BUGGAR and so that their right and left flanks respectively will meet about ^{the point where} the AMU SHAWISH road crosses the RAFA-REERSHEBA road. The Regiment (less A. and B. Squadrons) with attached M.G. troop will move forward towards EL BUGGAR.
5. In the event of the Air reconnaissance ascertaining that the country to be cleared up is occupied by a large enemy force two smoke balls will be dropped at an interval of half a minute. Another aeroplane will immediately report to R.H.Q. at BASAL. On this plane arising again and dropping three smoke bombs the flanking Squadrons will withdraw.
6. If no enemy are located at 0430 by the air reconnaissance no smoke bombs will be dropped and the aeroplane will come to ground to the West of GOZ EL BASAL. It will subsequently make a further reconnaissance, using the above signals as occasion demands.
7. If ~~the~~ enemy have entered the district to be cleared by 0700 all parties will retire independently to camp.
8. Two Sand carts will accompany the Regt. to GOZ EL BASAL.

Copy No. 1. -- File.

- 2 & 3. Brigade H.Q.
4. A.F.C.
5. M.G. Sqn.
6. War Diary
7. do.

(Sgd) *[Signature]* Lieut. & Adjutant,
5th Light Horse Regiment, A.I.F.



5th. Light Horse Regiment, A.I.F.

Report on Minor Operation 27th. / 28th. July, 1917.

REFERENCE MAP :-- BEERSHEBA 1/125000.

1. INTENTION. --- To capture enemy patrols which are known to come into the EL BUGGAR, KHASIF, KARM district daily.
2. "A" Squadron of this Regiment (Major Bolingbroke) and 1 Machine Gun Troop left camp at 1800, travelled on the W. side of the WADI to ESANI. On arriving there at 2100, Sgt. SMITH who had been sent there in the afternoon to find a crossing, reported that he had seen a party of Bedouin on the E. side of the WADI near ESANI. The O/C. Sqn. accordingly sent Sgt. SMITH and 6 men, dismounted, to deal with these Bedouin. They found 15 Bedouin with camels cutting and loading barley. On Smith's approach the Bedouin fired at his party, but without hitting anyone; the Bedouin were attacked -- 2 were killed with the bayonet and one killed by rifle fire, a fourth fell and it is certain that several more were wounded. On "A" Squadron's return this morning about 0900 they collected four of the camels, burnt their store of grain, rugs and packs. 3 dead bodies were still there. After this encounter at 2100 "A" Squadron proceeded up the WADI and took up a position at 0250 in a hollow 2 miles N.E. of RASHID BEK. Here the Squadron remained in concealment until 0700 as no signal was given by the aeroplane to close in on EL BUGGAR. No Turks came within 3 miles of the Post. At 0700 the Squadron returned to camp.
3. "B" Squadron of the Regiment (Capt. Nimmo) and 1 Machine Gun Troop took up by 0300 a position as arranged at POINT 720. At 0435 the advance point of an enemy patrol approached PT. 720 and ascertained that it was occupied by us. Captain NIMMO at once sent out 2 troops one due South and one to the S.E. to cut off this patrol. These troops raced as far as the crossing of the ABU SHAWISH road with the RAFA-BEERSHEBA road, but the Turks had too great a start and got back to the TAWAIL EL HABARI, where they remained until they retired. They numbered from 30 to 50. The aeroplane which was co-operating reported at 0505 that there were 50 enemy halted on the road 2 miles E. of HABARI. As this was outside the area that could be taken in rear by "A" Squadron from the S. the aeroplane did not give the signal to advance. The aeroplane came to ground at GOZ EL BASAL (R.H.Q.) and made another reconnaissance at 0630. As the enemy party still remained at HABARI the signal to close in was not given. The aeroplane then attacked this party with its machine gun and dispersed it.. "B" Squadron moved to HILL 720 via the entrenched HILL 1 mile South of EL GIHEIR (705). It was not occupied when they passed. At 0430 it was occupied by a party of 8 of the enemy. They were still in possession when "B" Squadron retired at 0700.
4. "C" Squadron and H.Qrs. with Machine Guns arrived at GOZ EL BASAL at 0310 where they remained until the advanced Squadrons had retired. A Turkish infantryman, apparently a deserter, was taken prisoner near KARM by this party.

I must place on record my appreciation of the services rendered by the aeroplane of the A.F.C. Owing to the advance Squadrons being so far to the front and far from support it was very satisfactory to know the enemy's approximate strength.

I enclose herewith recommendation with respect to No. 278. Sgt. ARTHUR VINCENT SMITH.

W8/7/17.

COMMANDING 5TH. LIGHT HORSE REGIMENT, A.I.F.

Lieut-Colonel,

