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

Formation Headquarters

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March 1916



AWM4-1/54/12PART7

SECRET.

INTELLIGENCE REPORT No. 495, ISMAILIA. MARCH 22nd 1916.

Source of

INTELLIGENCE

REMARKS.

INTELLIGENCE
OFFICER
KANTARA
21.3.16.

Agent sent out the end of February reports having made the following round.
EL ARISH - WADI ARISH - KOSSAIMA - HASSANA - RODEH SALEH - WADI HAMMA - LIBNI - ADJA - ASLUJ - BIR SABA - KHAN YUNIS - SHEIKH ZOWAID - ARISH - BIR EL ABD - KANTARA.
He reports that the post at Rodh Salem consisted of about 50 soldiers. At Hassana about 150, at Kossaima about the same. At Libni about 1,000 with 50 to 40 tents. These tents are struck immediately the "Look out" gives notice of an aeroplane coming. (Note. The numbers at Libni are probably much exaggerated./F.S.)
Agent was at Bir Saba on the 3rd inst, when Enver Pasha arrived with Djemal Pasha. There was a big parade and display in their honour that afternoon. (See Bulletin No. 485 of the 10th inst./F.S.)
The following day Enver and Djemal went by train and motor car as far as Rodh Salem and returned to Saba the same night. The following day he left for Jerusalem and it was said that he was going on down to Mecca and Medina to bring north all troops available in those parts. As a result of Enver's visit to Saba, troops left rapidly for Jerusalem and the north. He reports scarcely more than 1,000 troops left in Saba now. The health of the soldiers had been very bad - 50 & 60 dying every day from cold and pneumonia. The Sherif Arabs particularly suffering.
While at Saba Agent saw two aeroplanes flying-these were Turkish.

Agent reports Garrisons at EL ARISH to be about 1,000 - 1,500 Soldiers; BIR EL MAZAR 100 - 150; Hod el Gedaidia 130 men, of whom 80 are camelmen, having with them 4 small guns which are carried by camels. The telephone Office formerly at DEBABIS has now been moved up to BIR EL ABD. The Turkish market at Bir el Abd now takes place on every Wednesday and is cutting prices with the Kantara market. Agent informs me that the large square pile of black looking objects, stored near the reservoir at Hassana, is a stack of wood cut into short lengths almost square. He says that the wood is almost black in colour and has been stored there for use of the Army when it comes. Rumours are rife in Saba of a great war in the north and also that the Ibn Saoud and the Ibn Sawah are out against the Turks in the eastern desert. (?) IBN SAWAH = Probably IBN SABAH.
(NOTE. The number of troops at Hassana is evidently underestimated, and those at Libni greatly exaggerated. The rest of the report with the exception perhaps of the two Turkish aeroplanes flying at Saba, of which further proof is required, appears reliable./A.W.J.B.)

G.S.O.
SUBZ
21.3.16.

From Arab Sources.
MARCH 18th. At Towail el Dib (between Towal and Giddi) a patrol of 15 armed camelmen were seen coming from the direction of Bir el Giddi and going towards the wadi el Gebab. This patrol appeared to be examining the tracks of our recent column. Continuing towards Bir el Giddi agent came on the tracks of our aeroplane having been dragged. These tracks were first come on about point 1780 and were followed going in the direction of Bir Giddi. During the night there was heavy rain and the tracks were not seen again.

SECRET

INTELLIGENCE REPORT. No. 495. ISMAILIA. MARCH 22nd 1916. (PAGE 2.)

MARCH 19th. Wadi Um Soiala. All clear.

At Sudr El Heitan four Arabs were seen removing the telegraph poles and collecting them in fours and fives.

An Agent was met towards evening between Gebel El Heitan and Jaifi, who gave the following information.

- (1) The poles that were seen being removed are to be used for a branch line from Gebel Hisn (point 1760) to Ain Sudr. The latter place will then be in telephonic communication with Nekhl.

Previous information regarding Ain Sudr and Nekhl being in communication by telephone is correct. Up to the present time the enemy post at Gebel Hisn has been in touch with Nekhl, using our telephone line, and messages to Ain Sudr were sent to this post, who sent them on by messenger.

- (2) Regarding the loss of our aeroplane. On afternoon of 12th or 13th the enemy patrol near Giddi hearing a noise resembling what they thought was a bomb, hid themselves. The next morning they decided to investigate and came on the aeroplane (near point 1780 from their description). Tracks of two occupants were seen proceeding west but were not followed. Eight men of the patrol remained as a guard and a messenger was despatched to the enemy's post at Maghara. Subsequently a patrol of 3 Germans and 40 Arab camelmen arrived. 15 men dragged the aeroplane to the vicinity of Bir Giddi; there it was taken to pieces and carried on three camels on the 14th to Maghara via Baha, Wadi el Fallig, East of Jifjafa, East of Bir Hegailb, El Urf (point 1600) Bir el Melhi, Bir Maghara. Near the junction of Wadis Gebab and Towal enemy is stated to have captured a post of ours consisting of 5 men and 1 mule. This post was taken to Ain Sudr and thence to Nekhl. They were captured by Saad Saidat with ten Arabs. Informant also corroborates that Sulleman Abu Faris was killed by an aeroplane bomb.

NOTE... (HASSANA is a more likely place for the wrecked aeroplane to be taken to than Maghara. /A.W.J.B.)

AGENT
ISMAILIA
22.3.16.

Left Ismailia on 13th inst for Auja.

GEBEL TASSA 15th { Nothing to report.

GEBEL HAMAIYIR 14th {

HUAFA 15th. Agent travelled all night and reached Ruafa late on 15th. On the morning of the 15th he crossed the motor road east of the wadi. It is metalled but does not show much sign of wear. He saw from a distance a patrol of 20 camelmen riding north.

AUJA 16th. Agent saw about 300 tents and heard that there were about 3,000 men there.

Some were wearing Arab head-dress but the greater number dark green astrakhan turbushes. These last, he heard, were Turks. The Commandant was Nur Bey. He saw mountain guns in the village and one anti aircraft gun east of it.

About 50 horses and 40 mules. 30 camels brought stores from the east while he was there and after unloading and resting for two hours, returned east.

Agent returned by the way he had gone, seeing nothing worth reporting.

NOTE... A hitherto untried agent. Not to be depended on. /A.W.J.B.)

O.C.
ABU
ZENIMA
17.3.16.

An agent reports that he left Nekhl on 11th March after having spent 10 days there.

The garrison consists of about 160 Syrian Arabs under a Commandant. This Officer is about 35 years of age and wears two stripes on his shoulder straps (An assistant Sergeant Major??) The straps are of round gold lace. He lives in the house formerly occupied by the Doctor of Nekhl which is near the Mosque. He has two civilian clerks with him.

There is also a Kaimakam at Nekhl who lives in a house just west of the house of Sulieman Ghonoim. This Kaimakam acts as civil judge and wears Beduin clothes. He does not assume any Military Command. (Kaimakams in Turkey are the district magistrates. A.W.J.B.)

The agent describes the soldiers at Nekhl as being the worst he has ever seen in his life. They are for the most part armed with Martini Mausers but about 60 of them have magazine rifles. They have very poor uniforms and their ammunition is carried in belts made out of canvas with loops of string for each cartridge. They do not appear to have any reserve of ammunition in their camp and never take any reserve ammunition out to their outposts.

The rations supplied are much the same as Egyptian people live on but are not plentiful.

There are picquets on the following roads at about 5 minutes walk from the town.

SUEZ - Nekhl Road, NEKHL-ABU TAREIFIA ROAD, NEKHL-TOR ROAD. The picquets consist of an N.C.O. and 4 men. They are there night and day.

The fortifications round Nekhl are old and out of repair. They were dug last year and are now used as latrines by the people. There is no wire.

There is one gun in the citadel which is said to have been left there by the English. It is trained along the Nekhl-Tor road and is fired at aeroplanes when they come along. This gun is fired by a German and is muzzle loading.

NOTE.. (The only gun left at Nekhl on evacuation, was the barrel of an ancient muzzle loader without carriage. A.W.J.B.)

There are also 4 Turkish 5 pounder breech loading guns. They are known as "ROBH MADFAH" (Literally 1/4 gun. Usually applied by Arabs to mountain guns. A.W.J.B.) These guns are wheeled out on wheel barrows(?) along the Suez-Nekhl road every morning to look for aeroplanes. They have a range of about 1 mile. The agent was present at Nekhl during two aeroplane raids. FIRST RAID. About 16 days ago a bomb was dropped and 1 soldier and a camel were killed. Another bomb was dropped on the citadel and the German looking after the gun was slightly wounded in the hand. The gun was not damaged but jumped off its carriage when fired in the air.

2nd RAID. Four days after the first. Two bombs were dropped. First bomb killed a Beduin named Abu Faris and destroyed a house belonging to Sheikh Hamad. The other bomb did no damage whatever.

When at Nekhl the agent heard that an "Urdu" of soldiers had arrived at Bir Saba but they were suddenly recalled by train at very short notice. He does not know where they went but heard that they went to Constantinople.

Rations are brought from Hassana to Nekhl by a detachment of 30 camels under an N.C.O. There are 20 mules and 10 horses at Nekhl.

The agent has been going and coming from Nekhl for the past four months. The garrison has during that time remained the same.

NOTE.. (About 1,500 men were seen at Nekhl by aeroplane on 18th February, which confirmed the reports of various agents. If therefore this agent is correct in stating the garrison has not changed for 4 months, it should now be 1,500 or thereabouts and not 160 as his reports. Too much dependance should not be placed on his statements. A.W.J.B.)

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No 53.

I N T E L L I G E N C E S U M M A R Y .

25th March 1916.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
EGYPTIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

1. INTERNATIONAL SITUATION UP TO MARCH 6th.
 2. NEWS FROM TURKEY.
 3. AIR RAID ON HASSANA BY R.F.C.
 4. EXTRACT FROM A CENSORED CABLE.
-

W.H.C.
27/3/16.

1. INTERNATIONAL SITUATION UP TO MARCH 6th.

CHINA:- On February 23rd Yuan Shih Kai issued a mandate postponing his enthronement. Until he can recapture SUIFU or obtain some definite success against the rebels of the South his position is not very assured.

DENMARK:- A Scandinavian conference was to have been held in Copenhagen on March 8th.

EGYPT:- Ali Dinar the Sultan of Darfur has proclaimed a Holy War and has announced that he intends to invade the Sudan as soon as he is in a position to do so.

(G.H.Q. note:- This was part and parcel of the Senussi's scheme of an invasion of Egypt and was to have taken place simultaneously with the defeat of the Senussi. Ali Dinar may possibly now be ^{thinking} over the matter.)

ITALY:- There were 37 German ships interned in Italian ports of which 5 for various reasons were of no use.

PERSIA:- The Russian victories have steadied the situation. Count Kanitz committed suicide when the Russians entered Kermanshah and Capt. Killander of the gendarmerie had to pay £ 1200 for a passage for himself and his men. The Bakhtiari Govern^{or} of Isfahan who had sold himself to the Germans has resigned and left for the South. Nizam es Sultaneh (a former Governor of Luristan) who was raising a force in West Persia in German interest, is now on the point of deserting the Germans altogether.

The Germans are now pretty well cut off from Turkey but trade is at a standstill.

It is probable that Sir Percy Sykes will organise an

irregular force under British Officers to hunt the Germans down.

PORTUGAL. The Governor General of Portuguese East Africa contemplates the possibility of invading German East Africa.

SWEDEN:- Efforts are being made to establish a central distributing agency in Sweden with power to control imports and prohibit re-export. The Prime Minister has practically agreed to the scheme.

SWITZERLAND:- The court-martial on Colonels Egli and Wattenwyl was concluded on February 29th. The court found that the conduct of the accused in ^{communicating} the Swiss Intelligence Bulletin to the German and Austrian attachés was improper but not criminal. The court therefore acquitted them but sent them before the military chiefs for disposal. They were then sentenced to 20 days rigorous arrest and placed on retired list.

UNITED STATES:- The President has taken a strong line against German intrigues in the belief that he has the support of the country which will not tolerate bargaining for the German vote. He is annoyed at the way Bernstorff is intriguing against him.

2. NEWS FROM TURKEY.

The AIDAN railway is said to be working under great difficulties with a train for civil requirements every twenty days; but it is stated that coal is expected from Europe.

ENVER PASHA. It is impossible to find out at Constantinople what has happened to Enver. No one can say for certain whether he is wounded or dead, or his present whereabouts.

G.H.Q. NOTE:- From fairly reliable sources it is learnt that Enver Pasha arrived at TRIPOLI about 5 p.m. three days

ago (i.e. on 22nd inst) on his way from HOMS. A great reception was to have been held in his honour the day before yesterday at the House of the Military Commandant. GENERAL POSITION. There is no talk of peace at Constantinople and no probability of a revolution in Turkey.

In the army the men are unquestionably against the existing Government chiefly on account of the bad food and treatment, but the feelings of the Officers are uncertain.

The public have heard the news of the fall of Erzerum, but the papers have not referred to it. General opinion still appears to have confidence in the final victory of Germany.

COMMUNICATION WITH GERMANY. Trains from Berlin arrive at Constantinople on three days each week, there being several trains on each occasion. Each train brings trucks of ammunition.

FINANCE. A report dated Constantinople 24th February states that Turkish paper money has depreciated 18%: £ T. 1 note is now worth 82 piastres.

Another source states the rate of exchange for £ T. gold is £ T. 1 note and 20 piastres.

CENSORSHIP. The Censor has prohibited the publication of speeches made in the Chamber.

3.

AIR RAID ON HASSANA BY R.F.C.

A raid on HASSANA was carried out yesterday morning by 6 R.F.C. aeroplanes. Many bombs were dropped with effect and all the machines returned safely. Further details will be given tomorrow.

4. EXTRACT FROM A CENSORED CABLE.

A censored press cable states that French and German troops are in close contact on the Macedonian frontier. The Germans seem apparently to expect an Allied offensive as they are bringing up siege and heavy guns from Nish. A Bulgarian Regiment on the Roumanian frontier at LOM PALANKA is reported to have mutinied.

APPENDIX

Mb 21

SECRET.

CAIRO.

22nd March, 1916.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
-----TURKEY.

General information.

CAUCASUS.

Troop movements.

MESOPOTAMIA.

General intelligence.

PERSIA.Russians advance.

W. H. H. G.
27/3/16

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T U R K E Y .

SMYRNA 15th March, 1916.

Pertev Pasha is reported to have said that the economic condition of TURKEY is such that unless supplies arrive shortly, Turkey will be unable to hold out until June.

The position of the Governor General RAHMI Bey with the Committee of Union and Progress is extremely strong in spite of all rumours to the contrary.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 2nd March, 1916.

ABDUL RIZA Bey, late President of the Turkish Chamber, made a speech in the Senate denouncing the present regime, which has excited great interest. He said that his friends should not be surprised if they learnt after a few days that he also had "committed suicide".

It is reported that the Camarilla has forced the three Imperial Princes who are next in succession to the Throne namely, VAHED ED DIN, MEDJID, and SELIM to resign their rights in favour of Abdül Hamid's son BURHAN ED DIN who is noted for his pro German proclivities.

NOTE by CAIRO.

BURHAN ED DIN, ABDUL HAMID's favourite son is an effeminate young man, with a pretty talent for the piano. He paints and powders his face, but is not lacking in intelligence. At one period Abdul Hamid is said to have had the intention of altering the succession in his favour, but renounced the idea in consequence of the opposition of the ulema.

C A U C A S U S .

TIFLIS reports 20th March. 140 prisoners of the 8th Regiment have been captured in the Coastal sector, 5th March to 11th March. It is believed that a Gendarme Battalion and a Composite Regiment are at Samsun. Inhabitants report on 14th March that there are 5 battalions at TREBIZONDE under AVNI Pasha lately commanding 32nd Division which now communicating (?) with Coast Defences.

Prisoners state that 3rd Cavalry Division consisting of 7th and 8th Light Cavalry and 22nd Regular Cavalry Regiment (90 sabres per squadron) with 2 Infantry Reserve Regiments each composed of 3 battalions of 800 rifles have arrived at a village 10 miles W. S. W. of ASHKALE from ERZINJAN. The Regimental standard and 250 men of the 97th Regiments were captured W. of KAMAKHATUN.

NOTE by CAIRO.

The 8th Regiment has had a battalion in the Coastal Sector and two in the OLTI Sector for some time past. The 3rd Cavalry Division seems very weak if really composed of only three regiments. The 7th and 8th Light Cavalry are presumably Kurdish Irregulars. The 22nd Regular Cavalry Regiment was last reported attached to the 9th Cavalry Brigade (Regts, 21, 22, 25) The 97th Regiment belongs to the 33rd Division, XIth A.C.

2.

Regiments reported to have suffered particularly heavily in the recent fighting in the CAUCASUS are the following.

Regiment	Division	A.C.
93	31st	X
98	18th	XI (Hassan Kale 14/1/16)
97	33th	XI see above
54	34th	XI Division
100	"	" captured
101	"	"
108	36th	XII almost destroyed.

TIFLIS reports under date March 14th. Deciphered Turkish Telegram captured BITLIS stated advanced Guard 10th Div expected E.R. ZINJAN 5th March. 5th Division was at RAS EL AIN 1st March. 13th Division was at NIGDE 76 miles N. W. of ADANA on 29th February. 3 battalions (total 1,700, Regiment unstated) with mountain battery and machine gun company passed MARDIN by forced march towards BITLIS. The 4th battalion (800) of the same regiment was moving towards KHARPUT. Regimental commander KAIMAKAM?ALI RIZA. VEHB PASHA had been appointed to command 3rd Army vice KIAMIL Bey who had gone to CONSTANTINOPLE. VEHB was due to arrive at ERZINJAN on March 7th. He sent message from SIVAS on 1st March to the Governor of BITLIS and to Commander of 13th Regiment who was expected to arrive at BITLIS commanding them to defend BITLIS to the last.

NOTE by WAR OFFICE.

It is probable that the 4 battalions under ALI RIZA belonged to the 13th Regiment as he was supposed to be in command of that regiment.

NOTE by CAIRO.

This information is of great value as definitely confirming the dispatch of the 5th and 13th Divisions to the CAUCASUS front. The 5th had previously been reported as possibly in SINAI agents having seen men with 5th Divisional regimental numbers near BIR EL SABA. It is quite possible that this Division which left the Gallipoli Peninsula before the final evacuation of ANZAC and Cape HELLES by the Allies, was destined for the campaign against Egypt and that an advanced party reached BIR EL SABA but that the Russian successes in the CAUCASUS caused it to be diverted to the N. E.

There had been great uncertainty as to the movements of the 13th Division (Regiments 4, 46, 60) and it was recently reported by a Greek source as being at the CHATALJA lines with the 19th Division. It was withdrawn from Cape Helles before the evacuation by the Allies apparently in September. Its subsequent movements have been wrapt in mystery.

The information available from MESOPOTAMIA suggests that the 2nd Division now engaged there is a 12 battalion Division and this seems also to be the present composition of the 5th Division. Division 4 and 6 were 12 battalions strong on arrival in the GALLIPOLI Peninsula and it would seem that the 5th Division may also have been brought up to 12 battalion strength since the end of November 1915.

3.

VENIB Pasha, brother of ESSAD Pasha of YANINA is a strong supporter of the Committee of Union and Progress. At the beginning of the war he was Governor-General (VALI) of the HEJAZ. At a later date he was appointed G. S. C. of the "IInd Reserve or CONSTANTINOPLE" Army. He was then sent by ENVER pasha to the GALLIPOLI PENINSULA and took command of the Turkish Force holding the KUTUBIA-ACHI-BABA section of the GALLIPOLI Defences. He appears to have held this command during the fighting in July and August 1915. In the autumn (October) he appears in command of the 1st Army at UZUN KEUPRU.

M E S O P O T A M I A .

Turkish Official.

Our aeroplane bombed KUT EL AMARA on Saturday and hit a gun.

Unofficial Reuter.

Two Turkish guns were put out of action on the TIGRIS at ABU RUMAN where the enemy evacuated a sandhill.

NAVAS.

The "Daily Mail" learns that in outpost encounters S of the TIGRIS at ABU RUMAN the Turks were surprised and left many dead behind also losing 2 officers and 52 men prisoners.

P E R S I A .

TIFLIS reports " Russian cavalry occupied ISPAHAN on 13th March.

Monmouth
Captain,
for G. S. C. (I),
The Force in Egypt.

APPENDIX *MC 21*

SECRET.

INTELLIGENCE REPORT No. 496. ISMAILIA. MARCH 23rd 1916.

Source of

INTELLIGENCE.

REMARKS.

G.S.O.
SUZ
31.3.16.

Report from O.C. TOR. 17.3.16.

AKABA. Agent reports on 13/3/16, there are one Officer (whose name is GURMUSH) and 20 men there, half of them are soldiers and half armed Arabs of Leheiwat. They are in a wadi west of Ithm (probably Wadi Munelini). There are 4 mules but no camels nor horses. Food is very scarce there and Arabs are beginning to realise the weak state of the Turks.

Another agent visited wadi Ithm on 3/3/16 and reports that 3 mile east of the junction of wadi Ithm and wadi Araba, he saw a post of two soldiers (Natives of Akaba) and two armed Arabs also three tents. He saw the tracks of one horse, 100 men on foot and 50 camels, approximately going east up the wadi Ithm; he did not see how far they went. He heard that about 2 miles up the wadi Ithm there were 100 men who had come down from El Ghor, but thought it doubtful. Sheikhs had refused to supply 100 men each to the TURKS.

No. 1 Agent's report was confirmed by an agent arriving on the 14/3/16.

At Wweiba there is a post of 3 camelmen dressed in khaki clothes, also 4 Arabs. They are all armed with single shot Mauser rifles.

HASSANA. Agent reports on 15.3.16 that all the Sheikhs of Maaza and Huitat have been ordered to produce 100 men each. On these being forthcoming they will be sent on 4/4/16 to Akaba, Darb el Haj, Nekhl and Hassana. Also that 4 big guns, each dragged by 4 mules were sent from Hassana to el Baha. (N. of Abu Gurun and E. of Rodh Salem)

ABU ZENIMA. Agent came in on 16/3/16 and confirmed my previous report of the seizure of the Arab post at Um Ajraf.

AUJA. Agent reports on 14/3/16, that on the 1/3/16 all troops and able bodied Arabs of any age were being sent from Auja and Hassana to Asluj and from there to the north on account of the Russian successes. Men and women are working at the repairs to the railway arches between Auja and Khalassa, work is proceeding very slowly since the withdrawal of the troops.

NEKHL. Agent reports that on 17/3/16, he saw at Nekhl 70 Gendarmes dressed in khaki and 130 Syrians dressed in khaki with Arab head-dresses. There is a Kaimakan there who visited the Convent recently. His name is supposed to be Kheirridin Bey. There are no German Officers. There are about 35 horses, 25 mules and 25 camels. The camels have mange. They say that the Army which was to have attacked the Canal has gone north presumably against the Russians. There is discontent amongst the soldiers there, as they were told that after one month of war they would be able to return to their homes, while now they have been mobilised for 16 months.

Agent heard that the water supply from Kossaima to Sirr has failed. (NOTE. The pipe-line from Kossaima was never laid further than the banks of wadi El Arish somewhere south of Gebel Helal. When work on the pipe line first started, there was talk among the Arabs of the water being taken to Sirr, but there were insufficient pipes, not sufficiently powerful engines at Kossaima, also the levels were against the project. A.W.J.B.) The tanks at Hassana and Sirr are round, about 2 metres in diameter and 1½ metres high. (Incorrect A.W.J.B.)

SECRET. INTELLIGENCE REPORT. No. 486. ISMAILIA. MARCH 23rd 1916. (PAGE 2.)

NOTE. All reports from Tor and Abu Zenima make out the garrison of Nekhl to be only some 8 or 800 men, while Ismailia agents consistently report the garrison to be about 1,000 strong. Aeroplane on 18th February reports 1,500 men but on 15th March only 1 tent was seen and some 150 men. A large number of troops could no doubt shelter from observation in the town so that that is inconclusive.

A report from Suez on the 5th March states the garrison at the end of February to be 800 Syrians only, which the Turkish Officer in command threatened to withdraw unless he was reinforced.

The probability is that up to the end of February there was a battalion at Nekhl which was withdrawn early in March leaving there a double company only. A.W.J.B.

AGENT
ISMAILIA
23/3/16.

Left Ismailia on 14th inst for Nekhl.

On the evening of 15th a few miles west of Bir el Giddi, agent met a Huitat Arab who told him that an aeroplane had fallen near there and that the Turks had sent out a patrol which took the plane to Hassana.

WADI EL BRUK 16th (Nothing to report.)

WADI ABU GIDIL 17th

NEKHL 18th. It was raining and all the soldiers were wearing greatcoats with the hoods over their heads. He saw what he estimates at 1,800 men. There were about 100 tents, close to and to the south of the town. If the look-out signals an aeroplane, these tents are immediately taken down. The shelters of the Sheikhs of the Teaha and Leheiwat Arabs are to the east of the town.

Six mountain guns under tarpaulins are kept in the police camel stable. In the camel lines near the Barracks, there were 30 transport camels; 80 horses and 10 mules.

The trenches south of the town are used as refuse pits.

Agent heard that another "Tabur" was expected at Nekhl.

It had started from Kossaima and was due at Nekhl on the 15th but had not turned up.

Agent returned via wadi el Bruk, wadi Um Seiala and wadi Um Mukhsheib, seeing nothing of interest.

(NOTE. Agent unreliable. A.W.J.B.)

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CONFIDENTIAL.No. 34.I N T E L L I G E N C E S U M M A R Y .26th March, 1916.GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
EGYPTIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

1. R.F.C. WEEKLY DIARY.
 2. ITALIAN ACTION AT CYRENAICA.
 3. EXTRACT FROM CENSORED CABLE.
-

R.F.C. WEEKLY DIARY.

R.F.C. Reconnaissance of SINAI during the week ending to-day.

No. 1. Section. Two or three more tents were noticed at AIN SUDR which was bombed during the week. At JIFJABA the southern camp has been removed; The Northern camp consists of only 7 tents and work seems to be in progress on the well there.

No. 2. Section. HASSANA was bombed yesterday by 6 machines of the 5th Wing. Pilots went single seater.

4 machines of No. 14 Squadron left ISMAILIA about 5-30 am; and 2 machines of No. 17 squadron left SUEZ at 6 am.

All the machines returned safely, covering on an average 195 miles.

It is impossible to say exactly how much damage was done owing to the large amount of dust and smoke which was raised by the bombing, but the following was observed by pilots of Nos. 14 and 17 Squadrons:-

Camp East of Reservoir: 4 tents and 1 shed, hit.
 Camp South of Reservoir: 2 tents hit.
 1 bomb hit parapet surrounding 3 buildings S.E. of Reservoir.
 1 " hit new building North of Reservoir.
 1 bomb hit "T" shaped trench South of Reservoir.
 2 bombs exploded within 4 yards of Reservoir, damaging the wall and covering the roofing with debris.
 One pilot observing a body of infantry firing on our machines came down behind them to 200 feet without being seen and opened rifle fire with his machine gun. They scattered in all directions.
 He then observed what appears to be an officers tent in the S.W. main camp and turned his machine gun on to this. Three men in white drill bolted out of one large tent. It is impossible to say whether there were any casualties inside the tents.

In all 40 - 201b. bombs were dropped.

Attached is a map showing approximately fall of some of the bombs observed.

No. 3. Section. On the Eastern side of the QATIA OASIS, parties of the enemy are still observed. The enclosures at HOD ABU SHILLA, 5 miles N.W. of BIR EL ABD still appear to be occupied and between 100 and 150 men have been observed there.

ITALIAN ACTION AT CYRENAICA.

The Italian Military Attache has communicated the following:-
24th March, 1916.

Italian Headquarters Cyrenaica report on the 19th March.
In the TOBRUK, DIERNA, CYRENE and BENGHAZI districts demonstrations were made by Italian, Eritrean and African Troops with native cavalry, mountain guns, motor machine guns, and machine gun sections. Near REGIMA (BENGHAZI) the enemy endeavoured to make an enveloping movement which was frustrated with the loss of 10 killed and 20 wounded. At other points the enemy was compelled to change his location. By the above action all attempts to send reinforcements East were paralysed and the desire of the G.O.C., CAIRO, complied with.

EXTRACTS FROM CENSORED CABLES.

The Germans are aiming at securing the defence of the Macedonian frontier and are preparing to remove the village population to the interior.

In the LEMNITZA district the Greek Troops, in anticipation of an enemy advance, are also ordering the village inhabitants to withdraw towards Salonika.

MB22

SECRET.

CAIRO.

23rd March, 1916.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
-----TURKEY.

General Intelligence.

MESOPOTAMIA.

Extracts from I. E. F. Intelligence Summary.

PERSIA.

French Foreign Office Communiqué.

SYRIA.Extracts from BEIRUT Newspapers.

mmmm
27/2/16



M E S O P O T A M I A .

Extracts from I. E. F. INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY 28th Feb.

EUPHRATES LINE:- The tribes in the vicinity of NASIRIYAH have recently been somewhat hostile in their attitude and the G. O. C. wires that on the 22nd instant he sent a small column of all arms against a tribal gathering on the SHATTRAH Road 4 miles from NASIRIYAH. The enemy fled suffering severely. We had no casualties.

One of Captain Eadie's Scouts confirms the report of Husaid ibn Suwait having got the worst of the recent encounter with the Ajman near SHAGRA. Husaid ibn Suwait has now been joined by some of the ~~tribe~~ Under their Sheikh Shurshub. (This is a Pro-British tribe whose habitat is some 15 miles upstream of NASIRIYAH).

TIGRIS LINE. :- Sheikh Mahid-el-Khalifah (who lives at village of MAJAR KABIR and has lately been visiting the Sheikh of MOHAMMERAH) states to C. P. O. that it is not practicable for any Turkish Force from the HAI to reach the TIGRIS through his Muqata and that he undertakes absolutely to prevent any Turkish approach.

He could raise 6,000 men.

The C. P. O. is of opinion that allowing for exaggeration he appears straightforward.

Two or Three reports have now been received that the BAGDAD boat bridge over the Tigris (which was brought down to CTESIPHON and is now at SHUMRAN) has been replaced at BAGDAD.

Bridge This is only what might be expected, the pontoons on which it is carried do not take long to build. The QARARI is reported to still exist: it was standing at the time of CTESIPHON and has doubtless remained so ever since.

An Agent lately from BAGDAD reports much talk in BAGDAD of the Russian in the CAUCASUS. They are much feared in BAGDAD.

Weather at WADI reported fine and appreciably warmer. An echelon encamped one mile North of QURNAH lately dug up a Turkish mountain gun, breach block missing. Probably buried there at the time of our capture of QURNAH. Recent BAGHDAD news (2nd February) says that the price of Bread has lately risen and there is a great shortage of cotton goods, tea, coffee and sugar. Meat is expensive.

The rise in the price of bread is ascribed to the seizure of caravan camels. Flour has, we ~~know~~ know, been cheap there up to date by reason of stoppage of export. If however the Turks have recently commandeered caravan camels the influx of flour from the country into the city would naturally be checked and result in a rise in price.

An Agent (ex BEDRAI 20th February) reports only Gendarmes there and one Arab battalion and one gun at JESSAN. He says another battalion left BEDRAI on 20th February for KHANIKIN.

KARUN LINE:- Haji Rais, Wazir to the Sheikh of Mohammerah visited the C. P. O. on the 22nd February and reports that he is confident of the bona fides of the Bakhtiari, Ilkhani and Ilbegi (whom he had lately interviewed) and of their loyal intentions re BEHBEGHAN.

There is a report that machinery for the manufacture of S. A. A. has arrived at SHIRAZ. Brass and empty cartridge cases are reported as being bought in BORASJUN for this purpose.

The BORASJUN rebels sent a linesman to BAH DAR RIG on 5th February to repair the telegraph line (purposely interrupted by us). This shows they are keen on telegraphic communications between SHIRAZ and BEHBEHAN. The linesman was told to return to BORASJUN.

H. M. S. "Bramble" has penetrated still further up the creek at BUSHIRE and is now 100 yards S. S. E. of PUPAR in a good position to command the mashlah with guns and searchlight.

G. O. C. BUSHIRE wires that ZAIR KHIDR (in reply to offers of exchange) has informed him that Major O'Connor is all but he refuses to exchange him, nor does he offer to exchange any other member of the party.

A later wire from G. O. C. says that it appears probable that SAULAT is not trying to ingratiate himself with the Persian Government. Also that the latest estimate of the SHIRAZ force is 1500 rifles with 4 guns and 3 machine guns.

BUNDRE ABBAS wires that German "Consul" (apparently ZUGMEYER) has left KERMAN in a South Westerly direction with a machine gun and S. A. A. on the invitation of some of the anti-Qawam Chiefs.

Extracts from I. E. F. INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY 3rd March.

EUPHRATES LINE:- Hamud as Suwait of the Dhafir has been joined by his allies the Bedur and has fallen back from SHAGRA to YOAMAR, a place on the route towards KHAMSEH.

Yesterday the Sheikh of ZOBEIR sent letters to C. P. O. and Captain More reporting arrival at ZOBEIR of a Shammar caravan from HAIL; this caravan brought letters to the Sheikh from Ibn Rashid, from Ibn Rashid's agent, and from another of Ibn Rashid's men. Gist of these letters is that towards the end of January Ibn Rashid left HAIL and met a concentration of his tribesmen, (place not identified), with what object does not appear, but all appears quiet. There has been good rain. The Turks are buying camels from Ibn Rashid, 2,000 have already gone Westward to MEDINA. They are supposed to want 8,000 more. The C. P. O. is getting Sheikh of ZOBEIR to-day to discuss this news with him, and to consider whether the Turkish purchases of camels cannot be interfered with.

A letter has been received from Majid (friendly Sheikh of CHAHBAISH) giving proof that Badr Rumaidh has been sending various individuals to Mizher Bey whence they have returned with robes of honour.

G. O. C. NASIRIYAH reports that the hostile tribes have commenced to pitch their war tents at BUTANIYAH (12 miles out of NASIRIYAH).

Alli Al Fadhl (leading Sheikh of the Khaffajah) and Khaiyun are reported to be the leaders in this movement. (NOTE. Probable object is to threaten the Azairich, and so prevent their re-submission to us under pressure of our punitive columns).

Grey's negotiations with Badr Rumaidh (through Hamud of IFFIHA) have ended in disappointment (as we rather feared they would). Rumaidh sent Hamud a reply, through the latter's advance agent, that he was quite convinced the Turks were more powerful than the British and that he would see this within the next fortnight. He said he would on no account have anything to do with the British and he advised Hamud to open negotiations with the Turks.

The Headmen of Beni Huteit (East of Hammar Lake) and El Fekud (West of Hammar Lake) have now also visited us. These two tribes are under the rulership of Majid (our creating as Sheikh of CHAHCAISH), but Majid's influence is not sufficiently powerful to keep them straight.

SAMAWA reported by an Agent to show no change up to 23rd February.

A Shatt-el-Agent confirms previously reported arrivals of Turkish S. A. A. at SHATTRAH. He speaks of 50 camel loads of Mauser and 50 of Martini ammunition.

He says Khaiyun el Obeid has received a Turkish decoration and been given honorary rank of Kaimakam.

TIGRIS LINE.

Air reconnaissance on 24th February does not bear out General Aylmer's forecast of a Turkish retirement from HANNAH, as it reports the position still strongly held and new trenches facing Northwards to the SUWAICHA Marsh.

There also appear to be new trenches along Tigris left bank in advance of the SANNAIYAT line.

Two new gunpits at Northern extremity of SANNAIYAT line and 2,000 men in bivouacs there - these latter in addition to the camps of 5,000 and 1,000 men reported by airplane on 23rd.

There is not sufficient evidence as yet to connect these camps with possible arrival of a new division - but this Division (given 12 days rest in BAGDAD) is now due, according to two reports considered fairly reliable.

BAGDAD is reported to be "literally full of wounded" German gold coinage reported in BAGDAD

Casual informer reports arrival in BAGDAD on 23rd January of 8 German 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ c.m. guns. These are said to have been kept in BAGDAD because 20 Shahturs loaded with ammunition for them were sunk in Euphrates. (Allowing for exaggeration in the number of Shahturs there seems to be likelihood in the story).

As regards latest developments - the big camp in ATADA - SUWADA locality is still believed to be a withdrawal of some of the HANNAH garrison. It is logical to believe that as the HANNAH defences have improved the Turks have found it safe to diminish the garrison of these defences and this would be desirable in order to reduce casualties from our shell fire, which became much more pronounced on and after the 22nd (the date on which the withdrawal took place).

3.260
 Reinforcement on the left bank is not therefore believed to have taken place. Bu's Air report of the 27th February indicates some reinforcement (possibly 2,000 men) near HAI bridge. There is however no evidence as yet to show whether these are fresh troops from BAGDAD or are merely a transfer from SHUMRAN.

An Agent confirms the despatch of British and Indian prisoners of war, captured by Turks at CTESIPHON to MOSUL.

KARUN LINE.

An ARRAZ agent reports a German scheme said to be in vogue round KURRUMABAD and BURUJIRD.

They have spent large amounts of money and in addition to this give promissory notes to land holders, should the War go against these landholders and their land be lost, the promissory note is to be redeemed with interest "in BERLIN". If the Germans win the war they guarantee the land and will give the owners a bonus. (It seems open to doubt whether landholders are sufficiently credulous to be really persuaded as to these notes being worth anything - however they cost the Germans nothing.)

BUSHIRE.

G. P. O. has heard some of Qawam's proposals and requirements. An advance report of them does not sound very promising as he apparently chiefly requires mountain and machine guns which we shall have difficulty in supplying (or in finding ammunition for). Detailed requirements are being stated and statement will follow.

Qawam says he can muster 6,000 men: he would propose to first capture LAR - and subsequently to operate against SHIRAZ by investment - but for this he would want guns.

The following are extracts from Major Trevor's Diary up to 19th February :-

(a) Darya Bogi is described as being in more cheerful spirits. He says he could easily crush the rebel Tangistanis if he could get orders from TEHERAN and a force from HAYAT DOUD, Shabankerah etc.

Reports go to show that the mules collected for SHIRAZ have been dispersed again. A movement of Gendarmes towards BUSHIRE therefore seems unlikely - possibly by reason of rising discontent against Gendarmes among SHIRAZ populace.

There is a general air of set back at the local rebel movement :-

Borasjun has writton dolefully to Darya Bogi. Sheikh Hussein is reported to have been defied at CHAH KUTAH. Zair Khidr is discredited.

The rebels are short of money and ready to turn against their leaders directly a Persian or other force makes a movement.

The reinforcement of BUSHIRE will doubtless help this general feeling of discouragement.

Minister wires that only 1500 of the numbers of rebel forces at SHIRAZ are really effective. They have 4 guns (including 7, 8 and 9 c.m.) and 3 maxims. Plenty of S. A. A. but are short of gun ammunition.

PERSIA.

General Townshend received a message from General Darstorf on 29th February describing his entry into KIRMANSKAR. Received by Governor and population - he states he is convinced he will "very soon meet and shake hands in MESOPOTAMIA."

GENERAL.

The following short biography of NUR ED DIN PASHA is taken from a CONSTANTINOPLE newspaper "Tasvir-i-Efkia" of 8-12-15. NUR ED DIN PASHA. Son of Mushir Ibrahim Pasha (Wali of Tripoli). Born Brussa 1875. Diploma Brussa Secondary and Military Schools. 2nd Lieutenant 1st Army (Departmental) Corps. A. D. C. to Mushir (Osman Pasha 1898) whom he accompanied to SALONICA. The A. D. C. to Sultan at CONSTANTINOPLE. Attached for 2 years to the staff with his father who was O. C. 9th Division in SEYRUZ. In 1908 accompanied his father who was O. C. III Army Corps at SALONICA. Was made KAIMIKAM (Governor of Makri Kone) after the constitution. He was then in command of a Regiment and sent to KIRK KILLISAH. Thence he went with his Regiment to the YEMEN. Promoted to a Division and after two years command returned to CONSTANTINOPLE. Was sent to ADRIANOPLE as C. C. a Division for a year. He was then made Wali of BAGDAD and G.O. C. IRAQ.

of present

The following is an estimate numbers and distribution of Turkish Guns on TIGRIS :-

KUT - SHUMRAN.

45th Field Artillery Regiment	8 (15pr)
1 Battery, 2nd Field Artillery Regiment	4 Q. F. (14pr)
1 Mountain Battalion 13th Army Corps, plus 1	section 10 (2 of them (Q.F. 11pr)
1 Heavy Battery	4
	<hr/> 26 (6 Q.F.)

SINN, (R. bank)

35th Field Artillery Regiment	8 (6 Q.F.)
2nd Field Artillery Regiment (less 1 Battery)	4 Q.F. (14pr)
1 Mountain Battalion 13th Army Corps less 1	section 6 Q.F. (11pr)
1 Heavy gun	1
1 18-pr. Q. F.	1
	<hr/> 20 (16 Q.F.)

HANNAH.

3rd Field Artillery Regiment (less 1 battery)	4 Q. F. (14pr)
5th " "	8 " "
2 Mountain Batteries 18th Army Corps	16 (7Q.F. 11pr)
1 Section Gas (Howitzer) Batteries	2
	<u>30</u> (19 Q. F.)

Grand Total 76 (41 Q. F.)

Grand Total has been built up thus :-

At Ctesiphon	38
Arrived with 51st Division (22-11-15)	
8 Q. F.	8
Arrived immediately after the 51st Division	
8 mountain guns	8
Arrived with 52nd Division, (18-12-15)	9
Arrived BAGDAD, (5-1-16)?	12 Q. F.
Arrived BAGDAD, (17-12-15) 2 Horse arty, Batteries	Q. F. 8

83

Less 2 captured (7-1-16) 4 knocked out at
KUT, and 1 at SHEIKH SAAD

7

Remainder

76TURKEY.MITYLENE 7th March, 1916.

Mitylene reports under date of 7th March that the following has been received from refugees from SMYRNA.

PROVISIONS.

The price of Petroleum in SMYRNA is L.T.2 a tin but practically not purchasable; flour extremely scarce, matches none.

According to the statement of a refugee military baker, SMYRNA bread is 60% broad beans, 40% barley, wheat and sweepings. Both military and town bread is of the same quality.

In the Christian Labour Battalions each man gets 300 drams (400 drams = 1 Oke) of bread per day. Town bread is sold at 3½ Piastres per Oke. There are no bread tickets at SMYRNA, but no family is allowed to buy more than one Oke of bread daily.

Townpeople who are sick get a special permit and are allowed to buy bread at six Piastres the Oke. This bread is 20% beans, 40% barley and 40% wheat.

Considerable stocks of flour are held in reserve by the Military Authorities.

Sugar has been reduced from 44 to 30 Piastres the Oke.

P E R S I A .

(French Foreign Office Communiqué)

The general result of information received from PERSIA is that the German propaganda is losing ground there. The munition factory installed by Germans at ISPAHAN to supply the rebels is said to have been transferred to SHIRAZ through fear of a fresh Russian attack.

S Y R I A .

DELETT ME SHAPERS.

"AL HERAL" 4-3-16 informs its readers inter alia that Hunter Pasha and Gordon Pasha have been killed by the SENUSSI who are marching on the Nile. In "Southern Egypt" the railway has been "extended to PORT SUDAN" for fear of the Sudanese.

The "Syrian Telegraphic Agency" reports under dated of 29th February that ADEN is Beleaguered by the Arabs.

"AL BALIGH" 4-3-16 declares that the frontier tribes in India are giving trouble.

"AL IKHA EL OSMANI" 4-3-16 reproduces an alleged article from the Cologne Gazette describing an apocryphal mutiny of the Indian troops on the "Banks of the Suez Canal".

Under Local News the same paper publishes an account of the visit of ENVER and DJEMAL Pashas to JERUSALEM. Each of the Ministers visited the Harem in JERUSALEM and each offered two prayers in the mosque of OMAR EL FARUKI to which ENVER presented a KORAN set with precious stones. He also visited the Xtian Holy Places by invitation from the Orthodox Patriarch and the heads of the other sects. A religious service was held there and prayers offered for the safety of the Ottoman Government which had granted freedom of conscience since time immemorial, and that it might emerge victorious from the War which it had entered for the sake of justice. Triumphant arches were erected and the various religious sects all specially celebrated the visit. "The respect and loyalty manifested by the inhabitants on the occasion of the visit of this our great leader to SYRIA and PALESTINE are worthy of special notice".

M. S. MacDonnell

Captain,
for G. S. O. (I),
The Force in Egypt.

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 INTELLIGENCE REPORT No. 497. ISMAILIA, MARCH 24th 1916.

Office of

INTELLIGENCE.

REMARKS.

INTELLIGENCE

OFFICER

KANTARA.

25/3/16.

Agent sent to El Arish and Sheikh Zowaid reports the arrival of six guns—two large ones and four small ones (these have been previously reported. F.S.) He reports the post on the northern road to have been slightly reinforced; that is to say that MAZAR has now a post of 50 - 60 soldiers. Bir el Abd 300 Turks (? F.S.) under Zaki Bey. Debabis 90 camelmen.

He says that the talk in El Arish is to the effect that, when the news of the British reconnaissance to Katia on the 18th inst came in, Sufi Pasha was ordered to lead the way out to Katia with his Arabs and deal with the English there. That he had refused to go saying that it was the duty of the Turkish and Syrian Regulars to do this and that the place of his men was two hours behind the firing line - ready to take up the pursuit!

(NOTE. Named as Sufi Pasha is the head Sheikh of the Terrabin Arabs. A.W.J.B.)

Agent sent to Bir Saba reports being there on the 10th and 11th insts. While he was there troops were moving north all the time, both by train and by march route. The soldiers said that there was another war in the north and that they were going a long way beyond Jerusalem.

The state of health of the troops in Saba is very bad. 50 to 80 men are buried every day. The sickness is very sudden and death comes very quickly. Agent said sickness was called 'KORERI'

(I don't know this - possibly cholera? F.S.)

He says that the movement of troops northwards is due to orders issued by Enver Pasha.

At Arish he reports 9 ships - 32 Tents - 9 stores. These stores contain supplies of all sorts and are made of wood and palm leaf thatch. 5 are in the town and 4 out between the town and El Fagira.

He does not think that there are more than 100 soldiers now in El Arish. He says that Zaki Bey has now an English Chestnut horse caught in the desert by two Messaid Arabs.

(This probably is the horse mentioned in the letter sent in by Mahmud offendi. F.S.) Mahmud Eff: El Kurdi is now at Hod close to Bir Abu Afein and has with him 10 camelmen and 5 infantry soldiers. Agent suggests that troops at these advanced posts are very nervous and are fearful even of lighting fires at night. They seem to be ready to evacuate the northern road at any sign of a British advance.

Agent sent to Saba via Gebel Libni reports the following itinerary:-

9th inst ZUGBA
 10th BIR MALHA, S. of MAZAR.
 11th " ABERIG EL GINDI
 12th " KOSSAIMA
 13th " AUJA
 14th " ASLUJ
 15th " SABA
 16th " "
 17th " "
 18th " EL ARISH
 19th " MAZAR.
 20th " ZUGBA
 21st " ABU HAMRA
 22nd " KANTARA.

Agent says he found parties of armed Arabs near Libni and also

SECRET, INTELLIGENCE REPORT No. 407, ISMAILIA, MARCH 24th 1916. (PAGE 2.)

in Gebel Helal. Those latter stopped him but accepted his story that he was searching for a lost camel and he stayed the night with them. At the former there were 13 to 15 Arabs, at the latter place about the same number and 3 Turks with them. They were all without food and very hungry. They were openly talking against the Turks. He reports no activity at Kossaima, and at Auja he only saw 60 to 70 soldiers. At Khalassa was a small post who were living in dug outs in the hill side. They had 7 riding camels and 2 horses. At Saba he saw 35 Germans and a number of Turks. A train full of troops left while he was there. He saw 3 guns under canvas covers. He did not think that there were more than 800 soldiers left in Saba. At Arish he reports not more than 100 soldiers. At Mazar he reports 2 Turks, 5 Arabishia, 2 Sawarka, 3 Mossaid Arabs.

Agent sent to Bir Saba via Khan Yunis reports as follows:-
BIR EL MAZAR 10th inst. Nothing to report.

EL ARISH 11th. He says that there are six "Taburs" of 1,000 men each.

KHAN YUNIS 12th. He found 2,000 more. 3

AT SABA 14th to 16th. There were he thought about 3,000 soldiers. He heard, there, that the big Sheikhs had been ordered to bring all their tribesmen into Saba on the 3rd of April (Approx) when an active offensive against the English was to commence.

AUJA 17th. He says that trains now run into Auja ???
On his way back down the wadi El Arish and about 4 hours from the town he came across 30 tents and a number of labourers engaged in making a bridge for the railway. At El Arish on his return journey he saw a new "Tabur" marching in. They were Turks and wearing astrakhan head-dresses. While there, he heard that a Tabur was to be moved up to Bir Mazar.
(I imagine that this man has been put up to make the foregoing report, by the Turks. I had previously considered him to be a reliable agent. F.S.)

Agent working south at Maghara reports a post of 9 men (2 Ayayda, remainder Torrabin and Huitat) with a Turkish Officer at Abu Ratima, about one hour N.W. of Gebel Hamaiyir. This Officer told agent that the Turkish Army was as countless as the sand and that large bodies were camped at Es Sirr and Magdhaba on the wadi El Arish. Hearing this agent went to those places. He found nothing at Es Sirr and only 20 men at Magdhaba. The water at this place was plentiful.
(This agent is reliable and his story heightens the impression that the Turks are trying hard to make us believe that they are still in force and coming on. F.S.)

Agent who had been to Bir Saba on the 15th inst says that the place is full of soldiers. He heard that Sufi Pasha was giving out to his Arabs that they were to be ready to move in 20 days time and were all to collect at Saba. It was not known among the Arabs whether after this concentration the force was to be moved north or west. The sickness at Saba is very bad. Men attacked die within two or three days. Agent had gone on to Auja. He saw no engine on the road there, but there were number of soldiers perhaps 2 "Taburs". He reports 7 "Taburs" at El Arish on the 17th inst. (This man is not very reliable. F.S.)

An Agent who had not been out informed me that he had heard that 2 Taburs of Germans (in this case about 2,000) had arrived at Saba, but that they had been sent back north again and had left on the 10th inst. He confirmed hearing the report that.

Sufi Pasha had ordered all his men to collect at Saba at the end of the month.

Agent makes the following report:-

HOD EL BAYUD. There are now 19 wells opened up and 12 large drinking troughs for animals made of wood.

BIR EL MAZAR. 4 Tents - 8 soldiers - many stacks of wood - 3 of the wells have pumps.

BIR MOSEIFIG. Saw nothing.

BIR EL ABD. 2 tents - a large enclosure for stores - 8 wells dug out. - only saw 3 soldiers.

BIR ABU AFEIN. Saw nothing.

He heard while at Mazar that a great number of soldiers had been collected at Khan Yunis, but that they had been recalled by telegram and had marched back to Jerusalem.

(This man is usually accurate.)

Agent sent to Bir Mazar reports the post there to consist of about 45 Syrian Infantry. There is one tent there and a large square store, which is empty. Men of the post said that Zaki Bey had told them that 2 Taburs were coming up to Mazar to reinforce them.

He says that the post at Bir el Abd is about 20 - 30 men.

AGENT
ISMAILIA
24/3/16.

Left Ismailia on 18th inst for Hassana.

KATAIB EL KHEIL 18th. Nothing.

GEBEL GEDEIRA. 19th. Fresh tracks of 4 camelmenn going north.

WADI EL HEGATIB { Nothing to report.

WADI EL MAGHAZA { 20th No patrols nor workmen

WADI RODE SALEM { seen on the road.

WADI KHAMARA {

HASSANA 21st. Agent heard that the day before he reached Hassana, a number of soldiers had left for Saba by motor car. He himself saw 2 motor cars carrying 15 to 20 men each, leave for the east on the 21st. Agent estimates the number left at about 900. He saw 50 camels laden with boxes leave for Auja. There were besides some 150 camels tethered in lines.

He saw a patrol of 6 soldiers wearing dark green caps, and 3 Arab guides under an Officer called Khidr Eff arrive from Es Sirr. About half the soldiers at Hassana were wearing Arab head-dress, of the remainder some were wearing dark green, and others black astrakhan caps.

The reservoir is full of water and has a roof of waterproof sheeting erected over it. The black heap is charcoal and in the building close to the east of the heap are 4 incinerators. An anti-aircraft gun on a stand is among the small hills close to and to the S.E. of the camp (near the square 3 roofed building).

3 guns are to the north of the four buildings N. of the reservoir.

Bahgat Pasha was at Hassana.

Agent heard that:-

(1) The Army at Bir Saba had been sent north.

(2) The wrecked aeroplane had been brought to Hassana and sent thence east in a motor trolley.

Agent returned via wadi Khamara, wadi Dhalma to Gebel el Tassa, seeing nothing worth reporting.

NOTE. (This is a reliable agent. A.W.J.B.)

SUEZ TELEGRAPH OFFICE 24/3/16 9,36 a.m.

Tor telegraph line interrupted since this morning 7 a.m.

LATER. Disconnection localised between Shatt and Abu Zenima.

APPENDIX

Ma 23

page 310.

CONFIDENTIAL.No 55.INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.23th March 1916.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

1. SITUATION IN TURKEY.
2. EXTRACT FROM A GREEK PAPER ON THE SITUATION IN
TURKEY.

Mr. L. H. C.
9/2

SITUATION IN TURKEY.

From all the evidence we have it would appear that the Turkish General Staff never expected such a complete debacle as has occurred in the Caucasus, or they would never have left their communications in such a backward state.

They are undoubtedly endeavouring now to remedy defects, and it is reported that their railroad towards ERZINJAN has reached YOZGAD, but it is too late for them to pass their reinforcements quickly to the front.

In fact so slow is the movement that it seems highly improbable that they will be able to stop the Russians East of the line TREDIZOND - ERZINJAN - DIARBEHR.

At present we may say that the Turkish Army is located in six main areas, The CAUCASUS, MESSOPOTAMIA & SYRIA, THRACE, GALLIPOLI, and WESTERN ANATOLIA. Of these the last three are practically garrisons, and from them reinforcements would naturally be drawn. But the surprising factor is the withdrawal of the army from SYRIA. We have evidence that nearly all the BIR SABA troops have gone N., the garrisons of SINAI are reduced and that H.Q. of the Syrian Army have moved from DAMASCUS to ALEPPO. This would imply an abandonment of the Egyptian Expedition at any rate temporarily and plays our game. It is evidence of the straits that the Turks are in. Of course ALEPPO is the absolutely vital point on the communication with MESSOPOTAMIA and SYRIA, but there are indications that the Turks are beginning to foresee the possibility of having to make their final stand as far back as on the line KAISARIYEH - ANGORA, covering their railway system in ANATOLIA. Wherever the final defensive line against the Russians may be, it will undoubtedly be pivoted on some point in front of KONIA, with the configuration of the TAURUS and ANTI TAURUS protecting the right flank, and by

3 swinging the left back towards YOZGAD or AFGORA a position on the line KAISARIAD - YOZGAD becomes a very strong one.

The retiring army in the Caucasus consists, as has already been said (I.S. No. 46 of 17th inst. p. 263) of the remains of Divisions 17, 18, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 37. We have now fairly definite information that Divisions 5, 10, 11, 15, 42, 43 and 44 form the bulk of the reinforcements which have been, or are being despatched. Of these the 5th Division was at RAS-EL-AIN on March 1st, and in view of the situation it was hardly likely that it was going to MESOPOTAMIA. The 10th Div. was at ERZINGAN on 5th March, and is no doubt in the firing line. The 11th Div. is now certainly in the CAUCASUS. Its 97th Regt. is reported from Russian sources to have been engaged near MANAKHATUN (March 20th) and other evidence points to this Division leaving Europe for the CAUCASUS at the end of February. A report states that between Feb. 20th and 26th, something like 15,000 men were transported by ferry to HAIDAR PASHA. This movement corresponds with the reported arrival of the 11th and 15th Divisions from the Peninsula. There are very conflicting reports about the 12th Division, but the latest evidence rather points to the fact that it has not left Europe. The 13th Div. may after all, not have been diverted at the last moment to DITLIS, and may be the unidentified Division whose arrival is signalled from BAGHDAD. The 14th Div. is reported to be still in THRACE, but ordered to ASIA. No more can be said with certainty. The 15th Div. from CEHAK passed through CONSTANTINOPLE, going to ASIA, at the end of February, but it has not yet materialized on the CAUCASUS Front. As regards 42nd and 43rd Divisions there is no further confirmation of the report that they had reached SIVAS. With regard to the remaining Divisions, about which there is no new information, 1, 4, 6, 14 and 16 may be assumed to be still in THRACE, while 7, 8, and 9 are almost certainly still there, 24, 25 & 26 are still in GALLIPOLI, and also 19, as far as we know. In MESOPOTAMIA there are Divs. 2, 35, 38, 45, 51, 52, and possibly one other unidentified, very likely 13, as stated above. In ARABIA, Divisions 21, 22, 30 and 40.

In SYRIA, Divisions 3 and 23. (In ALEXANDRETTA possibly 41).

In SMYRNA and MENEMEN and along ANATOLIAN COAST, total about 600,000 troops in this district, i.e. Divs. 46, and parts of 46, 47 and 49, some of which have had to find drafts for the CAUCASUS.

A 3rd Cavalry Division has been reported near ERZINGAN. It consists of 7th and 8th Light Cavalry and 22nd Regular Cavalry.

EXTRACTS FROM A GREEK PAPER ON THE SITUATION IN TURKEY.

The following extracts from an account of the situation in Turkey is taken from the Greek paper "PATRIS" and is published with all reserve.

"The Turkish General Staff is in despair at finding it impossible to send reinforcements to the retreating troops from the districts of ERZERUM and TREBIZOND. The condition of the Turkish Army is defined by foreign Military Circles as follows:- It is impossible to detach even a single regiment from the troops in THRACE. Not only is this opinion expressed by the Staff, but also by the Turkish Government, which is under the impression that the friendship of BULGARIA must be treated with suspicion, a proof of which is the non-presenting of the Turco-Bulgarian treaty to the Turkish Parliament, and the declarations of Mr. Radoslavoff to the Sobranie, in relation to this same treaty. Therefore it is impossible to remove any troops from Thrace, and not only for the above reasons, but also to ensure the safety of the Young Turks at CONSTANTINOPLE, who are afraid of a movement on the part of their political enemies, which might break out at any moment.

At SMYRNA, all along the coast from the Gulf of ADRAITYT to ADALIA, there are 60,000 to 70,000 troops. No troops can be moved from these points, because the Turks are afraid of a disembarkation of Allied Troops at different places, which would create a panic and disorders amongst the Turkish population. X X X X

~~~~~  
X X The Syrian troops also cannot turn towards SIVAS, and other



near lying districts, firstly on account of want of communications, and secondly for fear of a rebellion among the Arab Tribes. Thirdly for fear of a disembarkation of Anglo-French Forces at Alexandretta, in SYRIA, which would cut off every communication and contact with CONSTANTINOPOLE. Of necessity therefore the retreat of the troops will be carried out without help, a desperate and aimless struggle, until they reach a likely rallying point in the interior of Asia Minor, that is a position extending from near KONIA to TREBIZOND, or perhaps to SIVAS or ANGORA.

This is the condition of Turkish Military matters, according to purely military Authorities; obligatory therefore are the so-called intentions of the peace-making group, which is headed in CONSTANTINOPOLE by Talaat Bey, and in Smyrna by Rahmi Bey, who are working feverishly to make a separate peace and to save at least the greater portion of the ASIA MINOR Empire. It is a fact that Turkish Envoys have met English and French representatives. The question that will now arise will be the attitude that Russia will take in connection with these plans. According to our certain information, the Russians are raising objections to these plans, as they do not wish to discuss peace with Turkey, until they have become the Military Masters of the Black Sea Coast, and of the interior from the line ERZERUM - KONIA - ALEXANDRETTA. In spite of this representations are being made that the conquered cities of ERZERUM and BITLIS should be sufficient to make the Turks open the DARDANELLES, which would more than help in the General War, and help Russia to obtain ammunition and other military necessities.

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SECRET.

CAIRO.

24th March, 1916.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

Extracts from B. E. A. & U. G. H. Q. Intelligence.

TURKEY.

Extracts from Turkish Press.

Effects of the Allied Blockade in W and S. W. ANATOLIA.

PERSIA.

Strength of Russian Forces in Persia.

*ms/ll*  
*27/3/16.*



# BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EXTRACTS from B. E. A. & U. G. H. Q. Intelligence  
Summary dated 10th January, 1916.

One of our columns attacked the enemy force at MUFUNGANI on the coast on the 10th inst. The enemy were driven back out of the village, but still occupy MUFUNGANI, opposite MWELE.

Elsewhere, the enemy are still in occupation of KASIGAU, they have a small picket at MUYUNI West, 2 Companies at SPRINGETI Camp and a small post at LANJORO DRIFT. Latest reports show only 2 Companies at TAVETA, but there must be another 5 Companies, probably at MUSHI.

Slight patrol activity in UGANDA.

During the period there has been nothing of note, and the enemy has shown a distinct falling off in their activity against the Uganda Railway, three bombs having been laid, only one of which was partially successful.

Extracts from B. E. A. & U. G. H. Q. Intelligence  
Summary dated 2nd February, 1916.

All quiet along whole length of frontier. We have advanced our railway to near NJORO Drift, only eight miles East of TAVETA. All attempts by the enemy to hinder this advance have met with failure.

The enemy have evacuated KASIGAU. We have occupied LONGIDO Hill (30 miles N. W. of KILIMANJARO).

There have been no attempts on the Uganda Railway during this period.

The Intelligence Section C. H. Q. of the B. E. A. and Uganda Force estimates the strength of the enemy forces in German East Africa as follows, under date 31/1/1916.

|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Europeans         | 1,660         |
| Askaris (i.e.     |               |
| Native troops)    | 12,700        |
| Native Levies and |               |
| Recruits          | 2,200         |
|                   | <u>16,560</u> |

The great majority of these are armed with magazine rifles.

The enemy has now probably 74 serviceable machine guns, 8 of which were captured from us.

The number of Germans and Austrians in German E. Africa on 15/1/1916 is estimated at 5,277. Deducting 2,000 for women and children, 700 as unfit or required by Railway, medical services, telegraphs etc, and 233 killed and prisoners since the outbreak of the war a total of 2,344 is left, or, after subtracting a further 10% for sick or permanently disabled, 2,110. To these must be added a few neutrals, known to be fighting with the enemy.



Page 2 of this Summary has been destroyed  
by instructions of CAIRO.



3.

EFFECTS OF THE ALLIED BLOCKADE IN W AND S. W. ANATOLIA.

GENERAL CONDITIONS:- The following information is collected from agents and refugees arriving in KALYMNOS during January. It may serve to illustrate the effects of the actual blockade, and suggest further measures.

Throughout the past year, and especially lately, supplies of all kinds have been commandeered, for the Army, and also (as is believed locally) for transmission to EUROPE. Labour is very scarce, and much land remains unsown, especially Turkish properties: but the Christians who paid exemption money are now being warned for service, and told that their payments are being held for them in Government Stock, so that it is likely that the Christian farms will suffer as severely before long. Labour-battalions have been used to gather the olive crop of deserted Christian Farms near AIVALI, and other labourers have been told off for tobacco planting, which is said to be going on on a large scale. There is great shortage of seed corn, but in this respect districts differ. The olive crop was poor both in 1915 and 1914, and this winter the winter crops have mostly failed.

PRICES AND SUPPLIES.

Wheat at MILAS is about 9 piastres an oke (say 40 lbs per kilo) and bread at DENIZLI is 8 piastres. Figs are being eaten by the poorer Greeks in BUDRUM, for want of bread. Here in KALYMNOS we are paying 5 piastres, in spite of short supply and a ring of corn merchants.

Barley and Oats:- no market, though they say there is some supply locally. There is no rice at all.

MEAT at MILAS and SOKIA is at 3-3½ piastres an oke; i.e. cheaper than Kos (6 piastres) and KALYMNOS (8 piastres) but the export of cattle is prohibited (except under special licence) and large cattle are "sealed" and registered. Many animals have been commandeered for food, as well as for transport.

Coffee at MILAS is 54 piastres the oke.

Sugar " " is more: last quoted price was 24 piastres. There is said to be some sugar now at SMYRNA.

Petroleum at MILAS is 32 francs per tin.

Soda at MILAS is 15 piastres the oke: the supply is running out, and offers are being made for consignments of contraband soda. They say it is wanted for soap; and in a basket of commodities which I was asked lately to send into ANATOLIA I found a large bar of common Greek soap, together with coffee and sugar.

Soda should be absolute contraband and regularly searched for by the patrols.



On the other hand a few commodities are abundant, and the Turks have issued a list of permitted-exports, as follows :-

Olive oil: there are 100,000 kantars at MILAS, and oil is being sent from MILAS to AEDIN? where the price is 8 piastres.

Olive kernels : though small outside demand, except for fuel. The S. S. AEGAION passed to-day (from RHODES to PIRAEUS) burning olive kernels instead of coal, she was said to be making 5 knots an hour, with nothing to spare for emergencies.

Oats, walnuts, Honey, wax and silk are also said to be on the free list.

Totally prohibited for export (besides cattle) are Wood and Pine bark.

PROPAGANDA:- Turkish officers are convinced that the war will be over in March. An important officer at MILAS, Veli Bay, said the war was a struggle for supplies; and that the Armenians were massacred for sending corn to RUSSIA. The Greeks are further told that if they keep quiet now (Still more if they help the Turks) they will presently be very rich. They are leniently treated at present and all is very quiet; Greek influence is evidently counted on to restrain the refugees from forming irregular bands, for I am told that "if irregular are used, the troops will come back to the coast districts". The patrol steamers are explained to the people as "protecting the Turks", which is more nearly true than they know, so long as our blockade remains defensive. The enemy's coast garrison has certainly been greatly reduced since the autumn, and the nearest large force seems to be at DENIZLI (about 50,000 men constantly changing) Many wounded men from the Straits are to be seen, and one informant says that the Straits Garrison, or a large part of it, is distributed in these western districts for reorganization; but I cannot hear of any large force nearer than DENIZLI.

#### RAILWAY.

The AIDIN railway is said to be working under great difficulties with a train for civil requirements every twenty days; but it is stated that coal is expected from EUROPE.

#### NOTE BY CAIRO.

This report affords interesting evidence of the increasing economic pressure exercised by the state of war and the Allied Blockade on what is naturally the richest and most productive province of TURKEY.

General insecurity together with shortage of labour and of seed corn have seriously reduced production; reckless requisitioning of supplies and the closing of foreign markets have destroyed the purchasing power of the population and concurrently there has been an enormous increase in the price of everything except such local products as can no longer be exported, such as fruit, olive oil and cattle.



The price of bread at DENIZLI - 8 piastres the oke compares unfavourably with the price now paid at CONSTANTINOPLE namely 6 piastres the oke as against the normal price of 11/3 to 1 1/2 piastres the oke, and must be regarded as a famine rate, while rice which is regarded as almost a necessary of life by the Turkish population is not to be procured at all. Absolute starvation is not to be apprehended, as in this fertile region some substitute for the ordinary foodstuff can almost always be found, but general discontent and suffering caused by malnutrition appear to be inevitable if the state of war is prolonged.

Information of two passengers who left CONSTANTINOPLE 24th February.

SUPPLIES:- There is no gas in the streets or houses, and electric trams run irregularly. The water supply is good.

The S. S. "RODOSTO" and "DOBROVINK" arrived with coal from ZUNGULDAK during the week previous to informants' departure from CONSTANTINOPLE; only half cargoes, however were brought.

Flour arrives from the Black Sea about twice weekly.

Sailing vessels and the S. S. "FLORIDA" now under the Spanish flag, run between VARNA and CONSTANTINOPLE with ammunition and flour. Sailing vessels from KUSTENDJI bring petroleum, and smaller craft from PANDERMA and MUDAMIA arrive with (?olive) oil.

PRICES.

|                |       |                        |
|----------------|-------|------------------------|
| Charcoal       | 100   | parasper oke.          |
| Wood           | 90    | Piastres per cheke.    |
| Rice           | 24    | " " oke                |
| Macaroni       | 20    | " " "                  |
| Oil            | 28/30 | " " "                  |
| Butter         | 60    | " " "                  |
| Cooking butter | 40    | " " "                  |
| Cheese (white) | 24    | " " "                  |
| do (casher)    | 45    | " " "                  |
| Sugar          | 30/35 | " " "                  |
| Meat           | 18    | " " "                  |
| Petroleum      | 180   | " " tin                |
| Bread - black  | 60    | parasper 100 dram loaf |
|                |       | - 6 piastres per oke.  |
| Matches        |       | 1 piastre per box.     |
| Candles        |       | None.                  |

TURCO - BRITISH RELATIONS

Informant (British) stated that he has recently had several conversations with Turkish Officers whom he knew previously to the war. During the DARDANELLES operations these Officers did not acknowledge informant, but lately have become friendly to a marked degree, and on several occasions have asked "when will TURKEY and ENGLAND be friends again?"



NOTE BY CAIRO.

For purposes of comparison the following list of prices in the European Quarter, Pera in October 1914 when prices had already risen somewhat, is given here.

|                 |                                                                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Charcoal        | 60 to 80 paras per oke (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs)                                       |
| Wood            | 45 P. T. (7s 6d) per cheke (load)                                                  |
| Rice            | from 8 p.t. (1s 4d) per oke (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs)                                  |
| Macaroni        | 6 P.T. per oke                                                                     |
| Oil             | 18 20 P.T. " "                                                                     |
| Butter          | 32 P.T. (best quality) per oke                                                     |
| Cooking Butter  | 18 P.T. (best imported) " "                                                        |
| Cheese (casher) | 28 P.T. " "                                                                        |
| Sugar           | 3 to 6 P.T. (according to quality) per oke.                                        |
| Meat            | 8 to 12 P.T. (according to per oke. quality)                                       |
| Bread (white)   | 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ P.T. per oke.<br>(i.e. 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d to 3d) |

Turkish Official Communique.

The following Turkish official Communique is published for enlightenment rather than for information.

"On 29th February a British warship penetrated the Gulf of AKABA to the E. of the SINAI Peninsula, bombarded our camp situated on the coast and landed about 300 men. Our troops organised their resistance and after a six hour fight drove the enemy from the beach. A second attempt on his part was equally unsuccessful.

Supplementary to the preceding bulletin concerning the YEMEN front, it is stated that on the last fight between SHEIKH OSMAN and LAHDJ (E of ADEN) the enemy had 160 dead among them an English General in command of the landing force.

*Philip D. Farley*

Captain,  
for G. S. O. (I),  
The Force in Egypt.