

AWM4

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

Artillery

Item number: 13/16/3

Title: Headquarters, Imperial Mounted
Divisional Artillery

April 1917



AWM4-13/16/3

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CONFIDENTIAL

War Dairy
of

Royal Artillery Head Quarters Imperial Mounted Division

From 1st April 1917 to 30th April 17.

Volume No III

H28
- APR 1917

April 1917

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 21

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.)

Head Quarters
Royal artillery
Imperial Mounted Division

629

APR 1917

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
DEIR EL-BELAH	2 nd 4/17		B. G. R. A. Desert Column inspected Div. Amm Column	1st P.
"	3 rd		2 nd Echelon Camel Ammunition Column formed under Lt C. A. M. MILLER	1st P.
"	4		Reconnaissance	1st P.
"	7		CAPT H. M. C. POLLOCK RFA joined for duty	1st P.
"	9		Duties of Staff Capt RA taken over by CAPT H. M. C. POLLOCK RFA.	1st P.
"	10		Reconnaissance to ABASAN-EL-KEBIR	1st P.
"	11		Inspection of Batteries	1st P.
"	12		Reconnaissance of WADI GHUZZE	1st P.
"	13		CAPT P. FORRESTER left for B/261 st BDE RFA for duty.	1st P.
"			Reconnaissance of TEL-EL-JEMMI by GSO 1 IMB	1st P.
"			JAC increased by 192 000 Rds SAA now carrying total of 866,000 SAA	1st P.
"			4 12 16 Rds 18 Pdr 25% H.E.	1st P.
"	14		2 nd Echelon. Camel AMM COLUMN increased to carry further 104 000 Rds SAA. /w L.A.M.B	1st P.
"			and Motor Car Light Patrol Total rounds now carried in this unit 704 000 SAA.	1st P.
"	15		Lieut J. H. R. THOMPSON to Command 2 nd ECHELON CAMEL AMM COL	1st P.
"			Lieut CAM MILLER to BERKS BATTERY RMA.	1st P.
"	16		Lieut T. C. L. BARNES from A BATT. H.A.C. to Command a Camel ECHELON DUMP	1st P.
"			Lieut G. H. MANSELL from A BATT H.A.C. to NOTTS BATT. RMA (Temporarily)	1st P.
"	16		DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY marched to TEL-EL-JEMMI to concentrate for action against	See appendix
"			TURKISH FORCES on ASEIFERIYEH ATAWINEH LINE	I
"			D.A.C. marched to I in GOZ EL-TAIRE reference map RAFA 1:125,000	

April 1917

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WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
(Erase heading not required.)

Head Quarters
Royal Artillery
Imperial Mounted Divisions

Army Form C. 211
630

A 23/3
APR 1917

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TEL-EL-JEMMI	17		Carried out reconnaissance of HBBAS RIDGE & ASEIFERIYEH with BGRA Desert Column	See Appendix II report on operations 17/4/17 to 22/4/17
"	17		DIV. AMM. COLUMN. Moved to TEL-EL-JEMMI.	thul.
"	18		Carried out reconnaissance of WADI SIHAN	thul.
ABU MAILIK	19		Moved to ABU MAILIK at 0400 took up Battle HQ quarters Batteries in action WADI SIHAN, B BATT. HAC SOUTH OF WADI SIHAN	thul.
WADI SAHIA	19		Moved to WADI SAHIA to 101 E of ELMENBUR reference GAZA 1:40,000	thul.
"	20		Batteries in action in Valley WEST OF SHARTA	thul.
"	21		Registration by Batteries B HAC moved to PT 280 EAST BANK WADI SHERIA reference map BEERSHEBA 1:125000	thul.
ABASAN EL KEBIR	22		DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY moved to ABASAN-EL-KEBIR	thul.
"	24		Carried out reconnaissance SHEETAL with Battery Commanders.	thul.
"	25		Carried out reconnaissance with BGRA Desert Column	thul.
"	26		Carried out reconnaissance with BGRA on WADI GHUZZE	thul.
"	27		Reconnoitred ground between SHELALL and FARA	

April 1917.

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Head Quarters

Royal Artillery

Imperial Mounted Division

Army Form C. 21

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

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
ABASAN EL KEBIR	27/4/17		Dumped 514,000 Rds SAA. 2000 Grenades + 200 Very lights under GOC 5 th MTD BDE.	mt.
	28		Reconnoitred ground EL SHAUTH. 2 nd ECHELON CAMEL AMM col Dumped 704000 Rds SAA 608 Rds 18 Pdr at WELI SHEIKH NURAN under LIEUT. JHR THOMPSON B. BATT HAC moved out to EL SHAUTH under GOC 5 th MTD BDE DUMPED 496 Rds 18 Pdr with this Battery making total 300 Rds per gun.	mt. mt. mt.
	29		Carried out reconnaissance with Battery Commanders.	mt.
	30		Carried out reconnaissance South of EL SHAUTH. CAPT HMCJ POLLOCK RFA appointed Staff Capt RA. IMD as from 9 th April	mt.

Carton C. R. A.
IMPERIAL MOUNTED DIVISION

APPENDIX I

Copy No. 4

Reference 1/125000 Map GAZA and BEERSHEVA sheets

After Order to DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY
ORDER No. 1 by COLONEL THE MARQUESS
OF EXETER.

COMMANDING R.A. IMPERIAL MOUNTED DIVISION.

Today is 9/1st day

1. In consequence of the G.O.C. right infantry division feeling somewhat anxious regarding the safety of his right flank during his attack on SHEIKH ABBAS in the early hours of 9/1st day, the following additional orders are issued:-
Having established the outpost line ~~as detailed in Order No. 1~~ the G.O.C. 3rd A.L.H. Brigade will send one Regiment via the crossing at the second E at EL MENDUR so as to arrive in the neighbourhood of KH. EL ASHIFERIEH by 0415 on first day. The G.O.C. 3rd A.L.H. Brigade will be ready to operate with the remainder of the Brigade including Notts Battery R.H.A., towards ASHIFERIEH to ensure protection to the right flank of the infantry during the attack on SHEIKH ABBAS. Notts Battery R.H.A. will move up to the 3rd Brigade Headquarters by 1900 and will come under orders of G.O.C. 3rd Brigade from that hour. G.C. Notts Battery will report at once to G.O.C. 3rd Brigade for orders.
The Divisional Artillery less Notts Battery R.H.A. will assemble at H.10 S.1 (reference Map GAZA (X) 1/40000) (well No. 13 is in S.E. corner of this field) at 2200 in mass facing South, Berks on right A/H.A.C. centre B/H.A.C. left. Markers will meet Staff Capt R.A. at Well No. 13 at 2200.
The Division less Notts Battery will march via H railway crossing at DEIR EL BELAH to TEL EL JEMMI under command of Major G.C. Mayall G.C. Berks R.H.A.
2. Place for orderlies to report as detailed in Divisional Artillery Order No. 1 para 13 is cancelled, these orderlies will report Mounted and rationed to H.Q.R.A. DEIR EL BELAH at 1700 today.
Units will send men for water convoy at 1600 today.
When bulk forage issue ceases 4 G.S. Wagons with 4 horse teams will report to 2nd Echelon Camel ammunition dump DEIR EL BELAH and will load 80000 rds S.A.A., and will be sent to report to G.C. D.A.C. and join this unit.
When G.C. D.A.C. learns that the forage convoy is no longer required he will send an orderly to 2nd Echelon Camel ammunition dump at DEIR EL BELAH to direct these vehicles to D.A.C.

Issued at 1300 18/4/17

Copy No. 1 A/H.A.C.
2 B/H.A.C.
3 Berks
4 Notts
5 D.A.C.

6 2nd Echelon Ammun
7)
8) War Diary
9 C.R.A.
10 File

Harry D. D. D. Capt.
Staff Captain R.A. F.M.D.

APPENDIX I

A 23/6

SECRET

Copy No.

APR 1917

DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY ORDER NO.1

By

COLONEL THE MARQUESS OF EXETER COMMANDING R.A.
IMPERIAL MOUNTED DIVISION.

In the Field,
15/4/17

1. Enemy forces are estimated at about
1500 - 2000 Cavalry
60 - 70 Guns
20000 - 25000 Infantry
holding an extended line from SHERIA through HAREIRA to GAZA. A small reserve is in the AKRA area.
2. The G.O.C. Eastern Force intends to occupy the MANSURA SHEIKH ABAS RIDGE on the first day.
3. The role allotted to the Desert Column is:-
(a) To demonstrate against HAREIRA in such a manner as to prevent the enemy there from detaching troops towards GAZA on the first day.
(b) To protect the right flank of the 54th Division which will be attacking SHEIKH ABAS.
4. To fulfil this role:-
(a) The A & N.Z. Mounted Div is to move forward against HAREIRA from SHELLAL to threaten that place, to block the road from BIR SABA and to cover the WADI GHUZZE from SHELLAL to KARIM ABU EL HISSIA.
(b) The I.C. Brigade remain at ABASAN EL KESIR.
5. The Imperial Mounted Division less 5th Mounted Brigade
(a) Will concentrate about TEL EL JEMMI at 0430 on the 1st day.
(b) The Division will be ready to operate against the flank of any hostile movement from KESH EL ATANINNI on SHEIKH ABAS.
(c) The 5th Mounted Brigade will cross the WADI GHUZZE at TEL EL JEMMI and will move up the WADI SHERIA in order to surprise and capture the enemy outpost at KHERK at daylight on the 1st day. The strength of this outpost is reported at one squadron. At the same time the 5th Mounted Brigade will detail a special Officers patrol supported by a Squadron towards KH ZUMMARAH, when this officers patrol will move rapidly to the main GAZA BIR SABA ROAD and destroy as much of the telegraph line there as possible before daylight. After the destruction of the KHERK outpost the 5th Mounted Brigade will occupy the general line KH.ERK EL MURKHEIL - KH. - EL ASHIFERIYEH with small posts the remainder of the Bde being employed in preparing as many crossing places for wheels as possible between KHERK and EL MENDUR over the WADI SHERIA.
6. (a) Batteries will assemble at a position of assembly and will march out in column of route in the following order:-
Barks, A/M.A.C., B/M.A.C., and Hotts time and place to be notified later and proceed to TEL EL JEMMI via Desert Column Road via EL IZRAAIN and will bivouac in the sites allotted.
(b) Hotts Battery will hold itself ready to move in support of the outpost Brigade if ~~called~~ on to do so.
(c) B Battery M.A.C. will remain ready on the first day to join the 5th Mounted Brigade when required by the G.O.C. Brigade.
(d) The wheeled echelon of the Divisional Ammunition Column will move and park about the I in GOZ EL TAIRE where the Desert Column route enters the Hills, at 0615 on the first day. A representative will remain at Divisional Headquarters day and night for orders. The D.A.C. will water its horses at DEIR EL BELAH under orders from the Division. Water for the personnel will be sent from DEIR EL BELAH. If the D.A.C. moves an orderly will be sent at once to R.A. Divisional Headquarters immediately on arrival on the new position, this orderly will remain at R.A. Headquarters and the orderly already at R.A. Headquarters will return to the D.A.C. A cable communication will be established by I.M.D. Signals between D.A.C. at the I in GOZ EL TAIRE and Divisional Headquarters at TEL EL JEMMI. The D.A.C. Commander will by this means keep the G.R.A. informed of any issue of Gun and S.A.A. or Very lights immediately it takes place. Signals will supply the operator at both ends of the cable and will patrol the line. Should telephone communication fail Mounted Orderlies will be

SECRET 2

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- used for this purpose.
- D.A.C. will send a representative to the telephone exchange at ABASAN EL KEBIR to report to C.O. Signals Desert Column Exchange
- (e) The Camel Echelon of the D.A.C. will remain at DEIR EL BELAH and will be moved forward to replenish as required under orders of Desert Column.
- (f) Ammunition can be drawn from any of the following dumps:-
SHIKH NERAN, SIR ABU, UM THIBIG, DEIR EL BELAH.
7. On arrival at TEL EL JEMMI the Field Squadron will proceed to KARIM ABU EL HISSIA where it will develop water for horses and erect troughs. These will be erected down stream of the drinking water supply of the A&M.Z Mounted Division. The horses of the Division will pass to water in rotation as the situation admits, commencing with the 3rd A.L.S. Sds. The only horses which will be watered at TEL EL JEMMI will be those of the 5th Mounted Sds. The Divisional Water Officer will be at TEL EL JEMMI where he will superintend the distribution of drinking and horses water.
 8. Cable communications are to be established by Signals Desert Col between ABASAN and TEL EL JEMMI.
Visual as well as cable communications will be established between Divisional and outpost Brigade Headquarters. The latter will be transferred to 5th Mounted Brigade Headquarters as soon as their line from ENK to A SHEFENIYEH is in position
 - 8a. As long as the Division remains at TEL EL JEMMI S/T sets of Brigades will remain under orders of C.O. Signals Squadron and will move by his orders at the request of S.O.C. Brigades.
 9. Desert Column Motor Ambulances will be at ABASAN EL KEBIR early on the morning of the 1st day so as to operate either to SHELLAL or JEMMI. Imperial Mounted Division Motor Ambulances will be at JEMMI EARLY on the morning of the 1st day and will be prepared prepared to cross the WADI to assist the 5th Brigade if required.
 10. A supply convoy will arrive at JEMMI at 1900 daily so long as the Division is situated there.
Troops will march out with the days rations and forage intact which they have drawn from the Supply depot that day.
 11. No maps other than the following will be carried into action
SYRIA JERUSALEM Sheet, 1/880000. SINAI PENINSULA Map squared. RAFA Sheet 1/125000. GAZA squared map 1/40000 and 1/125000. BEERSHEBA Sheet scale 1:125000 also PALESTINE SOUTH SHEET scale 1/125000; where possible, however, reference should be made to 1/250000 sheet.
 12. Divisional Headquarters will be at JEMMI from 1900 on 0/1st night. On 0/1st night Headquarters R.A.I.M.D. at DEIR EL BELAH will close at 1900 and will be established at TEL EL JEMMI at 1900.
 13. Each Battery will supply 1 Mounted Orderly and D.A.C. & 1 Mounted Orderly to report to R.A. Headquarters I.M.D. at TEL EL JEMMI on the night of 0/1st day at 1930 to remain with R.Q.R.A. night and day.
During an action Batteries will use every means in their power to give C.R.A. information as to their position, task, ammunition expenditure and any information likely to be of assistance to the general operations, message may be sent through Signal Squadrons attached to Brigade Headquarters but if possible separate line of communications will be organised.
 14. Batteries and D.A.C. will bivouac in an open space formation as space will permit in order to minimise as far as possible the effect of aerial attack. This also applies to wagons lines when in action

Edgewood Issued at 2630 15/4/17

Copy No. 1 A/H.A.C.
2 B/H.A.C.
3 Berks R.H.A.
4 Hotts R.H.A.
5 D.A.C.

6. 2nd Echelon Amm Col
7. C.R.A.
8)
9) War Diaries
10 File

Wm. J. Galloway
Staff Captain R.A.
Imperial Mounted Division

APPENDIX II



IMPERIAL MOUNTED DIVISION.

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REPORT ON ACTION OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY I.M.D. FROM THE 16th to 22nd APRIL 1917.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

- 16th The Divisional Artillery less Notts Battery marched to TEL EL JEMMI at 2300 16th. I ordered the Notts Battery to march at 1700 and report to the G.O.C. 3rd A.L.H. Brigade under whose orders this Battery was placed.
- 17th At 0500 the D.A.C. moved to I in GOZ EL TAIRE (reference map RAFA 1:125000) 2 1/2 miles S.E. of DEIR EL BELAH. I ordered B/H.A.C. to report to G.O.C. 5th Mounted Brigade. Officer Commanding this Battery having previously made a reconnaissance of the ground to the East of the Wadi SHERIA, this Battery was brought into action at 1430 to engage the enemy who were clearly visible on SAUSAGE RIDGE working on entrenchments and fortifications. 30 rds Shrapnel and 15 H.E. were fired with good effect, this Battery returned to TEL EL JEMMI at 1830.
- The Notts Battery under orders of G.O.C. 3rd L.H. Brigade moved across the Wadi SHERIA and remained in readiness, at 1700 this Battery returned to TEL EL JEMMI.
- Berks Battery moved up to join 6th Mounted Brigade at Point 280 at 0600 and reconnoitred ground. No rounds fired. I placed A/H.A.C. at TEL EL JEMMI under orders of G.O.C. 4th A.L.H. Bde. In conjunction with B.G.R.A. Desert Column I carried out a reconnaissance of the ground at ASEFREIYEH and ABBAS RIDGE with a view to ascertaining the best positions for guns to support an attack on ATAWINEH.
- 18th D.A.C. ordered to march to TEL EL JEMMI. On the night of 17/18 I ordered Notts, Berks, and A/H.A.C. to take up positions dug in Wadi SIHAN Notts Y9 D6-2 at 2000
- Berks Y9 ~~Y9~~ D7-6 GAZA X 1:40000
A/HAC ~~Y9~~ Y3d55
- With orders to co-operate closely with the attack of the Mounted Brigades KHIRBET SIHAN EL - ATWAINEH Front zones having been allotted at 0530 on the morning of the 19th.
- 19th Fire was opened by A/HAC at about 0530 on the enemies infantry and owing to low visibility observation could not be carried out effectively from Battery positions. A F.O.O. was therefore sent forward to G.O.C. 4th A.L.H. Brigade for closer observation, targets were engaged in this manner and a rapid rate of fire was maintained at ranges varying from 5000 to 5600 until it was evident that closer support was necessary. I therefore ordered this Battery to move forward across the Wadi SIHAN towards ATAWINEH the ground having previously been reconnoitred and although a difficult operation (as this Battery had to advance across the open) a covered position was successfully occupied at Y4 4-1. Observation was carried out on the high ground 400 yards to the West continuous touch being kept with the situation by an Officer of the Battery with G.O.C. 4th A.L.H. Brigade and fire support given as required and asked for. A searching and rapid fire was maintained on the enemy reinforcements as they advanced.
- No. of rounds fired 405 shrapnel 163 H.E. Casualties 1 o.r. wounded Berks Battery having laid out lines of fire over night commenced firing at 0600. Observation was difficult owing to light, towards 0800 however targets were more clearly defined and much ground was swept. This Battery was able to co-operate effectively with an aeroplane of the R.F.C. who directed fire effectively. On orders being received from the Division, I instructed this Battery to report to G.O.C. 6th Mtd, Bde, who were held up at RIJM EL ATAWINEH. A position under cover was taken up one mile further N. in the Wadi SIHAN where observation was good

firing at a range of about 5000 yds. At this period our troops were retiring and a thick covering curtain of fire was brought to bear on the forward slopes of ATAWINEH until our troops had evacuated the ground. No. of rounds fired 912.

Notts Battery opened fire at about 0530 and kept a steady rate of fire on enemy position until observation and light improved when fire was increased in intensity continuous touch was kept with 3rd A.L.H. Bde an Officer being with G.O.C. of this Brigade all afternoon to assist the retirement of our dismounted troops, effective fire support was given at this critical period.

No. of rounds fired 445 Shrapnel 255 H.E.

B/HAC marched at 0200 from TEL EL JEMMI under orders of G.O.C. 5th Mtd Brigade to MUNKHELLEH at 0730 an O.P. was established in front firing line in a M.G. emplacement, fire was opened at 0800 on lower slopes of SAUSAGE RIDGE Subsequently the enemy was engaged along the whole front of 5th Mtd Brigade following them up the slopes; at 1200 observation was moved forward to our support line as our troops had advanced and subsequently an Officer was sent forward into the front firing line continuously supporting the advance of this Brigade. At 1500 the enemy launched a counter attack in force and under instruction of GOC Brigade a barrage of fire must be kept on the enemy at all costs This Battery made rapid and effective shooting and thus enabled our troops to withdraw in order although at this time this Battery was being heavily shelled by hostile artillery, fire support never slackened, one entire detachment of gunners were wounded, gunners were immediately transferred from other guns and so the service of Battery was maintained. Shortly after the enemy attacks had been driven off one gun was put out of action by a direct hit.

At 1730 an order was given by G.O.C. Brigade for this Battery to withdraw to EL MENDUR. This was successfully carried out under very trying and difficult circumstances as the teams arrived on the position the Battery was again shelled several horses being hit and a team and some led horses stampeded.

I consider this Battery was handled in a most efficient and effective manner under most difficult circumstances and that the conduct of all ranks leaves nothing to be desired.

Total number of rounds 1002 shrap. 328 H.E. Casualties D.R. 5.

At 1800 I ordered Berks, Notts, A/HAC and B/HAC to retire and take up position behind SHARTA HILL under cover of darkness.

Batteries dug in behind SHARTA HILL and registered points

B/HAC ordered to point 280 under G.O.C. 5th Mtd. Bde.

The Division being relieved, Batteries marched under cover of darkness to ABASAN EL KEBIR, D.A.C. to KHAN YUNIS.

Communications were established successfully by telephone with Batteries throughout the whole of these operations with the exception of B/HAC.

Ammunition supply was most effectively carried out by D.A.C. and although one Battery fired 1400 rounds there was no actual shortage.

I have the honour to bring the attached recommendations of Officers, N.C.Os. and Men for your special consideration.

I have the honour to be Sir,
Your obedient servant,

Enter
C. R. A.
IMPERIAL MOUNTED DIVISION

20/21st
32nd

637
A 23/10
APR 1917

Headquarters R.A. I.M.D.

No. 395278 A/Sgt BROWN F,
Has done excellent work during the recent operations, his
services have been invaluable. He has also done good work in
the past and in the earlier stages of the formation of the
Imperial Divisional Artillery.

A Battery H.A.C.

No. 624021 Farrier Sgt. Blogg H.B.
624279 Trumpeter Bouchier C.A.

B Battery H.A.C.

~~Lieut. J. F. Hawkins~~
~~Lieut. C. J. Bushby~~
~~Lieut. J. F. Hawkins~~
2nd/Lt, C.A. Phillips

No. 625031 Opl. Bates J.E.
" 625020 Dr. Last J.S.
" 625120 Gr. Rockett G.R.
" 624978 Gr. Haynes W.L.
" 624733 Sgt Nathan A.J.
" Whlr/Sgt Wright H.E.

D.A.C. I.M.D.

Capt J. Bamford Smith R.H.A. (T.F.)
Has done excellent work during the recent operations, the
supply of ammunition was continuous and fire of batteries never
slackened although roads were heavy and distance not inconsiderable.
The Column was formed by this officer at the formation of the
Division. He has done excellent work in the past.