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Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Provost

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Corps

April 1917



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CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.
~~DUPLICATE.~~
~~TRIPLICATE.~~

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

EGYPTIAN SECTION, AUSTRALIAN PROVOST CORPS.

FOR

APRIL 1917. 191

- APR 1917

(VOLUME.....9.)

Signature of Officer compiling *J. H. Piacker Col.*

Signature of Officer Commanding *J. H. Piacker Col.*

C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provost Corps
A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provost Corps
A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

EGYPTIAN SECTION
 APR. 1917
 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.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Confidential. ~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

Volume 9.

Original.

(Erase heading not required.)

Page 1.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
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Cairo. April 1917.

During the month of April duties in the Cairo, Heliopolis and Moascar Detachments were carried on exactly as in the previous month, and there is nothing of special importance to report. Discipline in Cairo appears to have improved considerably, as the total of charges made by the Corps in Cairo and Heliopolis during the month shows a decrease of nearly 200 on that for March 1917.

 On April 17th a Detachment of 10 mounted men marched out from Cairo to Eastern Force Headquarters at Deir el Belah. These men, together with the Field Troop which was withdrawn from the Anzac Mtd Division at the same time, eventually formed the Palestine Lines of Communication Detachment. The Authority for the formation of this Detachment is D.A.G., G.H.Q., Memo No A6635 of 11-4-17.

 A report on the work of the police of the Anzac Mounted Division, with a note on the Imperial Mounted Division is attached as Appendix I. to this Volume.

 Report on the Field Troop and Eastforce Detachment, Appendix II.

 Summary of arrests and charges by the Cairo and Heliopolis Detachments. Appendix III.
 Also summary of returns for Field Punishment Compound at Moascar.

 Cases against members of the Corps for the month:-
 F.G.C.Ms. Nil.

C.O's Cases 4.

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J. P. Discoe Lt Col
 C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provoost Corps
 A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

App. I.
 App. II.
 App. III.

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WAR DIARY

OF

EGYPTIAN SECTION AUSTRALIAN PROVOST CORPS.

FOR

A P R I L 1917. 191

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
I.	Report on Anzac Mounted Division.
II.	Report on Eastforce Detachment.
III.	Summary of Arrests and Charges.

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J. H. Bisson Lt Col.
C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provost Corps
A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

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APPENDIX I. TO VOLUME 9. OF WAR DIARY OF EGYPTIAN SECTION, AUSTRALIAN PROVOST CORPS.

APRIL 1917.

Report on police of Anzac Mounted Division.

April 1st to 15th.

The Division was occupying the beach area at Deir el Belah at this time. There is nothing of particular importance to report. Duties were carried out as described in the last paragraph of the report for March 1917, and as the area became more closely occupied by troops, various fresh duties were instituted, such as canteen duty, extra road patrols and so on.

During the period as much rest as possible was given to both men and horses, to enable them to recuperate after the rigours of the winter and to prepare for the even greater discomforts of the coming Summer campaign. The horses benefited greatly by the abundance of green feed which was available, and when the time came to move out again, were in really good condition. A few prisoners and Arab suspects were dealt with ~~xxxx~~ during the fortnight.

On the night of April 16th the Division moved out to the second attack on Gaza, operating on the right flank. Shellal was reached early the next morning. During the next few days heavy fighting ensued and the Division was constantly on the move. The police of all Detachments were very fully employed, acting as guides to watering parties and Units moving up into the line, regulating traffic and directing stragglers, and dealing with prisoners and suspects.

On April 17th No 1637 A/Cpl Austin C. was killed in action at Shellal.

On April 21st (?) D.H.Q. arrived at Hill 460 (Gaza Shellal map 1:40,000 Square A 23.) and camped there till the 29th. The chief duty of the police here was to escort parties of Bedouin suspects to the Military Governor at Khan Yunus. These suspects were the cause of considerable trouble, as the parties consisted of natives of all ages and both sexes, often accompanied by a quantity of livestock. The women and children were often tired and weak and had to be helped along, while the men would take advantage of any opportunity to escape. On one occasion, when a mixed party of this sort was delayed and overtaken by darkness in the outskirts of Khan Yunus, two of the male suspects made their escape through a hole in a cactus hedge, and succeeded in getting clear away, although they were fired on and one of them wounded by the escort. An enquiry was held on the matter and the N.C.O. i/c of the escort was exonerated. Special instructions as to dealing with these suspects have been issued by the D.A.&.Q.M.G. Eastforce. A copy is attached to this report.

On April 24th Captain A.F.Jordan, A.P.M. left the Division for Cairo. No 299 Bergt McEWAN was put in charge of the Detachment in the absence of any officer.

On April 29th the Division moved to Tel-el-Fara, D.H.Q. being situated at Square M1 on the map referred to above.

The following is a summary of the work done by the police during the month:-

Prisoners of War dealt with.....	Officers	2.	Other Ranks.	49.	Total	51.
Bedouin and Arab suspects and refugees.....						97.
Soldiers charged.....						43.
C.T.C. Natives charged.....						6.

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EGYPTIAN SECTION

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As regards the Imperial Mounted Division, the police perform practically the same duties as those of the Anzac Mounted Division. During the action before Gaza commencing on April 17th the Imperial Mounted Division was operating on the left of the Anzac Mounted Division. The police performed the usual duties in action, their casualties being one man, A/Cpl Coutanche G., wounded.

The following is a copy of the instructions re the disposal of suspects referred to above:-

"The following procedure will be followed until further instructions are received in the disposal of inhabitants of the country whom commanders may consider it advisable to place in custody.

"1. Inhabitants whom it considered absolutely necessary to remove from their houses will be sent under Column or Divisional arrangements to the Arab concentration camp at Khan Yunus, which has been established by the Military Governor.

"2. Bedouins who attempt to enter the outpost line, loiterers in camp and suspects of all sorts will be dealt with as in 1. above.

"3. Any native against whom a definite charge can be brought will be handed over to the nearest A.P.M. and immediate steps will be taken to obtain all evidence necessary to allow effective action to be taken.

"4. Any inhabitant of the country who is found to be in possession of a sword or rifle will be treated as a prisoner of war and will not be sent to the Arab Concentration Camp.

"All natives sent to the Arab Concentration Compound at Khan Yunus will be accompanied by a statement as to the reasons for their removal or internment. The Acting Military Governor at Khan Yunus will be informed by wire as early as possible of the numbers and probable time of arrival of each party, the telegram being repeated to Eastern Force Headquarters.

"When action has been taken as in (1.) above it may be necessary to leave one or two men in charge of the livestock, which cannot in all circumstances be removed to Khan Yunus. In such cases the individuals left in charge will be provided, either with a temporary permit signed by an A.P.M. or the Intelligence Officer attached to Eastern Force Headquarters, or with a certificate granted by the Acting Military Governor, to explain the bearer's presence in a cleared area.

"No permits or passes other than those mentioned in the preceding paragraph will be issued to a native in any circumstances. Disciplinary action will be taken against any officer or soldier who issues an unauthorised permit of any description to a native.

"H.Q. EASTFORCE.
1-4-17.

Sd. J. GASCOYNE Maj: General,
D.A.&Q.M.G., Eastern Force.

No A.M. 1375. D.A. 1943.

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J. H. B. ...
C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provost Corps
A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

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APPENDIX II. TO VOLUME 9. OF WAR DIARY OF EGYPTIAN SECTION, AUSTRALIAN PROVOST CORPS.

APRIL 1917.



Report on the Field Troop for the month of April 1917.

On April 2nd the Field Troop was transferred to D.H.Q. to act as Duty Troop there.

Their duties were to supply the necessary working parties for D.H.Q., i.e. pumping parties, ration parties etc., to supply orderlies for the various offices and one mounted and one dismounted orderly for duty at the signal office. On the march they form an escort for the G.O.C. and supply gallopers when required. They also assist the police in dealing with prisoners of war.

On April 15th the Troop was withdrawn from the Anzac Mounted Division, as every fit man of the Mounted Section of the Corps has now seen Active Service, either with the Troop or on a Divisional or Brigade Headquarters.

The Troop was then attached to Eastern Force Headquarters, and, together with 10 men transferred there from Cairo, polices the whole of the Deir el Belah Area in co-operation with the Imperial Military Police.

Duties supplied by this Detachment are as follows:-

1. One man on camp duty at Eastern Force Headquarters.
2. One man on Deir el Belah village.
3. One man directing traffic on each railway crossing at Deir el Belah station.
4. A general area patrol of two men.

On April 20th, the third day of the 2nd Battle of Gaza, the Detachment was ordered to move out towards Gaza, as, in the event of that town falling into our hands, Lieut: Watts was to assume duties of A.P.M. there, and the Detachment was to take over the policing of the town. The retirement was carried out the same afternoon, however, and the Detachment returned to Deir el Belah.

The usual police duties were carried out during the remainder of the month without any noteworthy incident.

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J. H. Binder Lt Col
C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provost Corps
A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

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APPENDIX III. TO VOLUME 9. OF WAR DIARY OF EGYPTIAN SECTION AUSTRALIAN PROVOST CORPS. APRIL 1917.

Summary of Arrests and Charges made by the Cairo and Heliopolis Detachments during the month.

Absence without leave.....	1271
Drunkenness.....	26.
Improperly Dressed.....	100.
Out of Bounds.....	12.
In possession of another man's pass.....	1.
Giving a false name to the Military Police.....	2.
Resisting Arrest'.....	3.
Using obscene language.....	1.
Deficient of Identity Disc.....	18.
Altered pass.....	1.
Failing to comply with an order of the Military Police.....	3.
Assaulting a Military Policeman in the execution of his duty.....	3.
<hr/>	
TOTAL CHARGES.	297.
TOTAL ARRESTS.	227.

Summary of Admissions, Discharges etc: Field Punishment Compound Measer during the month.

Number of admissions.....	36.
Number transferred to Citadel Detention Barracks.....	7.
Number of refractory prisoners dealt with by the Governor.....	6.
Number discharged time-expired.....	54.
Number of safe custody prisoners admitted and discharged.....	30.

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J. H. Bicker
C. O. Egyptian Section, Australian Provost Corps
A. P. M. A. I. F. in Egypt

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