

## P R E F A C E

This record of the activities of the 8th Light Horse Regiment has been prepared in order that members of the Unit may have with them an account of the various fights and fields of labour in which they perhaps played part, and also to give some information to those sorrowing relatives and friends whose loved ones joined up the Unit and made the great sacrifice and who are thus deprived of first hand information of the soldier's life abroad.

A great deal of minor detail is left out purposely, but reference to the Unit's Official War Diary may give the seeker after special information that which he requires.

No Unit of the A.I.F. has done better work or suffered more heavily in self-sacrificing effort during the Great War. Its name stands out with peculiar distinctness among the Australian Regiments. The fatal luck which seemed to "dog" its career has made its name famous throughout the A.I.F. and among the English Troops with whom it came in contact during its varied wanderings. Search the lists of Casualties of the Australian Light Horse Regiments, you will find its name at the top, and these lists tell a story of their own, unique and sad. It was a peculiar fate that wherever the fighting was thickest, wherever a gap had to be filled, the 8th Regiment would be there on the spot. The famous sacrifice at "The Nek", Gallipoli, will go down forever as an epic, where men did their part in the face of certain death, while incidents like the attack on Gaza, Khuwelfeh and El Burj, though not brought under the glare of flashlight, are such that nothing can ever surpass. The innumerable heroic deeds of individuals are not quoted, they are too many. Honours have come freely to personnel, but then these were only the fruits of recommendations. In very many fights there were greater and more worthy deeds done but often there was no chance of submitting recommendations. The Regiment was often in the Field for weeks at

a time, each man carrying on his saddle only the bare necessities for his immediate comfort. As often as not, there was no paper on which to write a recommendation, and to this fact also may be put down the lack of detailed records in the Regimental War Diary, a glimpse at which shows a regrettable sparseness regarding many of the operations. For the period covering Gallipoli, there is scarcely any reference, and most of the detail has been filled in from the writer's recollections. Later periods, however, show that more care was spent in compiling the diary, and details were much more easily obtained.

The Regiment was formed in Broadmeadows camp in October, 1914, from all the Light Horse volunteers then in camp, and available after the 4th Light Horse Regiment had completed Establishment. It formed part of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade, having for companion Units the 9th and 10th Regiments. Throughout the whole of its history, these same Units have remained together, though establishments have been altered from time to time. Originally a Light Horse Regiment consisted of 550 all ranks, but has been amended to 478. An average of 500 all ranks, of whom 23 are Officers can be presumed. A reference to the tables of Casualties appended will serve to show therefore that the grand total of 712 casualties is enormous in its proportion, and when the huge total of sick is added, makes it appalling.

One has grown accustomed to hear that Egypt was quite a small side show and surely deserving of consideration when compared with those on other fronts. Such utterances are easily silenced by examples like the following:-

The 3rd Light Horse Brigade marched into the Jordan Valley in Mid-July, 1918, its establishment being up to strength and about 2000 souls. During the subsequent few weeks it did little fighting, such few casualties it obtained being caused mainly from long distance shell-fire, and stray snipers. During the months of August, September and October, however, the admissions to Hospital from this Brigade totalled 47 Officers and 1443 Other



Ranks, or almost 75% of the Total Establishment. Many of the above number died, their removal from the trenches to the base Hospitals entailing days of untold agony and discomfort. Camels, motor ambulances, trains and ships being consecutively used to convey the sick over the hundreds of miles back to Port Said. Only these unfortunates who went through it know its horrors. Through it all every man has played up to his part and never even under the most adverse.

### BROADMEADOWS DAYS

By September, 1914, the First Victorian Regiment (the 4th Light Horse) was practically complete in personnel, and as the newly enlisted men arrived at Broadmeadows, those desiring to be Light Horsemen were drafted into an area at the Eastern end of the Camp and there allotted into Squadrons, each about 150 strong. The squadrons were put through all the preliminary tests for riding and smartness, under the guidance of certain Staff Sergeant Majors. Within a few weeks, enough men had arrived and been tested to form five Squadrons. From these the Regiment picked its personnel and as by this time the staff had got a fair idea of the best men, a splendid type of manhood was selected.

On an afternoon in October, we were all lined up and drafted into the various departments of the Regiment and called the 6th Light Horse, as it was intended at that time that the Unit was to be portion of the 2nd Light Horse Brigade, then forming. This idea was soon altered, however, as it became known that more troops could be offered the Imperial Authorities, and a notice proclaiming the formation of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade appeared in the District Orders, No. 54, issued on the 23 October, and read as follows:-

"His Excellency, the Governor General, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, has been pleased to approve of one Light Horse Brigade being formed of persons who voluntarily agree to serve beyond the limits of the Commonwealth in the Australian Imperial Force, in addition to the Units referred to in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. 56 of the 13 August 1914, and Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. 74 of the 19 September 1914, etc. ect."

This was immediately followed by Military Order No. 575 dated the 3 November, 1914, giving a certain allotment of Officers to the 8th Light Horse Regiment, and naming Major A H White as Commanding Officer.

As soon as the men picked out could be moved, a space near the main



Broadmeadows Gate was found for the Regiment, just opposite the camp of the 4th Light Horse.

All our training was being done dismounted but as soon as the 4th got away, remounts were drawn from Maribyrnong Depot, and we became "full blown Troopers". This was about mid-November and we shifted camp over to the ground recently vacated by the 4th.

The first few days after the arrival of the horses, we were very busy indeed. Many of the animals had to be broken in and shod, and this provided plenty of work and fun, the animals being all very fresh and lively. Taken all round they were an exceedingly find type, and any weedy or extremely rough ones were considerably changed by the Remount people. In this way the Regiment became splendidly equipped in horse-flesh. There was a great deal of cuts work and swopping in regard to the selection and allotment of horses, but it all straightened out finally. The Chestnuts went to "A" Squadron, the Bays and Light Browns to "B", and the Dark Browns and Blacks to "C". This gave a distinctly smart appearance to each Troop, all the horses in each one being made as uniform as possible. Every man was quite sure at the finish that his own particular mount was the best.

The daily training and routine now became very strenuous, though the instructors had a congenial task because every man was so keen. Scheme were carried out, both mounted and dismounted, the Regiment several times holding bivouacs overnight at various little spots around Wildwood and Heidleberg. The fractious horses soon became subdued and quiet with work, and a marvellous improvement could be seen after the first fortnight's mounted drill. Those who were not sure of their seats in the saddle soon improved as the country round about offered good facilities for cross country work. Our musketry had been well attended to by frequent visits to the Williamstown Range, and also at a local range. Exercises were conducted by the Brigade Staff for Officers, mostly on road and reconnaissance.

work, while the N.C.O's received thorough grounding at the hands and tongues of the Staff Sergeant Majors. Each on the N.C.O's was required to pass a stiff examination before his rank was confirmed, and the consequence of this was to produce some admirable material from which the Regiment later obtained many of its Officers. A very great deal of credit is due to these Staff Sergeant Majors for the great amount of keen and hard work they did to make everyone efficient, both Officers and Men.

During December a march-past the State Governor at Broadmeadows was held and also a mounted parade through Melbourne streets, passing Parliament House en route. Days like these served to keep our minds occupied, besides putting a smart appearance on all ranks.

In this month, the Regiment prepared to embark, and several times word was whispered round that the succeeding few days would see us off. However, Christmas came along with most of us getting a few days leave to spend with our people.

On the 1 January 1915, some promotions came out in connection with the Officers, and this completed their Establishment, which now read as follows:-

Commanding Officer .....	Lieut Col A H White	*
Second in Command .....	Major J C O'Brien	
Adjutant .....	Capt J T Crowl	*
Quartermaster .....	Lieut H Fry	
Medical Officer .....	Capt S J Campbell	*
Veterinary Officer .....	Capt S A Mounthoy	
"A" Squadron	Major E A Gregory	*
	Capt W J Day	
	Lieut F O Thorn	
	Lieut A Crawford	
	Lieut T Howard	*
"B" Squadron	Lieut C Arblaster	*
	Major T H Redford	*
	Capt W Mitchell	
	Lieut K Borthwick	*
	Lieut R C Baker	
	Lieut E E Henty	*
"C" Squadron	Lieut E G Wilson	*
	Major A V Deeble	
	Capt A M McLaurin	*
	Lieut C Carthew	*
	Lieut W Robinson	
	Lieut C C Dale	*



Lieut M B Higgins      \*  
 Lieut L W H Anderson   \*

\* Made the Great Sacrifice

January went by with everybody getting most impatient to get away to the scene of operations. At the time serious doubts began to arise in many of our minds, if we would get away at all. Every imaginable rumour was spread about, regarding German defeats and the Kaiser's death, that we almost began to despair.

On the 2 February, Major O'Brien sailed in command of Troops on Transport A.43. to be followed a few days later by Captain McLaurin in charge of Transport A.25., accompanied by Lieutenants Henty, Thorn and Robinson and 55 Other Ranks, taking 130 Horses mostly draughts.

Excitement was now great and all were prepared to move any day. On the 14 February, the Brigade Staff sailed on the "Osterly". At this date the Regiment went to Altona Bay for a week's bivouac. We had a great camp here right on the Beach and on two or three occasions the Unit held massed bathing parades, when all would be formed up, naked men on bare back horses, the whole presenting a most unique sight, especially as they splashed through the waves, going out on the shallow beach to a distance of 300 to 400 yards. We did our final Musketry Course here, the Williamstown range being close by, prizes being given to the winners from Regimental Funds.

On the 20th, we returned to Broadmeadows and it then became known that we were to embark on the 24 February. During the next few days many were allowed leave to say their fairwells to their home folk, and on the morning of the 24 February, we marched out to the pier at Port Melbourne to embark on Transport A.16. formerly known as "The Star of Victoria". The name of the boat was most appropriate, as a finer and better trained body of mounted men never left the shores of Australia. She was a fine boat and as there were only a few sundries besides the Unit to go aboard there was ample room. We

were not allowed to say "Good-bye" to any relatives on the pier, a thing that hurt many of us very hard. However, in the work of loading horses and kits our minds and hands were kept busy. Everything went on board with a swing and by late afternoon all was correct and snug and the ship put out into the bay, just off Williamstown where we anchored for the night. A few hours were spent leaning over the rails looking at the lights of Melbourne and speculations of our future doings were many and varied. Bunk was tried at a late hour but as this was the first big sea trip for many the excitement and noises did not conduce to a sound sleep. However, on awaking next morning the boat was well under way and we were soon passing through "The Heads" at a slow pace. The world was now before us and though full of eagerness and glad to be on our way to the front many of us looked back on our Broadmeadows days with a sigh. The life there had taught us much. The Country man had got to know a good deal of the city, and the city man had grown to love the open air life points of a soldier's life, such as fatigue dodging, orderly rooms etc. We knew that the Y.M.C.A., was the place to find a man when he was required for fatigue or guard, that the dirtiest man in the camp was the cook, and that night time was the time to make up all shortages in kit and saddlery and that the Quartermaster Sergeant was the best man to buy beer for.



## THE VOYAGE TO EGYPT

The trip across the Bight proved exceedingly rough and found most of us with a distinct tendency to refuse meals, preferring to gaze at the water rushing past the ship's sides. We were all glad when the ship put in to Albany for repairs, a steam pipe having burst. Four men were put off here with sickness and we also lost three horses with pneumonia. On the 6 March, we sailed out of Albany, (where no one had been allowed to land) and in a high wind headed for Colombo.

The troops soon got their sea legs this time and spirits were much brighter. The daily routine of the ship was well organised, each man having his allotted duties, some doing the horse decks, some the Mess decks and others the hundred and one jobs necessary to keep things in order. The favourite job was to be detailed for the Kitchen and Bakery, and failing that Mess Orderly. The food provided was exceedingly coarse and rough, but from Albany on most men looked for their share. A canteen was on board and purchases from this helped the meals along considerably, though nothing could be obtained there in the shape of liquor.

The latter however, always seemed to be about in fair quantity and the Head Cook was the suspected person in regard to supplying same. Anyhow, he was pretty popular in the evenings, though why he should be able to sell liquor to troops on a dry ship there by making treble profits that a canteen would, when the stuff could have easily been regulated from the canteen, is puzzling.

The horse deck gang had the hardest work though not a man aboard, but did not want to do his bit there every day. However, the regular staff did splendidly and very great credit is due to them for their efforts to get the horses across as safely and comfortable as possible. A promenade was made around certain of the decks and each day herefor two or three hours the horses were led out and given exercise. This in a great measure served to

keep down swelled legs, besides giving the animals a blow of fresh air. A horse boat is not by any manner of means a holiday home for horses. The poor beasts are clamped as close together as possible in skeleton kind of stall and can move neither sideways, forwards or backwards. The decks are simply stifling especially in the tropics and a big draught has to be created by a huge fan rigged at one end of the ship to help keep the temperature somewhere near normal. A fair number of horses caught colds and chills but the Veterinary staff worked so well that on reaching Egypt a total of nine horses only had died on the way, chiefly from pneumonia, first caught during the rough weather experienced in the Bight. This is a very small percentage of casualties, as we had on board over 600 horses and clearly shows that each man had his eye on his horse throughout.

Various parades were carried out daily and boat drill, physical and rifle exercises and instruction in signalling kept us all busy. For amusements we were well catered. The ship's carpenter had rigged a staging on one of the hatches and this was lit up nightly for boxing tourneys or concerts. We had some good talent and a special boxing tourney provided some very excellent contests and great interest. The concert party was very good and competitions were organised for part singing. We also had our debating teams and fierce and varied arguments were put up mostly concerning "White Australia". Curiously enough no thought was given at that time to a debate on conscription. I do not think anyone ever dreamt that Australia would be found wanting even to the last man.

Our Regimental Band was a great item and well worth its money.

Crossing the Equator we had a great day, all the celebrities getting a good bath and shave in a special canvas tank rigged for the purpose.

Colombo rose out of the morning mists like a fairy isle, on the 18 March. We stayed here two days coaling and one half of the troops were allowed shore leave one afternoon and the other half the next morning. Not a man was



over leave, a fact which testified to the calibre of the men, though it disappointed our Padre. All had a good time especially with the coaling was slightly interfered with by some hard cases enticing the niggers to box for sixpences. Before many minutes the whole box and dice of niggers were hammering away, each eager to get some money. The Ship's 1st Mate nearly took a apoplectic fit when he discovered what was happening and some of our shearers licked their lips in admiration of his withering vocabulary.

It was here, we had our first call out, the troops on the "Runic" which vessel was accompanying us over, having taken possession of the ship's boats and threatening to go ashore. However, between the Port authorities and our people the men were got aboard the "Runic" again, without very serious trouble and she put out to sea. Our ship followed during the night of the 19/20th and the second day out all hands were vaccinated against Small-pox and many spent a very unpleasant few days after it.

The usual routine was kept up, Aden being reached at 10am, on the 28 March. We stayed a few hours but were not allowed ashore. However, we were treated to the sight of some big warships and a couple of converted cruisers, the latter being filled with Indian Troops bound for 'Mespot'. Proceeding up the Red Sea from Aden a very rough spell of weather was encountered and it was quite cold. The coast in sight most of the way proved very interesting, being of a very barren and volcanic appearance, whilst a number of small islands were passed, one group of twelve being known as "The Twelve Apostles". Old Mount Sinai showed his head fare over on the right and came in for a good deal of comment. Just before reaching Suez, a wireless was received stating that the enemy were threatening the Canal and all hands were put on in turns down the stoke-hold filling grain bags with cinders, which were used to make a barricade round the ships decks. Our labour went for nought, however, as we got off at Suez.

Whilst waiting off the town itself, on Easter Saturday late in the afternoon, a very impressive scene took place. Both vessels (The Runic and our ship,) lay perfectly still in water without a ripple on it. The shadows of the high hills, beautifully reflected, gave an added peace to the scene. A lad had died aboard the "Runic", and they buried him here in the water. On both ships all ranks stood to attention and the 'Last Post' rang out in the stillness with a startling clearness. The effect was very great and subdueing on all.

That night we were all busy collecting and getting ready for disembarkation next day. We were heartily glad to say goodbye to the ship, though all felt that everything had been done that possibly could be, for our comfort and welfare on the journey across. The ship's Staff and our own Officers worked untiring hard to give all a good time, and they succeeded. We had only one grudge and that was against our Chaplain. The only time we saw him throughout the voyage was at Sunday Service and then his dismal dirges made us angry. He never visited the Troop Decks and was a very poor example of cheer and help. His last Sermon prior to disembarkation will live forever with those who heard it. As a masterpiece of gloom.

## EGYPT PRIOR TO GALLIPOLI

We got off the ship at Suez wharf at 2am, on Easter Sunday, April 4, straight on the specially waiting trains and off to Cairo. Heads seldom left the windows on the journey up and the "eggs a cook" and "backshee" people did a roaring trade. Cairo was reached at half past ten in the morning and we detrained at a siding at the main station. We had to lead our horses out to Mena Camp, about 8 miles away and horses and men were all knocked out with the walk there over the hard asphalt roads. We settled down right under old Cheops himself, and he came in for a lot regard. The horses' legs were all more or less swollen and it was over two weeks before our mounts were ridden, they being led everywhere during that period.

Our first impressions of Egypt left us rather awestruck, especially Cairo, with its Citadel and Pyramids. Both these places were quickly explored and now as the years have brought us into constant contact with them, they seem to impress one as having been an awful waste of good labour and stone. The Pyramids would certainly have been much more remarkable had they been built "t'other way up". There was plenty of opportunity to explore and the Pyramids were climbed and rummaged over almost every inch. The stones both inside and out were inscribed with names innumerable. The Sphinx nearby formed a great back-ground for photographs and camera men and guides must have made small fortunes in no time.

However, Egypt with its ruins, its past and its present, possesses its facinations and no one will be ever able to forget the look of the Pyramids as they show up in the blue distance and who having seen the Citadel from Mena Road, with its background of Mohattam Hills, does not link it with the sublime. The wise, however, seek no close acquaintance, as dirt and filth will cause the most cherished illusion to go flop.

The chief thing to affect us at first were the "Out of Bounds" notices displayed. There were really very few decent places that the



ordinary soldier could go to without restrictions. The leading hotels were debanded to us and if all the instructions regarding the things which should not be eaten had been obeyed, well, a man would have had little else in addition to his ration. Even the Nile was denied us, on account of Bilharzia. However, there was a plentiful allowance of town leave granted of which full advantage was taken. The Australians with their free and easy manner and large quantities of money, took the "Gyppos" by storm. The bazaars and restaurants did a great business and the varied street scenes beggar description. In these days Cairo used to wake up about 10pm, and by midnight was a seething mass. Most of our passes were timed up to 10 o'clock, but everyone took an hour or two extra and consequently Orderly Room was a fairly busy place next day.

The Infantry had been here some time when we arrived and the novelty of the place had partly worked off, for them. However, as most of us had relatives and pals in the Battalions, they came in very useful in guiding us round. About Mena Camp itself quite a small township of small shops and hovels had sprung up and the quaint signs displayed everywhere caused much laughter.

The days were hot and dusty, the dreaded 'Khamsin' blowing strong each day. However, each night brought cool relief and life was very enjoyable. Not many days after our arrival the infantry began to move out for an unknown destination. It was good to watch these men as they swung along and the memory of them will never fade. Neither before nor since has a finer body of men ever moved out to fight for Empire. Months of training had put a polish on to bronzed skins and they looked so wholesome and fine with their magnificent physique, we felt proud as we cheered them out of camp, that we belonged to the same stock.

Our training went on strenuously each day, all sorts of tactical schemes and marches being carried out. The horses were supplied with a

little green forage, in addition to their army ration and soon became fit and quite recovered from their long voyage. They had little work to do and were not knocked about in any way, as galloping on the sand was strictly forbidden.

On the 28 April, the Brigade moved over to Heliopolis and camped on the racecourse there. We were much more comfortable, the ground being fresh and clean, while nearby were big modern shops and restaurants, to say nothing of Luna Park, which was next door and open nightly. Our training here extended into bigger schemes and we used to go daily out near the Old Suez Road Watch Towers and tear round scooping up imaginary enemies and redoubts. Both men and horses became very efficient in drill manoeuvre and were by now fit to hold their own against anything.

On the 29th, the first news of the Dardanelles came through. By the afternoon of the 30 April, most of us had heard garbled accounts of the landing, and as the rumours spread and consequently became exaggerated the excitement became intense. Through the first days of May, we were very impatient to be away. Every man was ready to be out at minute's notice. Lieut Arblaster and his Machine Gun Troop, consisting of about 27 all ranks, were sent off and all were anxious for the word which must come in the next few days.

### GALLIPOLI DAYS

On the 12 May, excitement among the troops had reached fever pitch. The first drafts of wounded were just arriving from Gallipoli, and were being tended at the huge Palace Hotel, Heliopolis, the quarters of No.1 Australian General Hospital. Many of the Regimental personnel had friends and relatives among the wounded men, and the stories narrated by these of the doings during the first few hours of that glorious landing (stories which soon became magnified and alarmingly exaggerated) made all ranks impatient to be at grips with the enemy.

On the 13 May, orders were issued to prepare and be ready to embark from Alexandria for the scene of action by the 18th inst. In the evening, a few hours prior to entraining from Alexandria, all was hustle. As no horses were to be taken certain personnel had to be left behind for their care. The following were detailed:- Capt Entwistle from Reinforcements, Capt Mountjoy, Veterinary Officer, Lieuts Thorn and Talbot Woods, the Transport Drivers and about 30 Other ranks.

Lieut Talbot Woods joined the Regiment subsequently just before the charge at Walkers's Nek. Our Padre, Chaplain Capt Moore, was also left behind.

Each Squadron had to march out up to full strength (i.e. 6 Officers and 148 O/ranks), consequently some of the Reinforcements, who up to now had been quartered apart from the Brigade, were called upon. All saddlery was packed in sacks and stacked, only certain articles of clothing were allowed to be taken. The rest of our personal belongings were packed in kit bags and sent to the Base Depot, where most of the best stuff was subsequently thieved.

A rucksack, modelled on the Infantry knapsack, but adapted for putting on over the bandolier equipment, was issued; it held all the



necessary kit. Officers were ordered to wear the same equipment as the men, the being to prevent the enemy snipers from picking them out. The horses were parted from with deep regret. Each man had grown to love his horse and no one liked the idea of leaving his "Pal" to the doubtful attention of a stranger. Gone also were our visions of charging and rounding up the enemy, visions that each and all had indulged in during the recent training.

Apart from the regret, however, all were most eager to get to the front, amid much bustle and dust the Regiment boarded a train at Helmieh Station at about 7pm, on the 14 May. Alexandria was reached without mishap, early next morning, the train was shunted right on to the wharf side. Here, after the usual delay for roll calls, loading gear, etc., all were got on board the transport, X 2., a boat formerly used in the American Cattle trade under the name of the "Menominee". This vessel sailed at 4am, on the 16 May, the strength of the Regiment on board being 23 Officers and 453 other ranks. The voyage was uneventful, land being kept in sight most of the way. The ship was crowded, other troops of the Brigade being also on board. The usual troop deck scenes and amusements were indulged in. A very strict watch was maintained for submarines, which, at that time, were just beginning to make themselves felt.

Cape Helles was reached at 9am, on the 19 May, here we saw the first shots fired by enemies. A big fight was in progress. Everybody worked up to an intense state of curiosity and excitement and we could see aeroplanes and warships all being engaged at high pressure. Our ship stood off from the shore, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile (just near the famous "River Clyde".) and our rigging and top decks were crowded with swarms of chattering sight-seers. We could see, on our right front, a fair distance up 'The Narrows' and this water was being busily patrolled by torpedo craft round which could be seen

occasional spurts of water, as the Chanak Forts tried their gunnery. Further over was the Asiatic shore, we looked from a distance on the fabled fields of Troy. Immediately in front could be seen the camp and dug-outs on Helles Beach, and these were being subjected to a fierce shell fire by the enemy from the direction of Achi Baba. All over the landscape, as far inland as 4 to 5 miles, could be seen puffs of smoke, here from a battery in action and there were shrapnel and high explosives kept incessantly bursting. Every few minutes, above all roared the broadside of a battleship and a long line of these imposing vessels could be seen stretching away into the distance to Suvla Bay. The resultant explosion from the big shells made us wonder why Achi Baba was not a crumbled mass. Good evidence of their destructive powers was afforded by a study of the Seddel-Bahr forts (or rather where the forts used to be) on the shore close at hand. These forts had been blown to ruins during the first Naval bombardment.

Away up on the coast on our left stretched their battleships, while further round loomed the island of Inbros, yet further away, in the extreme blue distance, the beautiful peak of Samothraki. It was a most wonderful day of sights.

During the hours our curiosity began to grow, as to where we were going to land. We knew our countrymen were further up and that was where our hearts were. At sundown fresh orders came aboard and we soon knew that Helles was not to be our home. The ship upanchored and put about and heading straight for the Island of Lemnos, we again anchored at 10pm, in the beautiful harbour of Mudros. This bay was crowded with warships and transport and various other craft. Everyone was full of work and bustle, the place being the Base Depot for the operations. After some hours delay,



orders were received that we were to proceed to Gaba Tepe and join the Australian Forces there. Accordingly, on the morning of the 21 May, three torpedo boat destroyers pulled alongside; all troops were quickly transferred their decks, a fresh start was made for the Peninsula. We were fortunate enough to get aboard the "Foxhound", the controlling vessel, led the way gaily across at a speed of 20 knots. 'Twas a most exhilarating journey, the speed and motion of the boat being in great contrast to the slow going transports to which we had become so accustomed. The Officers and crew were extremely generous and kind to all. Every man was served with hot chocolate, many secured a liberal supply of good tobacco, which proved a great boon during the next few weeks. On arrival off Anzac, the boats spent an hour or two cruising slowly up and down between Suvla and Anzac Cove. This was evidently to gull the enemy into the belief that the vessels were merely performing a patrol. Several warships nearby fired broadsides at intervals, serving to keep enemy heads down. Toward the early afternoon we were rushed close in towards shore, launches were immediately alongside, the landing was effected without mishap, though a few schrapnel were sent among us. Some of the launches bringing other portions of the Brigade ashore had slight casualties, but nothing considering what could have been done had the naval people dawdled. Their arrangements were excellent and splendidly carried out, the little middies causing us all to gape with amusement and wonder at their power in handling men.

The troops were guided from the shore to a spot allotted for a temporary bivouac half way between the pier and Russell's Top and on the cliff face. Here all hands were warned to dig in immediately. There was a great deal of Rhododendron scrub about and digging in consisted of each man burrowing out a hole slightly bigger than his body and about two feet deep covering it with waterproof sheet and some branches. Squadrons and troops were kept together as much as possible but all had to fit in to the nature



of the ground. While this work was in progress the famous "Anafatta Annie" opened up on us with shrapnel. As the first shells screamed towards us nearly every man straightened himself and looked up to see what would come of it. 'Twas beautifully ranged and landed right in our midst, but luckily proved a "dud". Everyone rushed to secure what, at that time, was considered a trophy. But curiosity was cut short by another shell bursting in our midst with a murderous shriek, and a run was made for cover. The gun, after firing a few more shots, switched further down the beach and we all came out again. There were no casualties, but we were all considerably wiser, the tradgedy of the huddled bundles and wrecked barges up along the beach towards Suvla came home to us then.

After the digging-in had been completed, nearly everyone found time for a swim at the beach below. "Anafarta Annie" fired a few ineffective shots, but somehow one felt safe in the water and little notice was taken of her. Towards sundown we were all gathered into the dugouts. Being under the cliff we were safe from rifle fire, which went directly over our heads and into the sea some distance out. Each bullet made a sharp snap-crack as it went over, and this noise was incessant during the night. No fires were permitted after dark, despite all the noises of real war which we were now hearing for the first time, everybody went to bunk early and slept soundly.

The next day at 3am, we had our first "Stand to Arms". This stand was a regular thing throughout our active service, the hours, of course, being varied according to the times of the year. On Gallipoli our average times were from 0330 to 0440, from 1800 to 1900 in the evening.

It is most annoying, being wakened on a raw morning, standing about shivering and groaning. Never, throughout our service, did the enemy

choose to attack during the hour of standing-to, as everyone was required to sleep with his gear on when in the trenches, it struck us as rather unnecessary to wake us up when a good extra hour or two of sleep would have been much more beneficial. Throughout the day most of us were allowed to wander round a bit, use our eyes and become familiar with the lay of the ground. At 1790, "A" Squadron was sent on outpost duty at trenches running down to the beach from Walker's Ridge. At this time this was our extreme left flank, though a few hundred yards to our left front, the New Zealand troops had established a post on a high knoll, known afterwards as No.1 Outpost. Needless to say, no enemy got near our lines that night, as everyone felt very keen and alert. This part of the line was never particularly pressed by the enemy, though it was a happy hunting ground for his snipers, who could obtain excellent cover and domination in the scrub on the heights immediately above. At Stand-to on the 23 May, some excitement was caused by the New Zealand party, which had just been relieved on the outpost, having their leading man, a Sergeant, shot fatally at 10 yards range. The sniper got away in the darkness, and he can thank his stars. The event caused a gloom for a time as these troops were suffering heavily during the last few days from snipers, whom it was impossible to locate in the thick scrub.

On the 24 May, an armistice was held to allow of the dead being buried. This day was our first sight of large numbers of dead men, and heaps of the enemy could be seen right along the line. A tape had been set up on sticks right along mid-way between the opposing trenches, and the enemy buried all dead on their side while our people buried all of ours. There were so many in certain places that they were just pushed over the cliff face and loose earth broken down over them. All ranks not actually engaged in the burial or collecting parties grouped round on parapets and viewed and discussed



the proceeding generally. There was not time to dig other than shallow graves, as there were so many heaps of enemy and the execution done, especially in the fight on the 19 May, was enormous. Wherever possible services were read over our own dead, many men whose fate up to now had been uncertain were found, their wounds undressed in the shrubbery, where they had died, fighting to the end. In some cases our boys and the Turks were found close together, evidence of the bitter struggle each little party had fought out. One wounded Turk had been lying out for 9 days. He was brought in but died almost immediately. It seemed pitiful that a man should thus die after giving his all for his home and country.

On the 25 May, the Regiment was allotted a sector (No 4) on Walker's Ridge, relieving the Wellington Mounted Rifles. By 1200, we were all ready to move from our Beach bivouac, and the long climb up the cliff face was accomplished by 1400. This was one of our most memorable days. When half way up and just as the troops had sat down to take one of the many rests that the hard climbing entailed, a big explosion at sea caused all heads to turn out in that direction. Directly off Gaba Tepe a huge column of water spurted into the air and a huge warship, which we soon heard was the famous old "Triumph", was seen rapidly to heel over and sink. She had been torpedoed by a submarine as she was bombarding Gaba Tepe redoubts. All the sea seemed to be immediately alive with rashing torpedo craft and launches, some hurrying to the ship's side to rescue work while two or three torpedo boats scurried round in circles in the endeavour to ram or locate the submarine. Our view was as from the gallery of a picture theatre, certainly our interest in the performance was intense. The incident in no way caused us any downheartedness, the significance of it all did not seem to strike us so much at that time as many lesser events in after days did. Of course, it was the main topic of conversation everywhere for the next few days, and when on the 27 May, we heard of the "Majestic's"



fate, most of us began to realise that we were up against it, both on land and sea. However, we had a little diversion by being lucky enough to secure a butt of wine, which had been washed up from the "Triumph" and enjoying a little "beano" in our troop.

On the 26 May, we were in it up to our necks. Everyone was most eager to do some shooting, throughout the whole day each loophole in the sand bags was manned by men as keen to secure a Turk as a schoolboy armed with a shanghai is to shoot a sparrow. Whether any enemy did get shot it is difficult to say, as they made no complaints to us, but if their casualties were half as numerous as our shooters claimed they must have suffered severely. One Sergeant was extra keen and he used to discover and kill Turks where not another man could see any sign of one either before or after he had shot. The notches to his credit would have filled up three or four gun stocks inside a week the rumour was started, that the Turks were offering £500 for him, dead or alive, and his keenness seemed to fade right away. This N.C.O. claimed to have done some time at cowboy work in America, no doubt he thought it incumbent to play up to the marvellous feats we are accustomed to read about in some of those "Bad Bill" novels. As the days wore on we soon learned to conserve our ammunition until it was wanted, and after suffering 7 casualties our heads were kept a little lower below the parapet. We used to manage a little diversion each night towards about 8pm. Word would be passed along the trench to do 5 minutes rapid fire and this with a few cheers and shouts thrown in seemed to put the fear of death into "Johnny Turk". Every rifle and machine gun in his trenches would immediately open up with an awful din, and this fire would be kept going for a full 20 minutes. He never made the slightest attempt at hitting us as we could often see his rifles pointing straight up to the sky and being fired. We suffered no

casualties, and besides giving us a good laugh, "diversion" must have cost the enemy an enormous amount of ammunition. He must have thought that, when we gave a cheer, we were about to charge and his experience of Australians at that particular style of warfare had been both costly and bitter. Many weeks elapsed before the enemy desisted from replying to our demonstrations.

At 0300, on the 29 May, the enemy attacked along the line, but particularly heavily at Quinn's Post. Our Sector was subjected to a heavy bombardment and rifle fire, and on this morning our first man was killed, No. 351 Tpr Coe.

The Regiment did good execution with rifle and machine gun fire on the attackers of Quinn's Post as we were able to give a splendid overhead fire, which materially assisted our troops holding that portion of the trenches. After suffering very heavily, the attack broke down. This was our first really big action, and the roar of the mountain batteries (one of which was built in our trenches), coupled with the detonation of the Japanese bombs, and the terrific rattle of rifle fire, was deafening. The days up to the 7 June, were well spent in securing our defences and deepening trenches. Certain allowances were made whereby some of us got turns down to the beach for a swim, and this proved a great boon as the weather was growing very hot and the trenches were almost unbearable towards mid-day, though we had a few casualties from snipers and shrapnel, to men unwary and unlucky enough to be caught in the open. On the 7 June, we were relieved and went down to bivouac in Mule Gully, a fairly sheltered spot under the Cathedral Bluff, though we suffered some annoyance from the big guns at Chanak, and also from our old friend "Anafarta Annie", the latter breaking up our Church parade on the very first Sunday, and wounding two men. During our stay here we suffered about 25 casualties from "Annie", this time she was a source of great annoyance all round, rarely a day passing without her claiming 40 to 50 victims on the beaches and the tracks leading thereto.



The time in this rest camp was employed mostly in swimming, though each day a party, about 100 strong, was sent up to assist in deepening and widening the trench systems at Walker's Top. As there were no cooks, each Section, 4 men, had to do its own cooking and in this respect the bushman showed up to great advantage. Many curious but appetising dishes were made up from "bully and biscuits", rissoles being general favourites. These were concocted from "bully", ground biscuits, a little Indian meal if obtainable, and some wild thyme (the latter was growing everywhere among the thick scrub). Some of the boys "palled up" with the Indian mule drivers and so managed to secure a few curry roots. The days of invitations to dine out were not frequent, though occasionally some section would give a quiet little party, supplemented by a drink saved from the rum issue. There used to be some great battling to "do" the Quartermaster, especially at a dump, though it was very rare to hear of rations being "pinched", which would have caused another man to go short. A great stunt was to visit the flour stack at the beach, and the bags here, although always well guarded, nearly all showed signs of human rats. A man would walk up, and as soon as the sentry's back was turned, proceed to fill his shirt quickly from a hole made with a jack knife.

On one occasion, I saw a Trooper go straight up to a flour stack while the clerk was taking a tally of the bags. He made no hesitation but simply grabbed a bag and walked straight round the corner to where a group of us were sitting and placing the bag on the ground casually sat down on it and joined in our conversation. The clerk who had been absorbed in his tally suddenly woke up and rushed round quickly, seeing no one in sight along the beach, he excitedly asked us had we seen a man go by with a bag of flour, and explained the circumstances. Of course, we had not, and said so. The clerk, after a few minutes puzzling as to whether the thief had fallen through the



earth or not, and not thinking of looking amongst us for the culprit, as he had noticed us sitting about for some time, went back to his counting. To this day I feel sure that he puzzles over that mysterious happening; and we often laughed after at what explanation he tended his O.C.

By this time we were quite old soldiers and well able to keep our end up at foraging. The ration issue was always good and we got daily, such items as bacon, cheese, jam, dried fruit, biscuit and rum and lime-juice. The trouble was its daily sameness and when an occasional issue came along of "Maconachie" it received a good welcome.

Major O'Brian, our Second in Command, left us in this camp, he being invalided to Egypt through continued bad health. Major Gregory took over his duties. Lieut E G Wilson was detached to General Headquarters as a scout Officer. He took about six men with him and these did very valuable work during the next few weeks on the left flank, and most of them acted as guides to the different Units in the Suvla Bay operations. Days passed fairly quietly, shrapnel and snipers accounting for a few men. Parties were sent up to the trenches each morning on sapping, while each night a Squadron would take its turn at inlying picquet, sleeping on the cliff face just near Cathedral Corner. The sapping work was not a popular item; it was always dangerous, and added to this the extreme hard nature of the ground, combined with the cramped condition in which one had to work, used to make us ache with pain. Several times the course of the trench would take us right through a dead body, the work of getting past this would cause us some little trouble. It was quite a common sight to pass through portions of the <sup>S</sup> maps, and see a pair of boots, the feet of a dead man, or his hands or else some boards passing through the sides holding the bodies in place. In no time we grew callous to such items and the boards often contained epitaphs inscribed there by some 'hard case'.

On the 20 June, we again occupied the trenches on Walker's Top, this

time taking a sector a little on the left of our old position and directly facing the enemy trenches on Baby 700, only 230 yards away. The shell-fire and bombing had greatly increased on the part of the enemy since our last turn, it was very evident that this portion of the line had been greatly strengthened by them since the armistice. In a few days quite a number of our men had either been killed or wounded, and on the 27 June, after a terrific bombardment at very close range, we had the great misfortune to lose the following:- Killed, Major E A Gregory, Capt & Adjt J T Crowl, and 5 Other Ranks. Wounded, Lieut Col White, and 14 others. Major Gregory's death was a very great loss. He showed great promise as a soldier, and had the respect and confidence of all who knew him. Capt Crowl, had become very popular with us and "Terry's" smile was known everywhere. The enemy kept up a raking and demoralising fire until the 29 June, he slackened up for a few hours. At 2100, however, a very heavy artillery fire was commenced by the Turks; it ceased after half an hour, only to be followed by a fierce rifle fusillade, lasting one hour. This slackened then ceased altogether. At mid-night the forward saps reported much enemy movement going on in their trenches, and immediately all our men were got in readiness to resist an attack. The supports were stood to, and everything possible to guard against surprise was done. At a quarter of an hour after mid-night the Turks sprung out of their trenches and made a fierce rush, but were immediately met with a withering fire. Their numbers must have been 1000, and in such a small area they were tightly massed. Our hail of bullets wrought great execution, and had the effect of making the line swerve to the left. This pressure forced those on the right into some of our secret saps where they were promptly accounted for by bayonets and bombs. A terrific din went on and flares lit up the scene, making all as plain as day. The Turks were completely demoralised in a few moments,



and could be seen running here and there like frightened rabbits. Our Supports had now come in and were anxious to take part in the show. As the fire benches were too crowded the men jumped up at the rear of our trenches and fired from there. Any high point of vantage was manned regardless of danger and all were intent on shooting. Many of the enemy seemed to have lost all sense of direction and as the flares glared out they would rise up quickly and scamper in any direction, most of them only getting a few feet before they would be riddled. The scene was awful and the whole attack a complete disaster for the enemy. No doubt many got back in to their trenches in safety, but at day-break 255 corpses were counted in our trenches and on our parapets, while the ground in between was covered with dead and wounded amounting to equally as many. Our own casualties were 6 killed and 12 wounded. The next two or three days were spent in burying the dead and cleaning and repairing our trenches. Those dead near enough to our trenches were pulled in with grappling hooks while many of the wounded were brought in at night. In a few days the stench was almost unbearable and we welcomed our relief on the 4 July, when we moved down into a bivouac at the foot of Walker's, some 300 yards to the right of our old Mule Gully Camp. The men at this time were suffering very badly from vomiting sickness and with septic sores. The latter is a kind of scurvy and is similar to the Australian Scourge known as "Barcoo Rot", known to every bushman West of the Darling. However, a good rest here did us much benefit. Our duties consisted of supplying the usual sapping parties and inlying picquets but we had ample time to go bathing each day, a pastime very beneficial to the men. By tramping out to No.2 Outpost, a mile away, we got some good water in this camp we also saw some bread here the first time for many weeks. The flies and vermin were becoming intolerable and the Medical Officer was at his wits end to know how to



cope with disease owing to the very limited facilities at his disposal for combating the same. Dysentery and diarrhoea were very bad, our evacuations began to grow alarmingly. The recent casualties made some promotions necessary, and Capt McLaurin was promoted Major, and Lt Dale appointed Adjutant. RSM Strang, one of our old Broadmeadows instructors, was transferred to us and appointed RSM. Squadron Sergeant Major Marsh was granted a Commission in the Regiment being appointed <sup>2nd Lt</sup> Adjutant. ~~RSM Strang, one of our old Broadmeadows instructors was transferred to us and appointed RSM. Squadron Sergeant Major Marsh was granted a commission in the Regiment being appointed a second Lieutenant.~~ This was hailed with great delight as it was the first promotion we had had come from the ranks in the field and it was a great incentive to the other NCO's. On the 14 July, we received a great shock, our popular medico Dr Campbell killed by a direct hit from Beachy Bill, whilst bathing down at Watson's pier. The "Doc" had been a great favourite. Captain Beamish reported on the 15th, in his place. On the 29 July, all our leather gear, bandoliers, etc, were handed in and exchanged for infantry web equipment. It appeared to us that we were parting with out last link with the horses and as a consequence we were not too pleased. However, the new equipment soon got its due appreciation, though we had a deal of labour assembling it together. Other than the swimming there was little to amuse the men in those day's, although a couple of times we did attempt some moonlight concerts. The best of these was held just prior to our return to the trenches, which latter took place on the 29 July, and we relieved the 9th LH, at Nos 1 and 2 posts, Walkers Top. We marched into the trenches in the afternoon and while doing this the enemy 75 gun took toll of 1 man killed and two wounded. It seemed a bad start for us during our next few weeks term of duty here. Life was very precarious during the succeeding days and the enemy in the high ground overlooking us gave us a very bad time. Casualties

were frequent each day and the whole position was rapidly becoming untenable. However, towards the first of August, rumours of a big attack to be launched at Suvla, started to excite us. Down on the Beaches below could be seen signs of great preparations, and we supplied several parties to haul guns up near our position. On the 3 August, we received a big batch of reinforcements from Egypt, bringing us well up to establishment. On the fourth, we were issued with final orders for our part in the operations. The instructions contained in these were very explicit and full of detail. The attack by us was to be delivered at the trenches on Baby 700, in two lines, each of 150 bayonets, though this was subsequently altered to read every available man, thus bringing the strength of each line over 200. Only bayonets and bombs were to be used. Each line had 24 Bomb throwers and carriers, while every man was also supplied with two bombs. Lieutenant Howard, had charge of all bombing personnel and arrangements. Each man excepting the bombers carried 200 rounds of SAA, and in the way of rations had 6 biscuits, a tin of bully and a water-bottle. As there was to be no further water issue for 19 hours orders were given to conserve it as much as possible. All wounded were to be left to the stretcher bearers, while any prisoners were to be sent to the rear without escort. White patches were sewn on our shirts at the back, and we also wore white armbands. This idea was to enable our own artillery observers to tell us from the Turks as we advanced. "B" Squadron under Major Redford was to be the first line, supplemented by 2 Officers and 50 Bayonets from "A" Squadron, while "C" Squadron with a similar addition from "A", was to form the second line. The first rush was to be led by the Colonel himself, while Major Deeble was entrusted with the command of the second. Throughout the whole day everyone was busy and as soon as the work was done most of us sat down to pen a word of farewell home. All realised that ours was to be no light job. The difficulties and strength of the enemy position had long been



known, not only to us but had practically become a bye-word to every Anzac on Gallipoli. However, there was never a thought of hanging back, rather did each man look forward with expectancy to having a real tryout with Brer Turk. On the morning of the fifth, at ten o'clock, we took over all the front saps and trenches manned by the 10th LH, and were quite ready for events. Looking straight out in the front of our position here, the ground took a sharp slope upwards, and our trenches formed the foot of a feature known as "Baby 700". From above, the enemy completely dominated us and consequently enfiladed many of our communication trenches at very close range. Their position consisted of a series of trenches running round the slopes of the hill, almost semi-circular, one above the other, at distances of 20 yards, the wings of the rear trenches commanding those below. In the same way they commanded our trenches, and movement during the day was almost fatal. Added to the terrible heat of the sun, the flies, and the vermin, there were surely few worse hell-holes ever existed. The nearest Turkish trench was only 25 yards from ours in the centre, extending to about 70 yards on the wings. It is unnecessary to add that bomb throwing was a popular pastime for both sides, though at that time bombs were mostly made locally, and were not the superior class we now use.

That night we slept in the trenches, and the 6th dawned bringing a roar of artillery up the wind from Helles, where a preliminary feint was in progress, intended as a draw to the enemy, in the hope they would weaken their lines opposite "Anzac" and "Sulva Bay".

As the day advanced we were allowed out in turns for a spell in the shade at shrapnel terrace, but the late afternoon saw us all gathered again in position.

The night of the 6th/7th, was moonless and chilly. We had been made to stack all our belongings, including tunics and overcoats, well at the rear of our position, and the men only had their flannel shirts for body covering. The



night air struck through, and despite a good rum issue, made us all into a shivering huddled mass, all fervently wishing for daylight.

About 9pm, a gang of engineers arrived, and with the aid of some of our men, quickly set to work removing sections of our barbed wire entanglements, to give us a clear passage through. This they soon accomplished, losing one man killed and a few wounded. The officer in charge was shot through the foot, but although it must have been exceedingly painful, he made light of it, his chief concern seemed to be more about his damaged boot than his foot.

All were roused at 3am, on the 7th, and preparations made 'hopping over'. Packs were adjusted, and bombers and ladder carriers sorted up. Each man was in his place quickly, and eager, as soon as the preliminary bombardment ceased, to jump out. This preliminary bombardment was being done from the sea by warships, and a word of explanation regarding its carrying out may not be amiss, as some wonderment may be caused as to how this could be done in darkness, and with safety, when the opposing trenches were so close to each other. This was got over by us putting up a secret lamp, colored red, right in our foremost sap, and on the cliff edge facing seawards. The observers on the boats could see this, though the enemy could not, and the ship's gunners knew that anything within 20 yards of this would mean casualties for us. They had been practising nightly during the past few weeks, occasionally using their searchlights for better observation, and had by now become very accurate.

On this morning our orders were, that as soon as the warships ceased fire, our first line was to go over and out ten yards, then lie flat, while the second line was to jump out and lie down on the parapet. At a given signal both lines were to spring up and charge, the first line, if possible, to try and break through quickly to the rear, leaving the second line to clear up the first of the enemy trenches.

The bombardment started at 4am, and closed down at a quarter past. Contrary to our expectations, it was totally inadequate, doing little or no damage to the enemy or his trenches. In fact, it seemed to put him wide awake, for the first line had just got well over, and the second line was climbing out, when he let loose a terrific storm of fire. His trenches were absolutely packed with men, all firing furiously, while about 40 machine guns were concentrated from many directions on the few yards space. The noise was appalling. The air was filled with a venomous hissing and crackling of bullets, and the swish-swish of machine guns as they traversed to and fro, searching for victims.

It was impossible for anything to face such a hail of metal. Within three minutes, the greater number of the men were casualties. The second line bravely rushed forward to the first, only to make their plight worse. All that those still living could do was to hug the ground, and wait for the storm to cease. A very few, evidently in the confusion, not realising that those lying around were mostly casualties and unable to proceed, tried to advance, but these never got to the enemy trenches, though some fell on their parapets. During the next few minutes, the bullets ripped and tore through the bodies, and the air reeked with the smell of cordite and the stench of the dried Turkish victims left here since the attack on the 29th June. In our own trenches, little of the situation was actually realised, and the 10th Regiment, which was to follow us on, sent out their first line. These suffered enormous casualties also, and then someone found out that the situation was quite impossible and orders were given to get back as well as could be managed. After 20 minutes, the fire started to slacken gradually, though the enemy 75s put in a terrific hail of high explosive at 500 yards range. Those nearest our trenches made their effort to get back, chancing almost certain death in doing so, as it was now becoming quite light. For those able to run, the risk was soon over, but many of the wounded could only crawl or pull themselves along by their arms. One boy hopped in, his foot hanging by a sinew. He was laughing as he fell into friendly arms, and was still full of pluck. They lopped his foot off a few minutes after, at the clearing station, but he got home to Australia alright.



Those nearer the enemy were in a terrible plight. The slightest movement of hand or foot brought a hail of fire at them, and in this way many a poor wounded fellow, moving in his agony, suffered death. Two men were out all that day, in the burning sun and heat, getting back to our trenches at midnight. Our men in the trenches had been warned to be on the lookout for such as these, and so they got in safely. Their experiences during that day were awful. They lay all day with their backs to the scorching sun, unable to move, as they knew that the enemy were constantly sniping the wounded as they moved on side. Unable to lift their heads, the flies and vermin from the dead bodies crawled up their nostrils and in their ears. They could hear the Turks conversing quite plainly, and could also hear our own people trying to get in wounded by means of grappling irons.

By 8.a.m., it seemed evident that all of the Regiment left alive were now in the trenches, that is excepting the wounded who were being hastily attended to at the rear and then sent down to the beach. Many of the men were quite dazed, and efforts were made to get them out to a ledge on the cliff face, to hold a roll-call. After some time, this was done and the scene there was very heart-rending. The casualty list of that date tells only too plainly, the horror of it all.

13 Officers and 157 other ranks were killed, and 4 officers and 81 other ranks were wounded. Many of the men on the cliff face were so shaken, that they were almost helpless, and the evacuations during the ensuing few days, from shock were heart breaking.

A large number had minor wounds which were never reported. One Sergeant had his hair shot away straight along the top of his head, two deep bullet scores across his chest, and another right across his back. These had been done by a machine gun as he lay out in the line. He was not reported wounded, though he surely earned his gold stripe that morning.

After roll call and a scrap meal, we were put in some old gun pits near by, and given a couple of hours spell. The other units of the Brigade had meanwhile manned our trenches, and the Cheshire Regiment were in supports. These latter suffered particularly heavy casualties, being enfiladed by the 75 at the summit of "Baby 700". No further attempt was made to advance at this position, and indeed it never was pushed forward right up to the time of the evacuation. The whole affair was a ghastly blunder.



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At 1300, the work of reorganisation had served to show us that although sadly depleted in personnel, we were yet capable of helping materially in that sector of the line. Lieut Higgins with 25 men was sent out to a small peak known as 'Camels Hump', while a similar party under SSM Beath, went to 'Destroyer Hill', a small formation next to the Hump. These two parties had a very trying 24 hours, losing many casualties, but certainly inflicting severe damage on the enemy and helping the attack further on the left, round Table Top and Rhododendron Ridge considerably. Beath's party caught a large number of the enemy in a dead end gully and practically annihilated them with close range rifle fire. The remainder of these two parties returned to the Regiment on the night of the 9th/10th, and the regiment acted as a reserve to the 9th and 10th Regiments, at Walker's Top. Here 6 men were wounded, two of whom died at the casualty station.

On the 13 August, Major MacLaurin, returned to duty, and WO Strang, was slightly wounded and evacuated. On the 15th, Capt Baker returned from illness. A board of Officers was held to report on the casualties sustained in the charge. On the 17 August, Lieut Oliver, went to hospital, followed by Lieut Beath on the 20th, Major MacLaurin on the 26th, Lieut Mack on the 27th, Lieut Stewart on the 29th, while besides these very many of the men were sent away.

RETURN SHOWING PROMOTIONS MADE ON 7.8.15 GALLIPOLI

	Major Deeble A.V.	Promoted Temporary Lieut Col	7.8.15
	Lieut Arblaster R.E.	Promoted Captain	7.8.15
	Lieut Fry H.L.	Promoted Temporary Captain	7.8.15
	Lieut Baker R.E.	Promoted Captain	7.8.15
456	R.Q.M.S. Sproat J.	Promoted 2nd Lieut	7.8.15
38	S.S.M. Beath R.H.	Promoted 2nd Lieut	7.8.15
479	Sgt Wilson C.S.	Promoted 2nd Lieut	7.8.15
26	L/Cpl Oliver W.D.	Promoted 2nd Lieut	7.8.15
262	L/Cpl Wilson E.H.	Promoted 2nd Lieut	7.8.15
519	Cpl Brown R.H.	Promoted Temporary 2/Lieut	7.8.15
458	Sgt Stewart A.W.J.	Promoted Temporary 2/Lieut	7.8.15
66	L/Cpl Mack E.H.	Promoted Temporary 2/Lieut	7.8.15
470	L/Cpl Walker Y.H.	Promoted Temporary 2/Lieut	7.8.15
545	Tpr Whitehead E.	Promoted Temporary Lieut	7.8.15

The tremendous casualties and evacuations had now emaciated the Regiment to about all ranks, and this force moved out to Aghyl Dere, halfway to Sulva Bay, on the 28th, at 7pm.

There being no safe route to get to this place except through the narrow saps, and as each man had to carry his belongings, the men were extremely knocked up with this journey, and a few had to be sent into casualty stations on the way. Shellfire accounted for three.

In this sector the regiment came under the command of General Cox, and was located at the famous Hill 60. The fighting at this spot had been particularly heavy, and our two sister regiments had suffered particularly, also a battalion of the Ghurkas. The whole area was littered with corpses, the enemy having received almost treble of what he had given. Two officers and fifty men were sent in to man the trenches, and assist the troops already there, but the following day our quota was cut down to one Officer and 25 men. Lieutenant Higgins and 8 men were picked out and sent across to Imbros island for a spell acting as a guard at General Headquarters. They only stayed away 2 weeks, but the respite did them the world of good.

We spent some days here, the men in the trenches being relieved by those in reserve every 24 hours, and thus most of them got some sort of rest. The reserve camp was in a beautiful little valley shaped like a horseshoe, and the enemy guns did not locate us here for some time. However, within a few days our evacuations had been so great, that by the 6 September, the regiment was reduced to 5 Officers, and 30 bayonets.

Being now practically 'non est' as a fighting force, we were ordered to rejoin BHQ up on Canterbury slopes, and the night of the 8th, saw us scrambling up the narrow gullies and watercourses of Chunuk Bahr. Here we were made a reserve force, supplying small fatigue parties, manning Table Top, and sending out two small posts, nightly in front of our trenches as alarm



posts. By the 13th, Lt Col Deeble, Capt Baker and Lieut E H Wilson had been evacuated sick. Major Scott from the 10th LH, assumed command. Lieut Higgins returned from Imbros, and Lieut Oliver from Egypt, the former taking over the duties of Adjutant from Captain Arblaster, the latter being required by Brigade as machine gun Officer. Captain Arblaster was however, wounded, just prior to his taking over his Brigade duties, and evacuated. Sergeant Major McGrath and Trooper T S Austin were promoted to commissioned rank on the 14th, and Lieut Higgins to Captain. Thirty three reinforcements arrived on the 17 September, and these just helped to keep the unit going. Casualties were constant each day, the average being about three. Most of the wounds were sustained through the agency of shrapnel and spent bullets, and in the dug-outs of the men, these latter being built facing the enemy, owing to the nature of the country.

On the 27 September, Major A L Nicholas, was sent to take over command, Major Scott being required at his own Unit. This officer was however, blown to pieces by a direct hit from a seventy five, just immediately after his relief.

Captain Hore was evacuated wounded on the same day, and Lieut Oliver was sent to Egypt on duty for the Brigade.

The men were still kept on sapping and outpost duties, and sickness was very prevalent.

Captain Shannon in charge of a batch of reinforcements, arrived on the 2 October, including himself and 17 other ranks for this regiment. These were a very welcome addition and brought our strength up to about 80 all ranks. This allowed of a little reorganisation, and also a few promotions among the NCO's. Warrant Officer Gilbert, from the 12th LH Regiment reported and took over the duties of RSM.

On the 4 October, the enemy made a big demonstration but nothing startling

happened. On the 5th, we lost a few men, wounded through the heavy shelling. The weather at this time was extremely cold and wet and early in the month a terrific storm raged playing havoc with shipping and ration arrangements. At nights terrific gusts of wind called "Levanter" used to burst up the gullies, wrecking our dug-out shelters and making most of us extremely uncomfortable. These however, served to hurry the preparations for the winter and each day now we had to supply parties to go down to the Beach, to drag timber and building materials up to make roofs for our shelters.

Lieut McGrath was evacuated sick on the 9 October. On the 17th, Major McLaurin and Lieut Wilson returned from Hospital, and on the 18th, Major L C Maygar VC, from the 4th Light Horse Regiment took over the command of the Regiment with the rank of Temp Lieut Colonel. Major Nicholas went to the 10th Light Horse in command. On the 19 October, Lieut Wilson was sent to Hospital while Lieut Rose, was transferred from B.H.Q. and took over our Machine Gun Section. Lieut A Crawford and 25 Other Ranks all of whom had been evacuated wounded or sick previously reported back from Egypt, on the 20 October, also a batch of reinforcements, 31 strong under Lieut Clark. On the 29th, Lieut Austin was evacuated sick.

During this month the men had been worked very hard and suffered a great deal from shell fire, sickness and exposure. The 1 November, brought along a bad day's shelling, one shell alone killing 3 and wounding 6 men. Major McLaurin was sent to Egypt on Brigade work on the 6 November, principally with the object of hunting up reinforcements. On the 13th, 31 men arrived and, to the great delight of those in the party, Lieut Walker and 41 Other Ranks were sent out to Mudros for a spell. On the 14 November, the Regiment took over a section of the line at Tolman's post. It was fairly quiet position, casualties were few. Major Shannon was sent to Hospital on the 17th. On the



23 November, Tpr T Urquhart was promoted to a Commission.

December came in with the weather bitterly cold and snow everywhere. Happily the personnel were fairly well supplied with warm clothing. On the 8th of this month, Lieut MacPherson and 1 Other Rank, reinforcements, arrived. Lieut Sproat, the Quartermaster, was evacuated the following day, sick. On the 12 December, the portion of the line manned by the 10th Light Horse was taken over by us and that Regiment was evacuated. Lieut Urquhart, was sent to Hospital on the 13 December, followed by Capt Hore, on the 18th.

The 19th, brought more relief to the men, than we had yet known. Our evacuation was to take place and though all ranks felt the sentimental reason against leaving the place where we had fought so hard, it was recognised that there was no other alternative. The personnel was divided up into various parties and the first party "A" left the bivouacs at noon. At 9pm, "B" party went down to the beach leaving capt Higgins, 4 Machine Gunners, and 18 Other Ranks to carry on, whilst Lieut Colonel Maygar stayed and supervised the Brigade personnel.

The night was fine and clear being bright moon-light. The enemy could be seen quite plainly putting our barbed wire and cutting brushwood. There was little firing going on and that was done mostly by our last party which had been left in charge of specially erected rifles, these being discharged by the pulling of a string and other devices.

No doubt the enemy thought that all was normal and must have felt chagrined when we did find out we had actually left. At 2am, on the 20th "C" party met Lieut Colonel Maygar at the foot of the hill and slipped quietly down to the beach. By 4am, the last of them were aboard the "Prince Abbas" and bound for Lemnos, arriving there safely at 9am, and transshipping to the "Horatio" and latter to the "Anchises". The latter boat sailed for Alexandria on the 21st, arrived there on the 25 December.

The troop disembarking immediately and proceeding to Heliopolis, reaching there on the 26th, a tattered a war-worn crowd, containing, of all the fine fellows who sailed away so full of cheer on the 14 May, seven months before, only one man, Trooper Driver, who had not been off the Peninsula.



## EGYPT AFTER GALLIPOLI

1916

The first days immediately after the arrival back at Heliopolis were full of excitement. Old friends were met with, including our horses. Many of the personnel who had been evacuated from the Peninsula had seen service on the Western Frontier Campaign against the Senussi and there was much to talk about. Reinforcement Officers and men were taken on the Regimental Strength, and we were once more made into a mounted Unit, all the old elementary training being gone through. It did not take long for all to become quite at home again. The horses were very fresh after their long idleness, but quickly buckled down.

Our stay here was well earned and it certainly proved most beneficial to the worn-out men. Leave was freely allowed and the scenes of Cairo were quite new again. The change of diet and comfortable quarters worked wonders in the appearance of the men, and money was freely spent to relieve the feelings so long pent up. The Brigade carried out all sorts of schemes, including some sham fights for the Cinema. These latter caused much laughter and side amusement. On one occasion, at a sham storming of a redoubt, the Padre could be seen reading services over the dead right in the thick of a mellee on the parapets. Knowing the habits of the average Padre this caused a huge amount of laughter. An Ambulance Wagon dashing up in realistic fashion very nearly ran over a supposed dead man, the latter having to roll nimbly aside to escape the wheels. It was unfortunate that this should have come within scope of the picture machine just then, though the man's language could almost have been photographed. Our work, combined with the good living, made us all very fit in a surprisingly short period.

In the middle of February, the whole Brigade trekked through Cairo to the Barrage, a beautiful garden Island in the Nile, a few miles north of Cairo. We spent a good bivouac amongst the trees and shrubbery. Everyone began to grow restless, however, and welcome rumours began to spread, about the middle of February, that we were off to take up a portion of the line on the Canal. On the 26th, the Regiment entrained in various parties to Serapeum, a spot mid-way between Suez and Ismailia. We camped on the West side of the Canal until the 13 March, and then crossed over and camped at Railhead, about 8 miles out on the Desert. Two Squadrons were sent out a further 4 miles to the front line in the vicinity of a big sand mountain called "Gebel Hebeita" and here carried on making trench systems and re-doubts on the sand hills. Miles upon miles of barbed wire were put up in this country and considering the enemy could not approach within 20 miles without being observed, it all seemed a fearful waste of good material, and subsequent events proved it so. Life here was most trying and unpleasant, Heat, flies and sand-storms being our daily portion. Very often the horses had to be sent back to the Canal for a drink, an operation which took all day to fulfil. However, from this period on, our horses were never afterward allowed more than two drinks a day under any circumstances, a piece of training that stood them in good stead in many subsequent marches. On the 18 March, a very popular Officer in the person of Lieut E H Wilson died of illness at Ismailia. This Officer had received his Commission just after the fatal Walker's Ridge charge and had done magnificent work on the Peninsula.

The morning of the 21 March, saw a reconnaissance party of about 150 all ranks leave the Brigade and proceed on a road to Wadi Mucksheib a small Turkish post away out on the Desert about 30 miles East. The march was very arduous but ended most successfully, about 40 prisoners being brought



in, while the water reservoirs there were destroyed. Capt A E Wearne, a newly joined Officer, was in charge of the 8th Regiment personnel, consisting of about 6 Officers and 72 Other Ranks, he was subsequently awarded the Military Cross, and Sgt P J Maginness the D.C.M., Cpl Monaghan was our only casualty, he being killed.

This incident only occupied two days and provided a good break in the general monotony of the desert camp life. On the 4 April, the Regiment received orders to move to Railhead, Ferry Post, a similarly situated camp, but about 8 miles to the North. We had a better time here, however, getting more patrol work and doing occasional sham fights, in conjunction with our Infantry camped in the locality. The latter were just preparing for France and many vacancies for commissions were offered to our N.C.O's and men. Captains Hore, Hutchinson and Arblaster were all transferred, the first named ultimately rising to Lieut Colonel on the Staff, but the latter two (both Duntroon boys) were killed. About 8 N.C.O's and men were given commissions and transferred, their Gallipoli experience being eagerly availed of.

As English troops were holding most of the line there was little doing for us in the way of work. One Squadron was always detached to do patrols well out in front, and also night outpost. No enemy was ever seen here, and the chief danger was always expected from the "Tommy Posts" as we came in after dark. Occasional visits back to the Canal gave the horses a swim, but the distance going and returning through the heat and dust was hardly worth the dip.

On the 28 March, a further move north to a place called Ballgh Bunyon, (about 12 miles) was made. We expected by the name to find some Irish Division here but the whole place was as barren as those we had just left, not a vestige of green stuff to be seen. Patrols were again the daily routine, though occasional parties were sent out to various cases to sink

wells and generally improve the water facilities in readiness for any advance. About the 1 August, the whole of the Brigade came along and wild rumours of fighting up round Katia, some miles further north, reached us. Accordingly, preparations were made in readiness for a call-out.



## ROMANI

On the 4 August, the whole camp was hurriedly roused just before the usual reveille time by hurried orders to saddle-up at once, and proceed to Hill 70 near Kantara, there to obtain our disposition orders to meet the Turks who were advancing through Katia on Romani. No one was allowed to carry anything on the saddle except rations and forage. Blankets, overcoats, and even tunics had to be left behind, all ranks appearing in short sleeves. The idea was to travel light.

We left Ballagy Bunyon in Brigade column at 0730, and reached Hill 70 at 1130, and received more rations. After some delay, we started off for Duiedar and about 8pm, took over an outpost line for the night in the sand-hills about 3 miles out to the north east of the Hod. A couple of strays evidently lost from their column were captured here, but no other enemy were seen.

At dawn next morning, the column started off due east to pick up touch with the enemy. The route went straight out into the glaring desert and sigh of relief went up when Bir en Nuss was reached, and water obtained for the horses. After a brief halt, we were off again, heading for Nagid. Here the enemy were encountered and the 9th and 10th Regiments sailed straight in and after a rapid fight succeeded in capturing about 600 prisoners. We were in reserve during this fight, and had a panoramic view of the whole show. At Hagid Hod the horses were again watered and the men had a couple of hours spell for tea. After dark a move was made back for Hod El Enna but the column losing touch with the advance guard, got 'bushed' and bivouaced among the sand-hills for the night. No time was lost in getting off the mark next morning and Hamisah was reached about 9am, and a halt called until mid-day. A good deal of abandoned material was found here including machine guns and ammunition, also a few wounded abandoned by the enemy were brought in and tended. At noon still going east, we were making

Darem and reaching that place without much opposition, camped there for the night of the 6th/7th. Off again through Sagia on the 7 August, and A and B Squadrons working the advance screen, were just clear of that place when the enemy caught up with. The whole Regiment was at once sent into the line, but the Turks were very strong, and we could make no head-way. At 300 yards range, hot fire was put in by both sides, while the enemy artillery was very active and accurate. Lt Urquhart and two ORs were killed, and Lt Austin and six others wounded. The horses were being searched out by shrapnel, so the Regiment was ordered by the Brigadier to drop back on the Sagia oasis and deny the enemy the water there. This was done and the remainder of the day passed very quietly. The 9th Regiment relieved us at night-fall and we went back to Hod Aysh for the night. By day-light the column was moving on and during the next few hours passed through Baheira, Dhahab and Hillali Hods, good water being obtained at the latter place. The desert herabouts was very rough, huge sand hills and valleys and wind scooped cliffs making our progress excessively slow.

The enemy was making a wonderful retirement and proved his knowledge of the country. At each Hod, we would come upon a certain amount of ammunition and heavy gear abandoned in haste, but throughout this day there was only skirmishing amount the most advanced of our troops and the enemy rear guard. Hammam was reached at sun down and bivouac made for the night; but at 4am, on the 9 August, we were on the move again and heading for Bada. The Regiment was vanguard to the column on this date and by 7.30am, the screen (C Squadron) was in touch with the enemy, 3000 strong, who were entrenched in a strong position 150 yards south of Bada Hod. Away up on the left was Bir el Abd, and heavy fighting was going on there. The New Zealanders, on the right of this line, soon gained touch with us and then



the Regiment attacked Bada. A Squadron took the centre, with B on the right and C on the left. Our line charged into within 400 yards of the redoubt, dismounted and settled down, the horses getting right back out of artillery range but not without first suffering heavy casualties. There was little cover, what there was being made by scooping up the sand in front of one's head. A Squadron, under Maj McAllister, was having a particularly bad time, also two Troops of C Squadron, under Lt McGrath, the latter being in a very exposed sector. The engagement kept up very fiercely throughout the day and the men, especially the wounded suffered agonies from the thirst and heat. The enemy artillery and machine gun fire was very accurate and our casualties were 2, Lt Buckland and six ORs killed, and 33 wounded, five of these died during the next few days. At dusk the enemy fiercely counter-attacked, "A" Squadron was compelled to retire some distance, where the 9th Light Horse came up and checked their advance. The two troops of "C" Squadron, not receiving any orders, were left in a very precarious position, being now almost in to Bada Hod. On seeing the situation, however, they came out in the darkness along a small defile and ultimately joined up the rest of the Regiment.

The 9th Regiment taking over the line, we moved back to Hillali and bivouaced, the next morning at 6am, moving to Hassaniya, and thence in the afternoon back to the line to relieve the 9th again, where they had relieved us the day previous. At midnight four patrols were sent out and these returned with reports that the enemy had evacuated his redoubts. Long before dawn we were all moving on rapidly and throughout that day advanced without opposition. Afternoon found us near Bir el Abd where an artillery duel took place against the enemy at Salmana. Horses and men were now showing signs of extreme distress from the arduous work, and as the troops were already too far removed from the supply bases, the



chase was here given up. The Brigade was given a sector in the general scheme to protect, and the Regiment was sent back to Hillali where it spelled for a few hours, moving next morning to Hassaniya where the whole Brigade camped for some time.

At Hassaniya we re-organised, blankets and clothing were got from Balagh Bunyon and all enjoyed a fair spell. Most days we supplied out-posts and patrols, while at night we took our turn at protective lines well in front of the main body. A few strays were captured now and then, but the enemy had made well away to Mazar and there was little doing in the way of fight. Several times we participated in sweeps across sectors of the country, and this way picked up a fair quantity of abandoned enemy material. Some promotions were made here, our Quartermaster, Lt Sproat, being made a Captain, and RSM Mulder and Sgt Currie being granted commissions. Lt Austin returned from hospital. About this time the troops rations were supplemented by delicious ripe dates, all the Hods in the vicinity producing big crops. These proved a great boon and we never tired of them.

On the 11 September, after a most enjoyable respite, the Brigade moved north and relieved the New Zealanders at Amara. We had just settled there when the orders for the operations against Mazar were received. On the fourth day after our arrival, we moved in Brigade column through Bir el Abd to Salmana, reaching there at 0600 hrs, after travelling all night. We rested there throughout the hours of day light, the only incident of note being an air raid by an enemy plane which machine gunned the camp, causing a few casualties. At 5pm, we were off again and heading straight for Mazar cross the sandy waste. Going at a good pace, the 29 miles of waterless stretch was got over in good time, and by dawn we were making for positions south of the Turkish redoubts. By 6am, we were attacking, but arrangements had

miscarried with some of the other Units, and they were not up in time to co-operate. Desultory fighting went on throughout the morning, and we approached to within 600 yards of the enemy redoubt. A heavy machine gun and rifle fire was being put up from here but our casualties were light. Our aeroplanes were doing excellent reconnaissance work, and reported that the enemy were evacuating their positions. However, the scheme was abandoned and all forces were withdrawn before noon and the long trek back to Salmana began. Halfway on the route, we were met by a small camel convoy and men and horses obtained a small drink. Salmana was reached at 8pm, in the evening and after the horses had been given their fill at the wells, bivouac was made for the night. We left for Amara at 8am, the next day.

On the 20 September, we moved again, taking up the Bada - Bir el Abd outpost line. The work was not strenuous and the horses quickly recovered from their Mazar trip. The railway was creeping up in our rear, thank mainly to the splendid work of the Egyptian Labour Corps, and in a few days were at Amara. This meant full rations to us, besides extras in the way of Canteen goods. Our main work here was the providing of patrols, chiefly at night time, to scour the desert approximately 15 miles to the North East and East. Now and again a few enemy deserters were picked up, but neither the enemy or ourselves could do much in the waterless space between Salmana and Mazar. Besides the dates, here we also came upon huge patches of watermelon, evidently planted by the Bedouins but deserted on our approach. It was our good fortune to strike these just when ripe, and it was a good sight to see men and horses taking in for all they were worth, especially after a long ride without water. Our days here were very happy, despite the sun and sand.

About this time, a reinforcement Officer, Lt Maunsell, was taken on strength. On the 12 October, the line was advanced, and we were located

at Geila, the front outpost line extending from Salmana across to Ganadil, thence south about 4 miles. At Geila Major W J Day joined up after a long absence and all old hands were glad to see him with the Unit again. The usual reconnaissance and night outpost work was carried out and the days were devoid of incident except occasional visits from enemy planes, which at times bombed us, though most of their attention was given to the Railway Gangs. Major Shannon conducted a couple of long reconnaissances to Malha for the Brigade, and found all clear there.

On the 22 October, came good news. We were to go back Romani for a spell and accordingly left that day. Romani meant canteens, tents, baths and sundry other luxuries, which we had long since lost. We bivouaced at Amara and Neghilyat en route arriving at Et Maler (Romani) on the 24 October, and taking over the New Zealand camp. Everyone went in for a thorough clean up and the disinfectants were kept busy. Football matches and concert parties were arranged and carried out. Squadrons were allowed to ride down to Mahamidya daily for swimming, and small leave parties went to Port Said and Cairo. Another reinforcement Officer joined up here Lt Mulholland. Reinforcements were sent up from Koascar Depot and Remounts were also procured in place of worn out horses. Everything was in good order when word came on the 23 November, to get on the move again, this time to Malha, a few miles South East of Mazar, the last named place having been abandoned by the Turks.



EL ARISH. MAGHDABA

The Regiment left Et Maler (Romani) on the 23 November 1916, en route for Malha, a deep valley in the sand hill wastes, miles south of Mazar. A few details were left behind to clear up the camp, in charge of Lt MacPherson. We camped that night at Kirba and on the morning of the 24 November, proceeded to Mossiefig, where the following Officers left to proceed to Cairo to attend a cavalry course of instruction at Zietoun school - Maj Day, Capt Higgins, Lt Walker and Lt Currie.

On the 25 November, we reached Kasseiba and the following day Malha. The journey had been done in easy stages, and as men and horses were in good condition, the journey had the effect of hardening them up. The Brigade stayed at Malha for three weeks and the Regiment, less "A" Squadron, which was posted at Kasseiba, carried out its portion of outpost duties and reconnaissance work. Every third day our turn came to do outpost and all ranks turned out and took up positions stretching practically in a semi circle from East to West on the southern side. Brigadier General Royston personally conducted Officers' reconnaissances to the Mageibra Hills, and we several times furnished parties to visit and become acquainted with the line held by the New Zealand Mounted Rifle and alarm turn-outs were carried on daily and the troops and horses here were in good fettle. All ranks lived in 'bivvies' and these had now evidently come to stay, replacing the bell-tents and having the advantage that each man carried his own, which though a little extra weight on the horse, freed the transport wagon for other work.

Several times in this camp, we were visited by enemy planes and once or twice were bombed. On one occasion, a plane flew over dropping four bombs, none of which exploded, though one actually fell on the head of a machine gun horse, killing it instantly.

Reinforcements and remounts had been kept well supplied, and on the 20 December, when the plans were right for an advance on El Arish, we were right up to strength. This town had for weeks excited our curiosity. Each day our patrols had been getting a glimpse of a white spire (the Mosque) shimmering above the mirage, far away across the sand, and the dome of the white tomb of Nebi Yesir was conspicuous among green palm trees on the sea shore. For some reason the enemy did not make a stand at El Arish, evacuating a strong system of trenches and redoubts built on the south side of the town. Our columns entered the place on the 21 December, and rested there a day. The inhabitants were very nervous but seemed pleased to be free from the Turks. The latter seemed to have taken everything useful to themselves, but though food stuffs were scarce, we managed to obtain eggs at a high price.

At 1800 hrs, on the 22nd, we moved out in the main column to Bir Lahfan arriving there at 2200 hrs, and waiting for the ration camels to come up to draw rations before proceeding to Maghdaba. The night was bitterly cold. By 0100 hrs, on the 23 December, all ration had been allotted and the column got moving once more down the Wadi bed. At 0600 hrs, we could see the buildings at Maghdaba redoubts, and a halt was made in the Wadi bed about 3 miles N.W. Later on, we moved over to high ground north of the enemy trenches and from here commence our attack on foot. The Brigade dispositions were, the 8th and 9th in the firing line, the 8th linking with the CMR on the left and the 9th with ICC on the right. The Regimental dispositions were, "C" Squadron on the left, "B" Squadron on the right, "A" being kept in reserve. The advance proceeded quickly, though much trouble was caused by advanced enemy snipers who could obtain good cover on the hummocky ground. Both the Squadrons advanced on redoubts simultaneously, "C" Squadron and a portion of the CMR taking the left one and obtaining 64 prisoners, while Lt Walker, taking through a reserve troop, captured four 9 pounders at the rear. "B" Squadrons, with



very able assistance from a Lewis Gun of the 9th Light Horse, quickly accounted for their redoubt and consolidated, and being reinforced by the remainder of "C" Squadron charged and took the main redoubt, securing approximately 250 prisoners. Other captures by the Regiment were the 9 pounder guns already mentioned, 1 machine gun, 44 pack animals loaded with SAA and many rifles.

Meanwhile, other redoubts began to surrender rapidly and the whole position was in our hands before 1800. The attack had been delivered with great dash and determination and the number of casualties incurred on our side in proportion to the magnitude of the operation was remarkably light. The Regiment was most unfortunate in the loss of Officers, these including the Adjutant Capt M B Higgins, Lt E H Mack and Lt E G Down, whilst Lt J T Currie was severely wounded as to necessitate his early return to Australia. 10 ORs were killed or wounded. By 1900, all horses had been watered at troughs in the Wadi so the Regiment was ordered to concentrate at Brigade Headquarters about two miles back towards El Arish. Here after rations were drawn and horses rested and fed, a move was made to return to El Arish, excepting "A" Squadron, which was detailed to remain behind and assist in collecting material and captured gear from the field next day. Bir Lahfan was reached at 0200 hr, and rations were again issued here, and the march back to El Arish resumed. All though the long night, we kept on the move and arrived at El Arish in the early morning. We marched round the outskirts of the town, produly flying the captured enemy flag, and eventually camped at Masaid, a huge date grove on the beach, approximately 4 miles to the south west.

A well earned and much needed rest supplemented by sea bathing was indulged in, and Christmas Day was the occasion of a double celebration



and thanksgiving. Two days later we again moved, this time to the head of the railway at Kilo 139 and to our rear about 9 miles. Transport difficulties had compelled this, as it was necessary that all available camels should be used to help in making the reserve and emergency dumps at El Arish. As this move was only necessary for a few days, most of the baggage was left at Masaid. However, it came on wet and cold and our few days were very miserable. All were glad to move back to Masaid on the 4 January, and gain the shelter of the trees.

R A F A

9 January, 1917

On the 8 January, the Brigade was camped at Masaid, having just returned from Kilo 139 on the 4th Inst.

At 1200, on the 8th, the whole Brigade moved out and concentrated at a rendezvous just north of El Arish on the east side of the Wadi. Here a halt was made and the horses were watered and fed. "A" Squadron (Mjr McAllister), was detached as escort to the Somerset Battery RHA, the remainder of the Regiment being in reserve to the Brigade. At 1700, our forces moved off for Rafa, via Sheikh Zowaid, the latter place being reached about 0100, on the 9th. Here a halt was made for 2 hours, each man holding his own horse, and ready to move at an instant's notice. The night was bitterly cold and it was quite a relief when the column moved off again, reaching some high ground in the vicinity of Shokh el Sufi at dawn. Here in full view of the astonished enemy, dispositions were made and in two hours our mounted troops had formed a cordon practically around the Rafa redoubt. Soon both sides got to work in real earnest and our troops started a rapid advance across country which offered not the least vestige of cover, and in the face of a withering rifle and machine gun fire. The enemy at first redoubts were getting pounded by our batteries very effectively. The 3rd Brigade went at the redoubt from a easterly direction the 8th Regiment being held in reserve at Div. Headquarters. Whilst the attack was in progress the Regiment supplied outposts and patrols, and guards over prisoners and captured stock. At 1600, aeroplanes reported enemy reinforcements coming from the direction Shellal and a troop from "B" Squadron was sent out to gain touch and information. Lieut. MacPherson the officer in charge, succeeded in doing this and at 1730, reported his estimate of the enemy at 2000 Infantry and 1

Squadron of cavalry approximately 5 miles from the frontier line and due east from Rafa redoubts. At 1930, outposts had been established and the troop was withdrawn to the main body. The main redoubts had by this time, capitulated and DHQ issued instructions that the Regiment was to take over the duties of rearguard and to assist wherever possible in collecting wounded and prisoners. "A" Squadron which had been relieved from duty with the guns had now been sent as escort to prisoners and had already departed for Sheikh Zowaid, and this left the Regiment only Headquarters and 2 Squadron strong. This force and a few ambulance details were left on the Battlefield, whilst all other troops made a hurried march back to Sheikh Zowaid. Throughout the night the situation was very precarious, and all ranks spent a very anxious time. The Bedouins (of whom there were a couple of thousand camped in the vicinity) seemed intent on trouble, and communications with Headquarters, at Zowaid were badly interrupted through the telephone wires being constantly cut. At dawn patrols had already obtained touch and information necessary to allow of dispositions being made to cope with any emergency. At 1000, Lieut Walker with one troop captured a post of the enemy numbering 90/ranks, just S.E. of Khan Yunus, and this officer with another troop from "C" Squadron, under Lieut McGrath, reconnoitred the country for about 5 miles easterly, driving back 2 enemy mounted patrols. "B" Squadron (Mjr Shannon) had patrolled the country between Rafa and Khan Yunus, and found it all clear. By 1100, on the 10 January, the work of burying our dead and collecting wounded was complete. These latter together with much equipment, rifles etc, had been despatched to Zowaid per camels, and 1100, were 4 miles clear of the battlefield. Lt Col Maygar began to draw in and collect his Regiment and it was just at this time that a friendly Bedouin brought news that a mixed force of enemy and Arabs intended to attack us. This force consisting of 2 Squadrons and was threatened our right flank, therefore a Squadron deployed to attack



it on its flank. A brisk fire was opened up by both sides and the enemy hurriedly retired leaving 5 prisoners in our hands. Our losses amounted to one horse being killed. As the whole of our force was now collected together, the C.O. ordered it to retire slowly and Sheikh Zowaid was reached about 1630. Here rations and forage were drawn and the horses were off-saddled and watered for the first time since leaving El Arish on 8 January, 1917.

The men and horses secured a good meal and Sheikh Zowaid was again left at 1800, Masaid being reached at 0135, on the 11 January. A days well earned rest and all ranks were again fit and eager. The conduct of all ranks throughout this very trying and anxious period was exemplary. The remarkable endurance displayed by the horses, many of whom covered distances in three days of 70 to 80 miles without the saddle being removed, and the successful protection afforded to the rear parties were fitting finishing performances to one of the most brilliant victories on the Palestine front.

For its services in this operation General Chauvel personally expressed his thank to the Regt at a Brigade parade held at Masaid on the 4 February, 1917. I've now settled down comfortably in Masaid Hod. A few tents were brought along and the camp gradually assumed ship shape proportions. Reorganisation was gone on with and this brought about it promotions to commissioned ranking RSM H M Nugent, SSM M W Cowell, R H Borbidge and H Peppercorn. Concerts and football were the order of the day and swimming was greatly appreciated. The horses were well looked after and soon recovered from all effects of the recent hard work. There was little done in the way of training, though occasional tactical schemes were held over ground some miles to the south east. A musketry course was held, chiefly for practice in rapid shooting.

BBdr Gen Royston kept the whole Brigade interested in its work and there is little doubt that this most popular officer had the 3 LH Brigade at its

highest pitch of efficiency during his term of command. His dash and general behaviour endeared him to all and every man under his command would have followed him to the ends of the earth.

About the end of January a great innovation came to the Regiments with the issue of Hotchkiss Guns. All throughout desert work we had been armed with 1 Lewis Gun per squadron, but now the issue came for 1 Hotchkiss rifle per Troop. The advantage of these were greatly appreciated and gun teams were speedily instructed in the handling of the weapon. Being simple of mechanism, this did not take long. The weeks passed quietly and about \_\_\_\_\_? We were not surprised at hearing rumours of advance.

G A Z A

MARCH - SEPTEMBER 1917

For some time the 1st and 2nd, Brigades had been patrolling the vicinity of Rafa and Khan Yunis, occasionally having a brush with the enemy near their main position at Shellal on the Wadi Ghuzze. News of an early offensive on our part began to flitter round and about this time also there was a good deal of re-organisation the composition of the Mounted forces . The 3rd Brigade was transferred from the Anzac Mounted Division and became portion of the Australian Division. As soon as re-organisation was complete, a start was made to get in touch with the enemy lines, more especially at Gaza, the next large city in our path. On the 9 March, the Brigade accordingly trekked north along the sea shore arriving at El Burg, 15 miles up, that same afternoon. A halt was made on the beach near here for two days, the weather being extremely wet and cold and the men having little beside their overcoats for protection. However, we had grown used to such things and took notice of the hardship. On the 13 March, we moved up 8 miles to Abu Thala and on the 14th, up a few more miles to Abu Shannar. A couple of Taubes came over but did not bomb as our formation was scattered in preparation, and did not offer a good target. We got a fairly sheltered camp here among the sand dunes on the beach and stayed a few days. We did a few outposts from here and reconnaissances as far as the Wadi Ghuzze, generally exchanging a few shots with Turkish patrols in this work.

On the 20 March, a big parade was held and the GOC Major General Hodgson distributed various decorations throughout the Brigade. The following day a big combined Race Meeting took place at Rafa and one of the Unit's horses, "Seymour", ridden by Capt Y H Walker, MC, won the big Steeple chase. This day the Regiment moved on North about 9 miles and camped at Marakeb, a point on



the beach about 7 miles south of Gaza. From now on we became very busy and our portion of the Brigade work kept us almost day and night on outpost duties. The enemy had withdrawn from his Shellal positions and gone back over the Wadi. This left us undisputed possessors of Khan Yunis and surrounding villages, and we were able to obtain oranges and other fruit to supplement the ration issue. The horses had a great time here also, the country being plentifully covered with crops and natural grasses. It also presented much firmer going and we were able to do our patrols at a greatly increased pace to that which we had attained on the desert. Our outpost line extended at this time from the Coast through Belah to the high ground north of Beni Sela. From almost any high point it was possible to see the domes and minarets of Gaza and we were very anxious to have to go for what was the largest town that had yet cropped up in our path.

On the 23 March, a big reconnaissance was held by the Brigade, with some attached Yeomanry as supports. Starting at dawn, by 0800, we were at the Wadi. The Regiment was given the ground from the beach to the main road running into Gaza from Khan Yunis, roughly about a 3 mile frontage. No incidents of note occurred until we reached the Wadi where "C" Squadron in advance became held up by quicksands and a troop of enemy cavalry posted in a farm house on the opposite bank. However, by quick concerted action these troops were driven helter-skelter back to Gaza and a line was established right on the very garden boundaries of the town itself. Orders to sit here and wait were received and towards midday various Officers of the General Staff came along and took notes of the enemy positions, only a couple of hundred yards in our front.

The enemy kept extremely quiet throughout the whole day but at 3pm, when the line was withdrawn, put, in a very heavy shell fire among the horses.

Luckily the ground for retirement was clear and all galloped quickly out of range, without much mishap. A couple of Taubes flew over but could not find a good enough target for bombing. We bivouaced that night back near Marakeb and did outpost duty next day. Everywhere about us was hustle. The Infantry had come up and large quantities of guns and stores were being towed along by tractors and lorries. For the first time for many months the motors were able to get a good clear run and they proved most valuable. In a few hours huge dumps and camps had sprung up around Belah and we expected to be called up for our part in the attack on Gaza, at any moment. We had not long to wait for at 3am, on the 25 March, (Passion Sunday) we were trekking along in a thick fog, threading our way through innumerable troops and guns, and over crops and making round to the south east of Gaza. There was some delay owing to this fog but throughout we could get occasional glimpses of the Infantry attacking, while it appeared as if everything mounted was making as hurriedly as possible to circle round Gaza on the south east and some come in from the north. There was little opposition encountered by the mounted troops and by late afternoon, the whole Brigade was right round 8 miles to the north of the town. Here the Anzac Division, who had proceeded us were charging into the town whilst our job was to keep pushing up north in the direction Huj, from where a large body of enemy reinforcements were reported to be advancing. We galloped out just before sundown, about 12 miles and came in contact with a body and fought a holding action on some very broken ground. Darkness fell rapidly and the situation became difficult. Word came through that the attack on Gaza had been abandoned at a time when victory seemed near. The Anzacs had galloped the street capturing many prisoners and were only a few hundred yards distant from our own Infantry, when the order was given to retire. Our job now developed into fighting a rearguard, and throughout that night we were being



continually moved, the enemy reinforcements pressing forward in great force. There was much confusion especially in the inky darkness. At 3.30am, word was received that all was clear to withdraw, so a slow retreat was made. As day broke the enemy brought up artillery and the whole column received a big grueling from shrapnel and high explosives. However, by rapid movement nearly everyone got away quickly and luckily. One or two sharp skirmishes occurred and 2 Troops of "C" Squadron cut out an Ambulance party which was in a very tight position. The columns soon got out of range and the enemy did not follow across the Wadi.

We camped near Belah that night and the next few days were spent alternately spelling and on outpost. Throughout Easter week we bivouaced in various places and did trench digging and outpost work on the high ridges, just above Tel el Kemmi. Occasionally we managed to get a swim at the beach.

On the morning of the 16 April, the whole Brigade moved out of camp at Belah and occupied an outpost line on the Umm Sirra ridge, just north of Tel el Jemmi. At 1900, an advance was made across the wadi Ghuzze at Tel el Jemmi, where roadways had been cut through the steep banks and a reconnaissance made round the vicinity of Asaferiyeh. The Regiment formed the advance guard and were given the Brigade scouts as guides. The night was very dark and soon it became apparent that the Regiment was being led astray. The country in the immediate vicinity of Mendur was extremely difficult for mounted work, the ground being fissured in all directions with wadis ranging in depth up to 12 feet. Major Shannon who was in charge of the advance party then made a personal reconnaissance, and finding a way through, led the Regiment into El Mendur, where a halt was made until midnight. At that hour the advance was resumed in an easterly direction though progress was very slow owing to the



broken country. Major McLaurin's horse fell in one of these wadis and the Major sustained a broken collar bone being immediately evacuated to hospital. At 0400, on the 17 April, Asaferiyeh was reached and an outpost line was established east of that village and about 1500 yards from the Turkish line. This line was held all day, the enemy subjecting us to a spasmodic artillery fire and some sniping. At 1700, the 10th Light Horse Regiment relieved us and the Regiment returned to Mendur where arrangements had been made to water the horses. At 1800, the whole Brigade was withdrawn to a point west of Tel el Jemmi, arriving at the bivouac area at 2100. Next morning, the 18 April, at 0200, the Regiment was ordered out to support the 6th Mounted Brigade at Point 280, on the Wadi Sheria, south of Mendur, but returned again at 0900, and bivouaced for the day, the horses getting a good deal of succulent grazing from green crops in the vicinity. At 2000, the whole Brigade moved out to march to Asaferiyeh and at 0430, the Brigade made dispositions for attack.

On the left towards Gaza was the 4th Mounted Brigade, who linked with the I.C.C., and these latter linked with 164th Brigade of Infantry. Our right flank towards Beersheba connected with the 5th Mounted Brigade. The Brigade dispositions for the attack were as follows:

10th LH

9th LH

8th LH (Supports).

The information regarding the enemy at our disposal was as follows:-

At Gaza	1 Cav Regt,	2 Inf Regts,	16-20 Guns.
At KH Kufeif Elbir		2 Inf Regts,	6 Guns.
At Hareira	16 Division (6000).		
At Sheria Area	2 Regts of Cavalry and 25 Guns.		

Total enemy strength about 25 000 fighting men, 1 500 to 2000 Cavalry, and

60 to 70 Guns.

At 0700, our whole line moved forward in a northerly direction towards Beersheba, and was supported by fire from the Notts Battery RHA, and immediately after by other batteries as the action became general along the whole front. Soon after the start it became apparent that both the advance Regiments were bearing too far to the right and in order that the line should be kept intact, Brig-General Royston ordered the support (8th Regt) into the gap originally meant to be the 10th LH sector. This gap was filled quickly, but the whole action had developed rapidly into a very strenuous pitched battle. The shell, rifle, and machine gun fire was very severe, particularly on the sector covered by the Infantry and the I.C.C., both of whom were suffering heavily. A tank which was supporting the Infantry was, no doubt, the responsible factor in drawing most of this fire, for after it was put out of action (which happened very speedily) more attention was paid to the adjacent sectors.

The 3rd Brigade and especially the immediate front of the 8th LH was opposed by a series of shallow trench redoubts, manned by about 200 enemy. The Machine Gun Squadron under Major Nicholas helped very greatly to cover the advance and before 0830, these forward redoubts had been cleared, the bulk of the enemy being captured or killed, though a certain number managed to retire back to the main redoubt at Ateweineh. General Royston and Lieut Colonel Maygar VC, both of whom were mounted, displayed great individual dash by galloping after and rounding up some of those endeavouring to escape. Had a small mounted force, say 2 Troops, been available just at this juncture there is little doubt that none of the enemy would have escaped. At the same time this small force may have run under the fire of the enemy artillery and suffered in consequence.

After these redoubts had been consolidated the advance was continued

but as the enemy fire was now being concentrated on us and the 8th Regiment had formed an apex, orders were received not to advance any further, partly to give the troops a 'breather' but mainly to allow both flanks to come up and thus straighten the line. At this moment the 10th Light Horse joined up with the 8th and these troops coming into the lines drew a very heavy and sweeping fire from all enemy within range. Reinforcements were observed coming to their help from the direction of Hareira and these getting quickly into position put in such a terrific fire as to render the ridges, which were without cover of any description, untenable. The line at this point was therefore obliged to fall back about 800 yards, thus straightening out the whole front. The enemy continued to pour in their heavy fire but made no attempt to advance. At this stage of the fight our casualties were extremely heavy. There was not the slightest cover and the enemy guns had the ranges to perfection. Gradually both sides settled down, the main firing being carried on with machine guns and Hotchkiss rifles. This style of fighting went on until 1400, when the line being supported by fresh troops brought from sectors further on our right, which had not been nearly so heavily pressed, again advanced and taking up position some 400 yards ahead under a very gruelling fire hung on here until dark when the whole line was withdrawn.

Both sides appeared to be very exhausted at dark and the enemy made no attempt other than with artillery fire to inflict further damage as we withdrew. On reaching the led horses which had been left in the Wadi all day the Brigade concentrated at Munkeileh. From here the horses were sent the horses were sent back to Tel el Jemmi, and all ranks were put to digging trenches and establishing a line ready for any emergencies next day. The casualties of the Regiment were:

Killed ..... 6 Other Ranks.

Wounded ..... 7 Officers & 61 Other Ranks.



(Of these 2 Officers and 8 Other Ranks subsequently died).

Two incidents worthy of note occurred throughout the fighting. The first was the action of armoured cars. At about 1000, when the line was being subjected to a particularly heavy volume of fire two armoured cars blew gaily along into the thick of the action. Their intentions were, beyond doubt, of the best, but the result of their coming was to draw every piece of ordnance which the enemy possessed within range upon that particular sector. The cars proved of no assistance, except to the enemy as they took up positions right on our firing line and so gave them the exact range. They were speedily put out of action as their tyres were riddled and guns damaged, whilst besides being indirectly responsible for a few casualties, one car actually ran over one man lying in the line and rendered his removal to hospital necessary.

The other incident was at about 1600. One of our aeroplanes was felled from a height of 3000 feet by the enemy, and crashed right in our firing line. The incident itself caused much excitement and some cheered mistaking it for a German machine but apart from the depression momentarily caused, there was no effect on the Troops' morale but rather the reverse.

This action was the first in which the .303 Hotchkiss Automatic Rifle was used to any great extent. True it was used in the 1st Gaza operation, but owing to lack of opportunity, very little in comparison with this fight. They were proved a great and absolute success. Each Light Horse Regiment had been issued with 12 and this allowed of a distribution of 1 for each troop. They were carried into action on the shoulder and this would seem to have proved, rather a mark to the enemy as many of the trained personnel were casualties. In future operations these weapons were ordered to be carried into action at the trail, and this although difficult to prove would seem to

be a great advantage, it being obvious that the enemy could not discriminate the automatic from the ordinary rifles, when so carried. The volume of fire produced and the moral effect on the enemy was very great indeed and it was very plain that he (the enemy) was much surprised at our acquisition of so many machine guns. The rifles were rather troublesome throughout, stoppages and jams being frequent, but these were no doubt, in large measure, attributable to the facts that the personnel had not yet become too expert in the handling of the gun, and also that the gun moving portions being quite new did not move as smoothly as they might have done. Indeed subsequent operations proved that once the gun teams became thoroughly acquainted with the weapon and also as the various portions became worn, stoppages and delays were much less frequent.

On the 18 September, 1917, the Brigade moved from the A basan area and took over the front line duties at Um Urgan and Tel el Fara. The days passed fairly quietly as a rule, our turns at doing outposts came along regularly, and served to break the monotony of the camp routine. Quite a few times enemy planes paid us visits, dropping bombs when opportunity offered and keeping us tune up to concert pitch. We had managed to minimise casualties from this quarter by forming a side, and the centre being empty except for a few forges. In this way only a thin line was presented to a aeroplane and even though a bomb obtained a direct hit it would only account at most for about 20 horses. At watering times when the movement at the water troughs became congested the planes were most dangerous, and on one occasion a direct hit accounted for a whole troop of Yeomanry in the Wadi, killing 15 men and 22 horses outright. The outpost work was always interesting, and occasionally varied with a long day when we would be sent to poke our noses round the ridges in the vicinity of Beersheba. These days always produced their little exchanges of rifles and



artillery fire, but casualties were light as the horses could be got to shelter quickly under the banks of one of the many Wadis. It was not long before most of us became very familiar with the country all round the west and south-west of Beersheba and the more prominent points on the map such as 960, 970, 840 and 720, became scattered with empty bully tins and other litter, relics of many midday meals held there. The weeks went rapidly by. Much being done in instructional work, especially regarding co-operation between aircraft and cavalry, whilst the engineers did a great deal of useful work in developing the water facilities around Esani and Imalaga a few miles to the south west of Beersheba. The reconnaissances, also gained a good deal of information regarding the enemy's strength and dispositions. By now the railways had been built right up to us and had a large amount of material on hand ready for the next advance when it should come. Large stacks of forage and huge dumps of supplies began to grow up everywhere. The health of the troops was good, and rations and camp equipment were right up to scale. The weather was fine, the days being rather warm but the nights always cold. Everybody lived in bivvies, the only tents available being one for the Regimental office and one for the Medical Staff's equipment.

Major A M McLaurin who had been attending a school course at Heliopolis for some weeks returned on the 15 October, and took over the command of the Regiment. Major Shannon who had been in charge since Lt Col Maygar had gone to Brigade, left for Egypt on 7 days leave. A good many parties had been given turns to Port Said where a rest camp had been established, and was proving fairly popular. Those in the camp had occasional amusement supplied by local concert parties, many of which contained some excellent talent and gave good programmes mostly on topical subjects.

On the 25th of the month it was very plain that something was in the air



concerning a advance. Activity sprang up all along the line, whilst the enemy displayed much more energy, denying the outposts daily all the high ground and observation points, and harassing the posts with machine gun and artillery fire. The Regiment was called out early in the morning on this date and proceeding to Points 720, 630 and 510, where small redoubts were dug principally facing the famous Hareira recoubt. At 0730, on the 27 October, the call to saddle up was given and by 0930, the Brigade was on its way towards Karm. Here a halt was made and it could be seen that severe fighting had been going on round the redoubts we had dug two days previously. We had been relieved the night before by the 8th Mounted Brigade here, and it was their misfortune to be occupying the trenches at a time when the enemy decided to make a most overwhelming attack at this particular portion of the line. The Yeomanry put up a magnificent and remarkable defence, but the 720 post was completely wiped out while the 630 people suffered a almost similar fate, aid reaching them when practically at their last gasp.

The 9th and 10th Regiments were ordered to retake 720 and with a very excellent preliminary bombardment from our batteries, which demoralised the enemy, succeeded in quickly re-establishing the line obtaining in the performance only a very few casualties. This Regiment was held in reserve and as the situation cleared received orders to return to camp at Urgan which place was reached at midnight. The 28 October, proved a busy Sunday. By 1200, the camp was dismantled and the Regiment all packed and ready to move on the Beersheba offensive. Our first job proved to be to act as escort to the main convoy to Khalasa, and at 1500, that afternoon the foot of Tel el Fara presented a wonderful scene. Parks of supply wagons, ammunition limbers and guns were formed up in the vicinity covering acres of ground. Busy staff officers and horsemen were to be seen galloping hither and thither, giving

orders and sorting the many different Units into their respective places in the column. This convoy is probably the record convoy of the war. It carried all the supplies and materials to be used by the mounted divisions in their attack on the east and S.E. side of Beersheba, a brilliant stroke which did much to crown with success the first of General Allenby's offensives in Palestine.

The column got safely started by 1700, on the road to Esani 8 miles distant and which was to be our first halting place. As the wagons strung out the column covered a length of 6 miles, there being 307 four wheeled vehicles besides innumerable horses, pack mules, and donkeys, and the first of the column was almost at Esani before the rear end had got clear of the Wadi Ghuzze. Thanks to a very bright moon everything went off without a hitch. On reaching Esani fresh orders were received and the column was broken up, "B" Squadron going on to Khalasa with a large portion whilst the rest of the Regiment went into bivouac near Tel Itweil. On the 29 October, Brig Gen Wilson assumed command of the brigade and Lt Col Maygar rejoined the Regiment. Four N.C.O's were granted commissions to complete establishment, namely, Sgt C G T Williams, Sgt H A Patterson, Sgt E M Jenner, and L/Cpl F Moore. The brigade moved on to Khalasa at 1700, and reached there at 2230. Horses were watered, and "B" Squadron rejoined. The regiment received orders to report to Anzac Mtd Division at As Asluj before 0500, on the 30 October, and our trek was resumed for that place. Asluj was reached in darkness at 0400, and after reporting to the headquarters there a bivouac site was selected on the North side of the town near the railway station. A spell was made up till 1700, when the regiment joined the Divisional column in its march to the east of Beersheba. When just north of Iswaiwan the regiment branched off and, though not in touch again, came under the command of the Australian



Mounted Division. By 0700, on the 31 October, we had taken up the line running through points 1210-1180-1280 (sq. Q), our place in the dispositions for the attack on the town, which could be plainly seen about 3 miles to the north west. Ras Ghannam redoubt which appeared to be held very strongly, was about 1500 yards directly west. We were linked with the 7th Mounted Brigade, who were some distance to the south of this redoubt and on our left, whilst on your right were the N.Z.M.R., extending towards Khashim Zanna.

The line advanced slightly but was ordered not to go further forward as the rest of the Aust Mtd Division would be up in the afternoon. Patrols were thrown out in endeavours to gain information and a good deal of fire was exchanged between both sides. Our casualties were light, one man and horse being killed. Meanwhile the attack on our right was developing and concentrating on Tel el Saba, a feature in the Wadi bed about two miles due east of the town. This place which was very strongly held fell to the New Zealanders and the 1st LH Brigade at 1500, after a very determined and bloody fight. Its fall helped very greatly in the capture of other redoubts. The 4th Brigade took over the line held by the Regiment at 1600, and soon after from here made their magnificent charge over the trenches and captured the town and many prisoners. The Regiment was ordered to report to Desert Corps Hdqrs at the rear of Khassim Zanna and arrived there at 1730. Just then 2 enemy aeroplanes swooped down and as there were very many troops and transport vehicles concentrated there a good target presented itself to them and of which they took full toll. At a very low altitude they bombed and machined gunned men and horses causing a large number of casualties to our side. Lt Col Maygar was seriously wounded by a bomb bursting almost under him and his horse, also wounded, bolted into the darkness and confusion and we never saw the Colonel again. After much searching his horse was found covered



in blood and news was obtained that the Colonel had been got safely to hospital, though he succumbed at Karm two days later. Captain Sproat and two other ranks were also hit while two horses were killed. Neighbouring units suffered much more heavily.

Major McLaurin took command and the Regiment moved in the darkness to the Wadi near Bir Hamam, where the horses were watered. The 3rd Brigade was picked up by the flash of a signal lamp and after a hour's spell we moved to bivouac about a mile east of Tel el Saba. At dawn, the next morning enemy aeroplanes again raided but the horses had been scattered over wide areas and presented poor bombing targets. Luckily the men were standing to arms at the time and were quickly formed into position where good fire control was obtained on the machines. One machine flying extremely low was caught by a terrific burst of rifle fire and subsequently fell in the hills just to the northward, the pilot being found quite dead.

Orders were received from B.H.Q. to join up and this was done by 0800, at a new site half a mile west of the Tel. A good day's rest was enjoyed here the horses obtaining a plentiful supply of water and the men fresh rations.

### TEL KHUWEILFEH

At 0700, on the morning of the 2 November, and just two days after the capture of Beersheba, the Regiment was camped in the Wadi Saba, midway between Tel el Saba and the town. Orders were received to report to the 7th Mtd Bde, which was at that time under the command of Bgdr Gen Wigan, and consisted only of two Regiments, (the Sherwood Rangers and the South Notts Hussars). Horses were immediately watered but owing to the scarcity of the latter this procedure took about one and a half hours. Finally, however, a start was made and we joined the 7th Brigade column at a spot on the Hebron road approximately 2 miles north of Tel el Saba.

Through some confusion of orders, it was understood that the Regiment was merely supporting the 7th Bde for the day and orders had been issued (to save delay), that no rations would be drawn, but would be collected when the Regiment returned in the evening. The water cart also was ordered to stay behind as the nature of the country was considered too rough for wheels. When the column reached Rijm Abu Derwan information was given by the end ALH Regt, who had been operating in that sector for the past few days and it at once became evident that the enemy were preparing a big resistance from Ain Kohleh to the Hebron road. General Wigan announced his objective to be Tel Khuweilfeh a large hill at the farther end of a big valley, the latter being bounded on both sides by ranges of rough hills. If this position could be secured it offered a big threat by our forces to the enemy's Sheria position and exposed all his left flank.

When within about three miles of the Tel itself, it was seen to be impossible to move up the low open ground in the valley therefore General Wigan sent the Sherwoods through the hills on the right and the south Notts on a similiar advance round to the left. The first named had a fairly clear advance, but the latter Regiment met with strong resistance in the locality

of Ain Kohleh and came to a standstill. At 1400, it became evident that if the position was to be occupied by nightfall a strenuous attack must be immediately entered upon. The 8th Regiment therefore was ordered to advance up the centre and Major Shannon took his squadron into action at the gallop. As it was impossible to approach directly up the valley under the heavy rifle and artillery fire, he therefore, made for the lower hill immediately skirting the left of the low ground. Here despite big opposition, he quickly advanced along the hilltops and established a position about 800 yards from the Tel itself. The rest of the Regiment galloped in to his assistance, and finding the enemy absolutely too strong, immediately consolidated and prepared to meet him should he advance. As the other two Regiments could make no further headway, and as darkness had now fallen, the 8th were ordered to hold on whilst the others withdrew on our flanks. Touch was lost with both for a time, but by feeling out, the South Notts and our line, was later linked up, though no connection could be obtained with the Sherwoods. This left the 8th as a sort of apex, with their right completely unprotected. A small post was put out on the low ground, which our position completely dominated, and this would have prevented surprise from that quarter. Throughout the whole night the enemy kept up an incessant rifle fire and at dawn it was found he had kept forward during the darkness to within close range. He had also been heavily reinforced and his volume of machine gun and rifle fire was much greater. Our position among the rocks was much greater. Our position among the rocks was good and afforded plenty of cover, a factor which kept our casualties down to a minimum, considering the fierceness of the fire. The men were beginning to show extreme signs of distress, as the day was hot and not a drop of water could be found anywhere in the vicinity. About 0900, on the 3 November, the Yeomanry were relieved by the 1st Brigade of Anzacs, and went back to Beersheba, whilst the 8th came under the orders of this relieving



force and were told to hold on at all costs. The Anzacs then made a determined advance, the 1st LH Regiment going straight up the centre of the valley. They suffered very heavily in doing so and were finally obliged to take up a position on a ridge about 300 yards off the Tel. The attack went on fiercely throughout the day and besides our casualties, a good number of men collapsed from thirst. Finally at 1600, our spirits were brightened by seeing advancing bodies of Infantry coming up from the rear, and the Regiment was relieved by the portion of the 158th Brigade, 53rd Division. After reporting to Headquarters, Anzacs we were sent straight back to Beersheba, and we reached the water troughs there at 2200, that evening. The scene there when horses and men rushed the troughs told only too plainly of their condition. Both men and horses had fought a bitter action for many hours through extreme heat, and altogether had been 39 hours without a drink excepting the one waterbottle with which they had started out. After men and animals had obtained their fill at the troughs the Regiment joined up the 3rd Brigade again and bivouaced about a mile S.E. of the town near the Asluj railway bridge.

Our total casualties were one officer Lt Matt, 2 O/Ranks killed and 14 O/Ranks wounded, 3 of whom subsequently died, added to this our sorrow was greatly increased to hear the news that our gallant CO (Lt Col Maygar) had succumbed to his bomb wounds, received on the 31 October, 1917. On the 4 November, 1917, Gen Chauvel, Mjr/Gen Hodgson and Bdg and Gen Wilson visited the lines and personally thanked the Officers and men for their gallantry at the Khuweilfeh operation. Lieut McGrath was subsequently awarded the MC for this action.

The epidemic of diorea which broke out in the Regt a few days was attributed to the fact that the men were so thirsty that they drank large quantities of whatever water they could get, on returning to Beersheba. The water question at Beersheba soon became very acute. There were thousands of

troops and animals concentrated there and the Wadi bed, which on our arrival contained many pools, soon became dry. The whole of the Australian Division were ordered back to Karm area. By 0500, on the 5 November, we relieved the Yeomanry Division on our old line round the neighbourhood of Point 510, facing Hareira, and for two days the Regiment supplied its quota of posts and patrols in this sector. There was no time for the rest as the Gaza offensive was now in full swing. On the morning of the 7 November, the Brigade did a rapid march to Sheria, which place had fallen to the infantry. As we passed through there was still some fighting going on around the Hareira redoubt, but we followed along the railway line for a few miles and halted for the night. Before dawn we were off again, this time with Huj as objective point. After coming under heavy artillery fire several times, Huj was reached about 1300. All along we could hear huge explosions and see tremendous columns of smoke shooting into the air telling plainly that the enemy was making a hurried retreat, and destroying or burning all his dumps and heavy gear. Much abandoned material was passed, and at Huj there were countless dumps of ammunition and stores. We evidently effected a big surprise here as the enemy could be seen in the plain about 2 miles away, retreating in great disorder. Some had even left the breakfast table as we found several set out for a meal. Our horses by this time were almost knocked up and water was unobtainable. It was a most aggravating position as with fresh horses the disorganised enemy were plainly at our mercy. However, every available man was sent into high positions overlooking the enemy and a good many of the latter were captured. On the left the Yeomanry whose horses must have been fresher, executed a dashing charge, cutting the enemy gunners down at their guns and doing a great deal of damage besides obtaining a good haul of prisoners. Lieut Borbidge with 2 troops of "A" Squadron succeeded in cutting off two field guns, shooting the crews and animals, whilst our



Hotchkiss gunners compelled two more guns to be abandoned in a Wadi. 80 odd prisoners were taken in the afternoon, one batch being captured by a NCO as they were escaping in a motor car. More would have fallen to our lot, had we been able to move from our line but orders from Brigade pinned us there. All that day no relief could be given the horses in the matter of water and night fell with us on outpost on the line we were then occupying. At midnight orders were received to send the horses to Jemmami about 4 miles distant, where a pump had been located and supposed plentiful supply of water. The night passed without much fighting, our men being too tired and the enemy too eager to get away at 0700, on the morning of the 9 November, the 11th LH Regiment relieved us. As our horses had not yet returned from water, we marched back about a mile to a Wadi bed and settled down for the day. The horses did not return from watering until 1600, having been absent 15 hours. Neither they nor the men with them obtained much of a spell that day. So far our casualties from Karm to here had been nil in personnel though 3 horses had been killed and 5 wounded chiefly from shrapnel fire. The strain however, was beginning to tell on the men and two or three were evacuated sick. At sundown the whole Brigade marched to Arak el Menshiye.

All the signallers and most of "C" Squadron being dropped out on the way as connecting files to Division who were to follow on. At Tel el Hesi a plentiful supply of water was obtained and a spell of one hour here did much to refresh both men and horses. We travelled all that night through extremely difficult country and reached the outskirts of Menshiye at 0200. A two hours wait for dawn and the column moved up close to the village but the enemy got on to us heavily with his artillery and we were compelled to take cover in the Wadis about one and a half miles to the south. Menshiye had been abandoned by the enemy after being subjected to a particularly nasty gruelling from our aircraft. The station and several other buildings had been burnt and a



complete aerodrome and repairing plant destroyed. Charred remains of what had been 5 complete aeroplanes and many engines and parts were among the ruins and the enemy lost here many thousands of pounds worth of material.

A number of wounded were found in a distressing condition in some of the sheds about the station, they had been abandoned by their comrades. At 1600 the 8th Regt was ordered to co-operate with the 9th in an attack on Summeil the next village in our line of advance. Lt Col Scott was in charge and after proceeding in the darkness, over country seamed with extremely deep Wadis. Connection was gined with the 5th Mounted Brigade under B/Gen Kelly, at the railway line about 500 yards to the south of the village. Through some miscarriage of orders it was found that the other units engaged in the attack did not come up and after some delay and deliberation the attack was abandoned and the troops returned to bivouac at Menshiye. We left two troops on outpost midway between the two villages. At 1530 on the 11 November, the Regiment was ordered to concentrate at Faluje (B.H.Q.), where rations were drawn and orders received for us to relieve the 10th LH, on the outpost line between Summeil and Menshiye. At midnight all the line had been taken over from the 10th from daybreak next morning intermittent shelling went on and at 1320 "A" Squadron situated on the left (Summeil) flank advanced with the 5th Brigade against Balan, Summeil having been cleared. At 1420 "C" Squadron were called up on to report to the 9th LH at Berkusie, and both the above Squadrons were soon heavily engaged. They could be seen detrainig fresh reinforcements about 2000 strong, and these soon compelled the whole of our line to withdraw slightly, though a good line was soon established from which they could not shift us. In this withdrawal Sergeant Jas Bowman greatly distinguished himself in bringing our wounded and was recommended for the VC (he subsequently was awarded the DCM). After the line had become settled "A" and "C" squadrons rejoined the Regiment and at 2000 the outpost line between Summeil and Menshye

was again taken up. The casualties for the day were Capt G Fay and Lieut Maunsell wounded 1 O/Rank killed, 1 O/Rank wounded and missing, and 5 O/Ranks wounded. The wounded and missing man was found some days later in the Turkish hospital at Junction station, where he had been taken and carefully treated by the enemy. Unhappily he died just after his rescue. Early next morning we rejoined B.H.Q. near Faluje and after rationing the whole column moved up through Sherkyre. The Regiment was sent ahead and took up a line of outposts from Tel el Turmus back Sherkyre. The following morning the Brigade column was rejoined and a move back to Esdud miles westward was made. Esdud was reached at 1430 and the Regiments went into bivouac at the Wadi Sucereiere, plenty of water being available also a little sea bathing. After resting for two days the track was taken once again and by 1600 on the 17 November, we were bivouaced near Junction stn. The next morning at 0600 we were on the move to support the 9th LH at Khubab, and on reporting to Lt Col Scott were ordered into positions near Yalo and Beit Nuba. We were now getting close to Jerusalem and among the hills. The country was becoming very unsuitable for mounted work, every hill being very stoney and steep, and most of the movement of troops had to be done at a slow pace and in a single file. The wheeled traffic suffered particularly and was quite useless as soon as the column left the road any distance. Our water cart collapsed in pieces and a similar fate befell several of the ambulance wagons. The enemy were reorganising their opposition had become much stronger. Their artillery harassed us considerably and our casualties were 3 other ranks wounded and several horses. At dusk we were ordered to withdraw and the journey out of the hills was a very trying experience. However, we reached the bivouac near Junction Station at 2200 amidst light rain. Horses were sent to water at 0030, on the 19 November, to a place about 2 miles distant, and returned at 0300. On the 19th and 20th rain fell and as firewood was



scarce and the troops had no shelters of any kind, things were most uncomfortable. The soil was very sticky and deep and the horses suffered considerably from the cold. There were a good many Jewish villages around this part and the inhabitants were quick to sell us bread and fruits, though at a most exorbitant prices. The men got into a good many arguments over the prices charged and although the Jew is a noted dealer I am firmly convinced that he has yet got a good deal to learn ere he beats a hungry Australian. The latters, language and boots always proved a convincing factor. However, the change in diet was worth the money, bully and biscuit do get monotonous after a few weeks. Two troops were sent to guard Tinch Station and captured dumps on the 21 November, as the Bedouins round about were stealing anything at all of value. The rest of the Regiment joined Brigade in moving back to Medjel arriving and bivouacing there at 1830, 21 November, 1917.

Mejdel proved a great camp, our bivvies being scattered about under fine old olive trees and lovely orchards grew all round. We spent a good time here until the 27th, receiving during that time a big parcel mail from home per motor lorry, while the AIF, Cante en people motor car paid us several visits. Besides these sources our ration was supplemented by the purchase of bread, fresh mutton, and greenstuffs from the village. Horses were clipped and were sent over almost daily to the beach about 3 miles away for a swim. The spell here did all a wonderful amount of good. All the country in this neighbourhood is rich in historical memories, especially of the Crusader period, and everybody was interested in the various sights. Ascalan, about 3 miles over the coast, was a source of much delight the ruins, especially of the mighty walls, still showing prominently, and reminding us of its many glories. Herod and Saladin both had strong holds here and any reading matter containing references to these days of their



sovereignty were eagerly pursued. On the 27 November, a rather hurried move was made at 2200 for the front line again and the Brigade, travelling via Deiran (a Jewish colony) and Berfilyah, reached the village of El Burj on the afternoon of the 29 November. The name of this place signifies watch tower and the village is perched on a very high knoll just after entering into the lower slopes of the Judean hills, almost midway between Jerusalem and Jaffa. Here we took over the line from the 5th Royal Scots Fusiliers just before dark, and our horses were sent back to Ramleh on the plains to the rear and about 5 hours journey away. The 'Scotties' were greatly pleased at us relieving them. They had been fighting strenuously for weeks and at the time we took over, we were clothed in short khaki pants, no tunics and had only one blanket between every four men. To anyone who has been in Palestine during the winter months it will take little imagination to cause a shiver at the recollection of its bleak winds especially as night falls. Our boys supplied the 'Jocks' with matches and cigarettes, and the 'Dinkums' as they always call us were very popular.

After a fairly quiet night, disturbed mainly by snipers and machine gunners, the morning came with several of our parties out on scout work and the enemy snipers were located and accounted for. At 1900 on the 30 November, the Brigade line was moved over about a thousand yards to the left to make room for the 4th LH Brigade. This had been necessary as our line even now was extremely weak. We had lost one third of our men when the led horses had been sent back and as the campaign had now been strenuous for some weeks our ranks had been sadly depleted by casualties and sick. Our strength at this date were put into two squadrons.

Our position after this move brought us between El Burj, where Brigade headquarters were located, and Shilta which was strongly held by the enemy and practically the centre of the line if attacked. As we took over the ground from the 9th Light Horse in pitch darkness, no one had much of a

chance to get familiar with the surroundings. Rough stone Sangars had been built, holding up to 6 men and these also served as shelters where with one sentry posted the rest of the men could sleep under cover. "B" Squadron under Capt Walker, and about 45 all ranks in strength took a small knoll on the right and linked up with the 4th LH across the valley about 400 yards away.

"C" Squadron (Mjr Crawford) occupied a higher hill across a saddle 300 yards on the left and connecting with 9th LH. It will be seen that each squadron therefore occupied the high points leaving the low ground between open, and this method applied right along that sector of the two Brigades. The country was particularly stony and being of a limestone formation most of the hillsides were honeycombed with caves. The caves and rock outcrops afforded splendid cover and the enemy took full advantage of these features when concentrating to attack. By 2200, the change over was complete and everyone was in hopes of a quiet night. At a half hour past midnight however, Capt Walker reported by telephone that the enemy were to all appearances all round his position having crept up in the pitch darkness without noise. As he was speaking on the 'phone' they made their rush and in a moment a fierce hand to hand struggle was taking place between his men and the enemy. This went on for a few minutes and by this time our men had succeeded in getting together, and gradually made their retreat to the same hill as Crawford's Squadron, taking up their line on the lower slopes on the left. The enemy meanwhile had halted to take a breather and reorganise to deliver a fresh attack on "C" Squadrons hill.

Incidentally they were fossicking around the posts and sangars on the lookout for trophies and eatables, Walker's men having had to abandon almost everything. No doubt too their wounded were being bandaged and sent to the rear, though there were 20 of their number who would never fight again, our



bombs proving very effective during the short struggle. Some minutes went by with a almost weird silence. We had sent a urgent appeal to brigade for the supports to sent up and also more ammunition and bombs. These had not arrived however, before the enemy came on again with great dash calling their battle ery of "Allah". They approached fairly close before we could obtain proper shooting effect, but at 20 yards they were met with a withering rifle fire, whilst our bombers got going with terrible results. Every man knew it was neck or nothing and that if the enemy once broke through here the whole line would be jeopardised, and there was no let up or quarter. The enemy could get no closer than 5 yards and as he had to show himself, where as our stone sangars protected us, his casualties were enormous. The noise was appalling. Lieut Peppercorn on the crown of the hill put up a very fine performance with a hotchkiss gun, for which he was awarded the MC. All his crew had been wounded yet he kept going and was responsible for a good deal of the disorganisation among the enemy. The fight was its height when 48 men of the Gloucester Yeomanry under Lt Col Palmer reported and these were followed a few minutes later by a company of the 4th RSF. All of these were hurried up the hillside and joined in the fight. Both parties had brought along fresh ammunition and plenty of bombs. The enemy were now taking among the boulders and caves and our new helpers very quickly put the result of the fight beyond doubt. The 9th LH put up a crossfire between the enemy and Shilta village thus cutting off escape. Desultory bomb-throwing and rifle fire went on till morning, and a battery of our artillery put up a barrage towards Shilta but it was too dark to do any observation and no results could be obtained of the effect. At daylight the survivors realising their position as hopeless came out from their cover and surrendered, the total amounting to 6 Officers (including the Battalion Commander) and 112 O/Ranks, many of whom were more or less wounded. About 100 corpses strewed the ground against our sangars showing that the attackers were not only determined but very brave in



the face of the awful fire they encountered. Their wounds were dreadful through being inflicted at such close range, their bombs were very poor in comparison with our Mills grenades. Many badly wounded were picked up and sent in to our ambulance. Our own casualties were 2 Officers (Capt G Fay and Lieut S V Moore) and 5 O/Ranks killed, while 2 Officers and 35 O/Ranks were wounded, most of them very severely and about 5 died in hospital. The RSF lost an Officer and man killed and 2 wounded while the Yeomanry had three O/Ranks wounded. This action was one of the greatest fights the Regiment ever participated in and the men showed the greatest devotion and bravery. During the morning although harassed by a very heavy artillery fire and thoroughly worn out, the work of collecting material and cleaning up the hill went on. Besides a great quantity of rifles, grenades and equipment, the booty included 8 new type of automatic rifles and the first of this pattern seen on this front. The full enemy particulars are quoted in the following extract, received a few days later.

Extract from "Descorps" Intelligence Summary 1/51.57. for 24 hours ending 1800, 8/12/17.

Attack Battalion. The following notes on the attack battalion of the XII Army Corps which attacked our 3rd LH Brigade on November 30, at El Burj, may be of interest. The battalion was formed in Galicia from picked men of the 19th and 20th Divisions, and were trained by Germans. Here in Palestine it was attached to the 19th Division. Casualties were as follows:-

1st and 2nd Coy's.	Infantry	150 rifles and 4 Automatic rifles each.
3rd Coy.	Engineers	120 Effectives.
4th M/Gun Coy.		6 Machine guns.
Trench mortar battery.		4 Trench Mortars.

The Battalion attacked twice. The first time it lost 100 killed and wounded, and its machine gun company. The second time it was wiped out. It had had good personnel and was well officered. The RSF were withdrawn to their battalion about 0900, leaving the Regiment, now just over 50 strong in the line with the Gloucesters as supports.

Major General Hodgson visited the scene and expressed his pleasure and congratulations to the officers and men and the following telegrams were received via the 3rd LH Brigade:- "Descorps. Please convey Corps Commanders (Gen Chauvel), congratulations to Lt Col McLaurin and all ranks of the 8th LH on their brilliant fight last night".

"20th Corps". Commander (Gen Chetwode) much admires the staunchness of your troops who with small forces beat off strong enemy attack last night and captured so many prisoners".

For this action Lieutenants MacPherson and Peppercorn received Military Crosses and Sgt Currington and Tpr Keable, DCM's. On the nights of the 1 and 2 December the front was quiet, and Shilta village appeared deserted. We were well supported each evening by detachments from the Sth Notts and the Dublin Fusiliers. At 1000 on the morning of the 3rd the Regiment was relieved by the Worcester Yeomanry and went into reserve at the foot of El Burj. On the 5 December we selected a new bivouac site and also 20 other ranks joined up from the led horses as reinforcements. On the 7th, Maj McLaurin received word of his promotion to Lt Col, Captains Sproat and Walker, Majors and Lieuts MacPherson, McGrath and Austin to Captains.

The weather was extremely cold at this time and the troops had no other shelter than the rocks. Heavy rain fell incessantly for some days, and as firewood could not be obtained the troops had a very hard and miserable time. On the 8 December we got a few bivouac sheets sent up to us but nowhere near

enough to go round. The bitter wind combined with the rain and mud was almost unbearable. The roads, at all times difficult, now became too bad for wheeled traffic and camels were called upon to carry everything. This in consequence entailed a ration shortage, right at a time when we needed them most.

The line was being gradually advanced and this necessitated us moving bivouac during the next few days. On the 12 December, we relieved the 12th LH in the firing line, taking up about 1000 yards of line between Shilta and Sufa villages. Our troubles were added to here by receiving a message from Mjr Shannon who was back in charge of the horses, that his camp had been bombed by enemy aircraft, near Surafend. His casualties were 4 o/ranks wounded, 21 horses killed outright, 27 seriously wounded and subsequently destroyed, and 28 others slightly wounded.

However, from this time, troubles gradually disappeared. The rain eased a good deal, and firewood became plentiful as the line ran through big olive groves. The regimental quartermaster managed to get on to a supply of new boots and clothing and also on a big consignment of canteen stores. Our job in the firing line was easy, our position being very strong and as the men had built a system of stone sangars (in this country trenches were quite impossible), these served to protect them from the cold night winds. Every man slept in the posts at night, ready at hand if the sentries gave a alarm. The enemy however, seemed to have withdrawn most of his troops elsewhere as little movement could be seen in his lines. On the 14 December, we got a knock back. Each day a patrol was sent out in the hours of light to take up a observation post on a rocky knoll about a mile to the left front. On this date the men, four in number, were ambushed. Trooper Peterbudge shot a Turk but was immediately killed, and the other three captured. These were the



only three prisoners that the Regiment ever lost. They were taken away and we did not hear of them until their repatriation at the close of the war. They were quite well having been well treated during their captivity. We conducted a polling in connection with the Conscription Referendum on the 15 December. It is difficult to say what the men actually voted but many jested that it was no place to vote to bring any man to, and very probably some votes were influenced by the conditions prevailing.

Days passed slowly and without incident. We managed to get a few extras for Christmas day, but as the rain poured so heavily all the previous night and during the day it was impossible to keep a fire alight to cook. From the led horses we had sent up to us a few jars of light wine, and with this in possession, we managed to get some carol singers going. "While shepherds watch" as an easy favourite. On the 27th, the whole line made a general advance for about 3 miles northward, and the Brigade took up a line between Kuddis and Khirbetha. The enemy made some resistance, mostly to the infantry on our right flank. The country proved more and more difficult, but somehow the animals struggled up and down the hillsides, keeping up with us. Wheels were useless, so had been sent to the rear. The surprising beast was the camel. This ungainly animal is almost the equal of the mule in climbing steep hillsides and scrambling over rocks, the only drawback being that on very wet days he was inclined to slip, his hip-joints giving way. On the new line were made reserve regiment and on the 31 December, being relieved by the Connaught Rangers, moved back to Kefr Rut and there bivouaced until the coming of the horses which had been sent for to take us out to the plains for a much needed spell.

## BELAH

New Years Day 1918, saw us camped in caves and rocks shelters on a small bleak hill at Kefr Rut. It rained heavily all day and combined with a cold wind and the discomfort of wet clothes and blankets not to mention the slush and mud, the outlook was not cheering. There was no fire wood but billies were boiled. However, we all wore smiles because the next day was to bring our horses and a spell on the plains. The horses came along at 1000 on the 2 January, and by 1230, the Brigade was in Column and moved off to Latron where they bivouaced for the night. Off again at 0900 the next day for Kabrah, the village where the horses had been camped. The Australian Official Photographer took some cinema films as we moved past on some of the winding roads. A day of rest was spent at Kabrah, but on the early morning of the 5 January, 1918, we marched again. The country side was in a frightful state, owing to the recent rain and in many places, we went a mile or more with water reaching to the horses bellies. We were very glad to reach the sandhills at Sodud by sundown and bivouaced for the night. The weather was very rough here and heavy storms of rain blew over all night soaking everything. We moved off in pouring rain early the next day for Mejdal, a very forlorn looking column indeed. We rode all day in the teeth of a gale, combined with lashing rain. The horses were soaked to the skin. The bivouac at Mejdal proved a good site, but there was no firewood obtainable. However, we settled down for the night, a few cases of whisky from a canteen near by helping us out a little.

We were glad to get going the next morning as everyone was just about frozen. The rough weather continued and that night we camped in slush just outside Gaza, on the slopes of the mountain itself. We had a few hours roaming over old familiar battle grounds here and the next day marched to Belah. Here we got a beautiful little bivouac on the sandhills. Tents were issued and everything promised to be comfortable. During the next few days



everyone was hustling to get comfortable so it became known our stay here was to be of 2 to 3 months duration. Before a week had gone everyone was well housed, cook houses were going and even the weather had cleared up. We started a Officer's Mess here the first since July 1916. The horses started to do well, about 2 hours each day, parties being detailed to take them grazing on the banks of the Wadi Ghuzzie. All ranks were started in training exercises after a few days the chief items being musketry and practice at dummies, using bayonets as thrust swords. Up to the end of the month everyone was enjoying the spell, sports and concerts being frequent, and a good percentage being granted Egyptian leave. With the beginning of February, Major Priestley a reinforcement officer from Australia joined up, while officers and o/ranks were sent up from moarcara to complete our establishment big parties were sent daily to the old trenches at Gaza where much material was salvaged and sent up the line. About the 9 February bad weather interfered with work and training, and for a week all we did was to re-erect blown down tents and bivvies. We were treated here to the phenomenon of a water sport which just missed the camp. With the fine weather came orders for the Division to practise for a march past the CMC, who was to present medals.

Lt Col McLaurin, Major Sproat were granted English leave and departed on the 12 February, leaving Major Shannon in charge of the Regiment. Some remounts came in and by now the Unit was almost complete in establishment. This was proving one of the best spells, we had ever had. On the 2 March, 1918. The Brigade held sport and horse show. It was a good day and our chaps won a fair percentage of the events.

A school for young officers was started at Kelab to which a couple of the juniors were sent, while Major Crawford was detailed as a instructor.

On the 14 March HRN the Duke of Connaught held a review and march past of the Division and presented medals.



Rough weather came again on the 20 March, and interfered with the routine, but the next few days save us clearing up camp and preparing to move up to the front again. We regretted leaving the camp as it had been our best and only spell since Masaid a year before.

### 1st JORDAN VALLEY & ES SALT

On the 1 April, 1918, the Brigade moved to Gaza and the next day to Majdel and so in daily stages until the 5th, bivouacing consecutively at Wadi Suceire, Devian and Summeil. At the latter place we settled down and hard training carried out for a raid on the enemy, their positions at Ras el Ain and Kefr Hatta being well reconnoitred for this object. On the 12 April, a tactical scheme was held at Mahar, the scene of a brilliant cavalry charge in the recent operations. The projected raid was abandoned and on the 19 April, the Brigade moved for the Jordan Valley, bivouacing at Deiran, Labron and Enab in successive days, and passing through Jerusalem on the 22nd, arrived at Talaat ed Dumm late that night. After a day's spell we moved to Jerico and camped on the Wadi Neeunieh on the 24th. Detached posts were manned in this locality for a few days and on the night of the 29 April, at half past nine, the Brigade was concentrating at Wadi Muhair preparatory for an attack upon Es Salt. The column moved off from here at 0300 and came under a very heavy shell fire at the river crossing. Much difficulty was experienced here, especially with the Artillery.

By 0800, on the 30th, the climb through the mountains was begun. The country was almost impassable in many places the whole column could advance only in single file. The progress was good considering, and at 1300 a halt of 4 hours was called. In the meantime the advance guards of the column succeeded in taking some high points held by the enemy and were threatening point 2900. The Regiment was held in readiness to gallop on Es Salt if 2900 was taken, and its 1815 orders were sent to break through and take the town. Major Priestley with 3 troops of "A" Sqn raced through the streets capturing over 200 prisoners, many motors, and large quantities of military stores including 29 machine guns. 2/Lt Foulkes-Taylor, attached from the 10 LH, showed up conspicuously, and was awarded the Military Cross for this charge. Two

troops of "A" Sqn, continued on and secured the Amman-Nimrin Road junction and thus making the approaches to the town secure from attack.

On the morning of the 1 May, the Regiment was ordered to report to GOC 2 LH Bde, on the Amman Road with 2 M/Guns and 2 Camel Guns. At 1600, the 2nd Brigade moved forward to a position reported to be held by the enemy. The latter, however, had retired so an outpost line was decided on. This Regiment was allotted the left sector, a line of about 2½ miles. At 1800, orders were received to report back to the 3 LH Brigade, but owing to the darkness and extreme difficulties of the country the Regiment did not leave the line until 2300. By midnight we were passing through the 10 LH outposts and had reported to the 3 LH Brigade by 0200, on the 2nd inst. Everyone was ordered to stand by as the Regiment was warned that it must be prepared to be moving at a moment's notice. The hours until daylight were terrible. Heavy rain combined with intense cold set everyone shivering and there was not the slightest hope of obtaining shelters. The sufferings of the men and animals are beyond description. It is a fact that 2 or 3 men became half delirious and when the orders came for moving off had to be dressed, they, having unknowingly, removed their clothes.

At 0830 "C" Sqn (Major Crawford) was sent to the 10th Regiment at Pt. 2900 where the enemy were heavily counterattacking. By 1030, the enemy could be seen advancing in great force along the Amman Road on Es Salt. The Regiment, less "C" Sqn, but with 2 Camel Guns and 2 M/Guns was ordered to hold up the enemy on this road a Sqn, of the 10th Regiment being attacked to assist. By 1200 this Squadron (under Major Hamlin) was being so heavily pressed that A & B Squadrons, had to come into a position to allow of its retirement. This was done without serious detoiment a good portion being formed just to the rear. At 1400, the Regiment came under the orders of the 2 LH Brigade again and a squadron of the 7 LH which was later relieved by



a sqdn of the 5th came into position on our right. About 1600, the enemy 600 strong, commenced to advance in extended order. This body was followed by a number of mounted men on camels and horses. Two 5" guns at their rear were causing considerable annoyance by shelling our position.

By 1900, they had got to within 800 yards of us and took up a position in some dead ground. The night was moderately quiet, Major Hamlin's Squadron being moved at 2100, on to the left of the Amman Road, denying the enemy on tactical feature there. At 0345, on the 3rd, the enemy launched his attack directly against our Regiment. Within half an hour he was making things so unpleasant for "B" Squadron (Major Walker) that 2 troops were sent from the 10th Squadron to help the latter, Major Walker's line was still weak and the 5th LH Regiment were asked to send 1 troop along as supports. This was done and the enemy were checked. Meanwhile "A" Squadron on the right had driven the enemy back into some dead ground, but Major Priestley was killed while this was in progress. By 0530, the enemy were falling back and at 0600, arrangements had been completed for a counter attack by Major Walker's Squadron. The enemy being absolutely penned in could do nothing but surrender. 319 prisoners being taken, while 100 dead and very many wounded were left on the field. Our casualties were - 1 Officer (Major Priestley) and 4 O/Ranks killed and 19 O/Ranks wounded. By 0700, fresh enemy troops could be seen coming up. 500 infantry were on the Amman Road while back about 4 miles a Squadron of cavalry escorting 2 guns could be seen hurrying up. By 0800, they were pressing heavily, the fire preventing us from tending their wounded, who were left to their fate. 2 Squadrons of the 6th Regiment came up as supports and a heavy machine gun and rifle fire checked the enemy who were compelled to take up a position in dead ground about 800 yards in front. At 1300, the whole attack had to be withdrawn and troops had to make back to the Jordan. The enemy had broken through away up

on the left of the line and unless all in the vicinity of Es Salt got out quickly, they would probably be cut off. The Regiment withdrew to Brigade at 1700, leaving "B" Squadron attached to the 6th Regiment. At 1930, the Bde moved from Es Salt. Lt Col McLaurin and Major Sproat just joined up after their English leave. "B" Squadron followed the Regiment home. The Regiment got back to the bivouac at Wadi Neuinich at 0300, on the 5th inst.

At 1400, we moved again for the Auja bridge head and patrols and sapping parties were hurriedly supplied as it was feared the enemy were going to press heavily. At 2300, a report was received that 300 enemy had broken through at the 5th Mounted Bde. The Regiment saddled up and moved out in support, but 0130, the enemy had retired and we turned in.

A much needed rest was looked for, but unfortunately no respite could be given the men or horses. The Regiment had played perhaps the most conspicuous part in the operations and had captured the great bulk of prisoners and stores. The total prisoners captured were Germans 2 Officers, 48 O/R, Turks 28 Officers, 713 O/R, and of these our portion was 519. The stores included 28 M/Guns. That the enemy appreciated our efforts is shown by an intercepted wireless which read, "Es Salt was captured by the reckless and dashing gallantry of the Australian Cavalry". Major General Hodgson quoted our work as excellent in the extreme, while captured staff officers expressed surprise that horses could be galloped where no one else would think of riding at all.

On the 7 May, all available men were put on trench digging, and the positions around the Duja Bridgehead were greatly strengthened. This work was continued for some days. On the 9 May, the Comforts Fund sent us 67 cases of gifts which were greatly appreciated. Sickness was now assuming alarming proportions. The exposure of the past few days played havoc with the health of the troops, and the average daily evacuations numbered 9.



The rest of the month here was the usual Jordan Valley tale. Heat, dust, flies, mosquitoes, trench digging, patrols, enemy shell fire and bombing planes, each one telling its own story and combined making the torments of hell.

At 5.30am on the 2 June, 10 enemy planes bombed the bridge camp inflicting heavy losses on the horses though the personnel got off lightly. Our casualties were light. One man wounded, 6 horses killed, 4 horses wounded. The total for the Brigade being 10 O/R wounded, 103 horses killed.

On the 5 June, the Regiment moved to the Wadi El Obeid taking over from the 6th LH Regiment. On the 14th, Major J Sproat was sent to Hospital with shell-shock and was later invalided to Australia. On the 15 June, the Regiment moved to Tel es Sultan, Jericho arriving there at midnight. On the evening of the 16th, a move was made to Wadi Kelt and the next night to Talaat ed Dumm, half way back to Jerusalem. Four days were spent here resting, though by the time horses were taken twice, a day, 3 miles and return, to water there was little chance of spell. At 2000, on the night of the 21st, the Regiment moved to Solomon's Pool, arriving there after an all night march at 7am on the 22 June.

The Regiment departed from the Solomon's Pools camp on the 10 July, at 1700, and travelling by night, marched through the Jerusalem streets then down the Jericho road, reaching Talaat ed Dumm shortly after midnight. We bivouaced here in preparation to taking over from the Anzacs in the Valley. The men were employed on three days very hard work, clearing up the area here, the intention being that it was to be a permanent halfway bivouac between Jerusalem and Jericho. The days were frightfully hot and dusty and water for the horses was scarce. The whole place was extremely desolate and barren and enough to give anyone the blues, especially with prospects of the Valley ahead of them. However, early on the morning of the 14 July, a hurried



call was received to saddle up, leaving a certain number to pack camp and follow later. By 0730, we were on our way to reinforce at Mussallabeh where the Anzacs M/D Div had been very heavily attacked. Arrived at Tel es Sultan, the famous old mound just outside of Jericho town and the site of the old city, and bivouaced on the Wadi Nieuemeh. News came through that the enemy attack had been broken and we were ordered to stand by if wanted. Later in the day a big batch of German prisoners arrived, looking much the worse for wear. They were allowed to bathe in the Wadi, a privilege denied to our own men, who needed such a concession just as much, and this little item caused a great deal of dissatisfaction for the time. We stayed here a day moving on the 16 July, to relieve the 2nd LH Regt. at Mussallabeh. This relief had to be carried out in the darkness and was completed at 10 minutes to midnight; the horses being sent back to the camp at Wadi Nieuemeh, for safety, under the charge of Major Shannon. The relieved Regiment had had a trying time here and much lumber and equipment from their recent brilliant fight was left about. We spent the next few days busily collecting this and also burying dead Germans. The trench systems were greatly knocked about through the enemy's recent bombardment and besides our own parties, the GLH used to send up nightly under cover of darkness about 50 men to help. On the 19 July, extra heavy shelling was concentrated on the Mussallabeh redoubt, resulting in one man being killed and five of the wounded. The casualties were particularly light, considering, for throughout the day the hill was shaken with continuous explosions of 5.9 shells. The heat in this sector of the line was almost unbearable and movement in the day was prohibited, as the enemy observers were very keen and even solitary men going between posts were sniped at with artillery. On the 21 July, a canteen tent was opened in our line. This was the first time we had had such a convenience on the Palestine operations and the men greatly appreciated the initiative of

the AIF canteen people. The canteen tent came under shell-fire several times whilst here, but although the tent itself was often riddled, there were no casualties among the tinned sardines or beer bottles. At this date the Regiment had in the firing line 15 Officers and 218 O/Ranks, while there were 4 off and 143 men back tending to the horses. The personnel in the line had a front approximately 2 miles long to watch, running from "C" Sqdn at Vyse post to "B" Sqdn forming a centre apex on Mussallabeh itself, and thence towards the river to Maskerah where "A" Sqdn hung out. Regimental Headquarters occupied the Bluff midway between Mussallabeh and Maskerah. At our rear were the Abu Tillut ridges manned at night by the GLH support troops while 3 miles to the back were BHQ at Madhbeh.

All provisions and water were sent up at night on Camels as it was impossible to get near the place during hours of light. The whole system was linked up by telephone, and happily these conditions served to keep the staff and visitors away, leaving us to manage on our own.

Up to the 26 July, we drifted along fairly quietly, there being only a few casualties, all from shell fire.

The position had been well strengthened and rebuilt again and our reserves of ammunition and supplies were replenished. 23 Reinforcements arrived, replacing our evacuations. About this date however, the Medical Officer was beginning to be extremely hard worked, and the Malaria had got its grip. Evacuations were swelling daily in numbers. The men could only be got away to the rear on camels at night and it was very disastrous on them lying all day in the terrific heat with their own temperatures at 104° & 105°. A man was seldom bothered too much about, if his temperature was less than 102°. These facts probably account for the reason that many of the men we evacuated from here never came back, either burning right out or getting invalided to Australia. So the days wore on, each one being similar to its



predecessor, except that the number of malarial sufferers was greater. Shell fire was put on regularly by the enemy morning and evening, chiefly on Mussallabeh, though some long range guns from our side had come along and used to give a reciprocal fire, which served to keep things even. Our dug-outs under shelving rocks were pretty safe and saved us from many casualties. Enemy deserters were coming in daily. They were a poor lot and told tales of great disorganisation in the Turkish ranks. Evidently the Germans at this time were being turned on and subsequent events proved that this was true.

On the 11 August, the Regt led horses, came up and took us (expecting "B" Sqdn) back to BHQ at Madhbeh where we acted as reserve our places in the front line being taken by the 9 LH.

"B" Sqdn remained at the Tillut as support to the 9th. We were reinforced here, various drafts having been sent up from Moascar. Had it not been for these the Regt could not have carried on. Our chief duty consisted in furnishing mounted patrols nightly, to reconnoitre in front of Maskerah. The malaria was still taking its daily toll, and it was hard work keeping up efficient organisation. A relief was caused by a battalion on BWI troops marching in on the 16 August, these taking over half the front line duties. By the 22nd, these BWI's had taken over all the duties and the Brigade was relieved at Madhbeh at sundown on the 23rd inst. The 9 LH relieved us and we marched back Talaat ed Dumm independently to the Brigade that night, glad to be off from such awful scenes. We did not even halt at Jericho, but going via the old Roman road arrived at Dumm at 1am on the 23 August. Passed the daylight hours in bivouac here, and proceeded again in the evening for Enah. At 10pm we passed the 2nd Brigade at Bethany and by 2300, were passing through Jerusalem. Taking the road down to Kulonieh, one of the men and two horses fell over the edge, and down among the rocks some 30 feet below. The man was badly injured, but both horses escaped. We watered at Kulonieh at 1am on the 24 August, and arrived at Enab at a quarter past two.



Bivouaced among the beautiful old olive groves and terraces until 5pm and then left for Labron, arriving at the latter place at 11pm. Departed from here again at 5pm the next day, and reached Ludd, our destination, at midnight. The state of the men throughout this journey can be followed by a look at the following evacuations, en route:-

Madhbeh	1 Off 19 O/R
Talaated Dumm	6 O/R
Enab	1 Off 3 O/R
Labron	1 Off 5 O/R

We presented a most distressing spectacle, marching into Ludd, over half the horses being led along with empty saddles. The Regiment went into the valley on this second occasion 25 Officers and 401 Other Ranks strong. While there 7 Officers and 190 Other Ranks marched in from reinforcements and other camps, making a total of 32 Officers, 591 O/Ranks. We arrived at Ludd with 8 Off, 274 O/Ranks, making a total evacuated from various causes, very chiefly malaria of 24 Officers, 317 O/Ranks. The only Senior Officer was Lt Col McLaurin, each Sqdn being commanded by junior subalterns. The Brigade was encamped among the olive groves and was thus screened from enemy aerial observation. Reorganising was immediately entered upon and effort to obtain help in officers resulted in 5 cadets being sent along fresh from the Zieton training school and taken on strength. Besides these, some of the personnel who had been evacuated in the earlier stages were now returning and the reorganising work was rapidly put on a sound footing. On the 27 August, a big issue of ordnance gear, included swords. We had for many months heard rumours from time to time regarding the probability of being armed with this weapon and had indeed received a good deal of instruction in sword exercises, using the bayonet as a substitute. The new weapon was eagerly welcomed and all ranks were keen to become expert in its use. During the immediate ensuing

days vigorous training was indulged in, the Officers and NCO's being instructed first and then passed their knowledge on to the men. For three weeks here, all day long, could be seen eager swordsmen, charging full tilt at straw dummies, suspended from gallows and thrusting and cutting at imaginary victims. The parade ground was just near a huge P of W compound, and the prisoners there were greatly interested in our training. No doubt they expressed satisfaction at being on the safe side of the fence, when the real thing should commence.

Various Regimental and Brigade training schemes were carried out over the surrounding country, and the troops were also instructed in cavalry drill. The latter was learnt very quickly but was never much used, as our old Light Horse drill had become almost second nature to us.

Our camp in the groves was very comfortable, the men living in bivvies. A wine canteen was run for the mens' benefit and was greatly appreciated. The ration issue was supplemented by the men buying from local canteens and a few obtained limited leave to Egypt.

Rumours began to spread regarding a new offensive and as the early days of September passed nearly everything was in order for fresh emergencies. On the 14th, we received definite orders to get ready to move in a few days and the 16th and 17th, saw us packing up. By 1600, on the 18 September, the Regiment had finished packing and storing all gear.

A parade of all officers was held at BHQ, and there various and detailed instructions were given out by the Bgdr Lt Emmett and 36 O/Ranks were sent to report to Headquarters 5th Cavalry Div to assist in the break through over the trenches. At 1830, the Regiment joined in the Brigade column and moved north to Taffa. Here bivouac was made and the troops sat down to await the outcome of the infantry assault which was to commence about 0400, the following morning 19 September.



All was quiet that night, but from 0600, on the 19th, all troops were standing by ready saddled and packed, to move forward as the situation demanded. The infantry being entirely successful, we moved rapidly at 0800, north through Saron. As we passed along, all was bustle and excitement, Aeroplanes and ammunition wagons were coming and going at top pace.

At midday we watered at \_\_\_\_\_, and proceeded straight on to Sheikh Mohammed. At half past seven pm, the horses started watering in the Wadi, but owing to unsuitable facilities off-saddling was not completed till almost 10 O'clock. Horses were fed, but at a quarter past midnight, saddling up was ordered and the column moved north through Zelefe. The march proceeded rapidly, various villages being passed and occasional batches of prisoners being rounded up. At 1130, Lejjim was reached and the Regiment supplied outposts and patrols while the Brigade watered. At 12 O'clock we off-saddled, but at 1700, the Brigade moved to Tenin/leaving the 8th Regiment as reserve at Australian Division 63 Headquarters. We provided guards here over the prisoners captured by the 4th & 5th Cav Divisions and who by this time numbered several thousands.

At half past 4am, on the following morning (21 Sept), we received orders and marched out hurriedly to Tenin. On arrival there, the place had been captured by the 9th and 10th LH Regiments and the Regiment was made escort to over 7000 prisoners with orders to deliver them to "Ausder" at Lejjim. With these prisoners was a big convoy, containing many German personnel (including nurses, doctors, etc) and about £10,000 in gold. The few miles back to Lejjim took all day to accomplish, the bulk of the prisoners being in an extremely exhausted state. The Regiment provided 2 squadrons as guards on the P of W Compound, the inmates of which now totalled 14,000.

The intelligence personnel were sent back to Tenin to assist at Brigade Headquarters. On the 22 September, at 1400, we started off for Nazareth,



passing through El Afule. The 13th Cav Brigade was in occupation at Nazareth, and the steep road leading up to the heights was littered with hundreds of captured motor lorries and other transport. We took over from the 13th Brigade at 0500, on the 23rd, 2 squadrons providing the defences of the town and 1 squadron doing the town itself. The 13th Brigade moved on towards Haifa and Acre. The 23 and 24 September, was spent in putting Nazareth in order. The whole town was littered with enemy ordnance and equipment. Hundreds of lorries, cars and motor vehicles being found there. The whole place had been taken so quickly that the Germans had had not time to remove a thing. The 14 hospitals there, were in a disgraceful state, most of the orderlies having deserted and taken the provisions with them. However, with the help of the Sisters and townsfolk the patients were concentrated in two or three of the main buildings and a supply of rations was requisitioned and hurried forward by motor from El Afule, many German drivers being put on to drive the vans up to us. All the troops here had quite a "beano" on champagne, large stocks of which had been found in the vicinity.

Patrols had been sent out well along the Tiberias and Haifa roads, reporting all clear. On the 25 September, at 0430, "A" Squadron was hurriedly sent off to reconnoitre Tiberias on the Sea of Gallilee. It was difficult to keep up communications with this Sqdn, but eventually a Brigade party at Mt Tabor got in touch and reported that the 8th Squadron, in conjunction with a squadron of the 12th LH and some armoured cars, had captured the place at 1500, with but little resistance on the part of the enemy. For this action Major MacPherson was subsequently awarded the DSO and Lt Stubbs the MC. About 20 Germans and a few Turks were captured here. On receipt of this news the Brigade hurries through via Nazareth and the Regiment joined in the column on the north side of the town. Tiberias was reached at 0500, and the 8th provided patrols to clear the villages and country to the north and along

the Damascus road.

By noon, Tiberias had been put in order and the column moved down to the shores of the lake and the men and horses enjoyed a good day's swimming. The water of the lake was quite fresh and good drinking. Everyone had a splendid day. At 8 o'clock next morning, however, we were off again along the Damascus road. The pace was constant and 2pm found us facing the Jordan near Kusr Abra. A force of the enemy, mostly Germans, was here however, and offered a resistance to the crossing. The bridge had already been blown up, and the enemy had posted men on the high ground overlooking the ford. By 1900, after a sharp bit of fighting, we were across the Jordan with the 10th Light Horse. Guides were left with signal lamps to direct the rest of Brigade to the ford in the pitch darkness and the 10th and 8th Regiments under a guide, made onward. The guide missed the road and led us a most difficult track up on to the high plateau, but eventually after much toil and a few mishaps with the packs, the road was again found and Tat Ashsein was reached at 4am. We halted and rested here near a large enemy ammunition dump. Just after sunrise, communication was established with Brigade. At half past six, 3 enemy planes flew over a low altitude and bombed troops at our rear. Four of our planes were quickly on the scene and no further trouble was experienced.

By 0900, we were off again, the Regiment acting as advance guard. The country began to get exceedingly rough and it was almost impossible for the horses to get along except on the road. We reached Teba without much opposition, but as no water was available there, we moved on to the Wadi north of Kuneitra. We stayed here until 1500, on the next day 29 September, and then moved on towards Damascus. At dusk the column reached Sasa, where the enemy had secured and prepared a good position overlooking the road. The situation for us was very difficult as movement off the road was almost impossible for the



horses. The 9th and 10th attacked, but made no impression. The situation had to be cleared by daylight as the whole advance would be delayed. At half past 2am, the 8th were sent in on a frontal attack touch was gained with both the 9th and 10th on the flanks, but lost as the line moved forward in the darkness. However, the 8th (2 Squadrons) went right on, and inside of half an hour had cleared the whole position, capturing 5 machine guns. The enemy bolted, but were intercepted by the 10th on the road and captured. At dawn we were at Sasa, where the horses were watered and breakfast indulged in. By 7am we were off again to attack the Katana, Sagnata, Kiswe line the defences south of Damascus. We could see the later place by 0900, and the Division attacked near Kankab, about that time. The 4th Brigade did the frontal work, while the 3rd Brigade swept to the left. All that day our progress was slow, owing to the enemy resistance on our right, but at 1700, we had taken up a position overlooking the Beirut road. The Regiment was held in reserve except 1 squadron, which was sent out to the left to intercept trains or stray bodies of prisoners. All though the night little sleep was obtained. In the city, below us on the right, huge fires and explosions were going on everywhere. The Germans destroying the huge wireless plant and depots. At 4am on the 1 October, the column moved down to the Beirut road through Dumar and through the streets of Damascus. The road at Dumar was blocked with corpses and animals and wagons. Our machine gunners had caught a column escaping here the night before and wiped it out. A train was on the siding, filled with baggage and spoils. In the streets of Damascus itself, the inhabitants turned out and gave us a great welcome, throwing flowers and giving fruits to the troops. The whole place was in a dreadful state of confusion and a good deal of rifle shooting was going on.

We moved straight through to the other side and then out through the vineyards to Duma on the Aleppo road. The Regiment was in reserve to the



Brigade, but two squadrons were sent up to the front where the 10 LH was having trouble with a large enemy column, who were making a determined rearguard stand, near Khan Ayash.

A good number of German prisoners was sent on during the afternoon.

The Regiment was now scattered all over the route from Damascus to Khan Ayash, on various duties. Late in the afternoon, however, parties began to join up Headquarters again and the Regiment was ordered into bivouac among the vineyards. Forage and rations were requisitioned from the inhabitants and a good night's sleep was gained. By dawn a troop had been sent out to reconnoitre toward Khan Ayash and a 7am word was received to saddle up and hurry out as about 2000 of the enemy were trying to make away on the Aleppo road and the patrol troop was in danger of being annihilated. A hurried gallop was made for 5 miles, but on arrival it was found that the 9th LH Regiment who were camped 3 miles nearer the scene had galloped the enemy, who capitulated without much resistance. The rest of the day was spent on out-post round Khan Ayash, but all passed quietly. The two succeeding days 3 and 4 October, were spent at this place, late on the afternoon of the 4th, the Brigade column moved through Duma en route to Kaukab on the south side of Damascus. The column passed through the city streets late in the night and bivouaced near the roadside just clear of the town at midnight. By 0830, next morning, we were moving to Tudeide where we stayed until the 9th and then moved south of Kaukab, where a big P of W Compound containing about 20,000 prisoners was being guarded by the 10th LH.

Sickness began to grow extremely prevalent among the men and malaria and cholera and dysentery were feared. Lt Glanfield succumbed to Cholera in Damascus and the daily evacuations averaged about 8 to hospital. The men however, were enabled to enjoy a good rest here as each day a draft of 300 or 400 prisoners would be borrowed from the Compound and these were employed

in cleaning the camp and grooming the horses, etc. our men merely supervising. The arrangement gave immense satisfaction to both sides, our chaps taking great delight in bossing the Jackos, while the Jackos themselves made backsheesh in the way of rations and stray piastres. The mens' health generally improved and rations were supplemented by purchases of eggs and sheep etc, from surrounding villages. On the 18 October, a wire was received containing following awards for good work done:-

3466 Sgt E M Williams

1566 L/C J Thompson

3507 Tpr Shier

2952 Tpr A E Perry.

All Military Medals.

About this date a party of 3 Officers and 6 O/Ranks ascended Mt Hemon, taking 2 days to do the trip. This party rode their horses to the very summit 9800 feet, a performance which only serves to enhance the sterling qualities of the Australian remount. Unfortunately no photos were procured of the trip, but it is probable that these are the only horses that have ever ascended that snowy old peak.

On the 27th of the month, the Brigade moved en route towards Alepps via Homs. Successive bivouacs were made at Tobar, Khan Kusseir, Kubeife, Nebk and Homs. On arrival at Homs the news of the Armistice with Turkey came through and though received without any show of jubilation, every man was extremely relieved that the Central Powers were beginning to crumble.

At Homs we settled down to await further orders as now the whole campaign on this front was held up pending the negotiations. On the 5th, we heard of the news of Austria's Armistice, and the following decorations came through by wire:-

Major L A W MacPherson MC      Awarded DSO

Lt R H Borbridge            awarded MC

2/Lt J N Stubbs            awarded MC

On the 6 November, the Brigade moved for Tripoli. The journey down was done most of the way along the coast, the end of the Lebanon Mountains being crossed over. The weather was extremely cold throughout especially in the mountains. Everyone was pleased on arrival at Tripoli and a Camp site was picked at Megdelaya among the olive groves. A good camp was made here, but the weather was extremely wet and cold and the horses suffered greatly. Nine Officers and 140 other ranks arrived from Moascar camp on the 18 November, per boat, and these made a great deal of difference to the routine work. Comforts and clothing began to arrive and whole outlook brightened considerably.

On the 12 December, the Regiment moved to a new camp site on the beach south of Tripoli. The new camp proved much better protected than the one just vacated and the contrast from mud to soft sea-sand being greatly felt and appreciated. The horses especially derived much benefit in the change.

Preparations began to take place for Christmas celebrations and sports and football matches were the order of the day. Very little training was indulged in, only just sufficient to keep the men fit. Canteens did a roaring trade and a good many extras were procurable in Tripoli to help along the ration issue. Regimental Funds were drawn on freely to purchase potatoes and vegetables, and all ranks enjoyed this camp greatly. Commodities however, were at dreadful prices, and had it not been for a timely visit from Lt Col Austin, inspecting YMCA's, who not only gave our funds a large donation, but also put us on the track of Comfort Fund money which had been remitted from Australia and had gone astray, we would have fared much worse.

Leave parties were allowed to ride up to the Cedars of Lebanon at Besharri, a trip which usually extended over four or five days and was much



appreciated, while smaller parties were allowed down to Egypt, going by steamer to Port Said.

The weather was remarkably good and the climate fine. Only 20 miles away, but appearing to the vision much nearer were the splendid Lebanon Mountains, 12000 feet high and crowned with snow far down their sides, and it was a remarkable though fairly frequent sight to look up and see snowstorms raging there, while we were enjoying good bracing weather below.

December and January passed quickly by. Everyone had picked up in condition and enjoyed himself thoroughly. Both Brigade and Division held sports early in February, some of our men doing fairly well in the various events. On the night of the 11 February, a big storm blew down most of our camp, and the weather was bad for a few days. Rumour began to talk demobilisation and certain of the personnel were sent down to Moascar for early repatriation. Various preparations were gone through for the home going and on the 18 February the ADR inspected and classified our horses, all fit and serviceable animals were to go to the British Army while the unserviceable ones were to be shot. Altogether from the Regiment about 230 horses were handed over, and about 200 were destroyed. The latter cut a very pathetic and grotesque picture; the last few days prior to their destruction, their manes and tails being clipped for the hair. On the 19 February, we said goodbye to our horses with many a regretful sigh, but we were kept busy on this and the next day packing up for embarkation to Egypt. All our saddlery and heavy gear were handed in to ordnance at Tripoli.

Orders from Headquarters were most conflicting and confusing but after much worry we finally got away from camp, the Regiment marching dismounted down to the Tripoli wharves, (our personal gear being sent on in wagons) and from here we were taken in lighters to the S.S. "Ellenga" and put aboard. The following day we were joined by the 9th Light Horse Regiment and sailed

for Port Said on the 22 February. Arrived at Port Said on the 23rd, and disembarking marched straight to waiting trains and were immediately packed off to Kantara, where we changed trains and were shunted off to Rafa on the borders of Palestine and Egypt and the scene of one of our memorable fights, though at this time the home of the Anzac Mounted Division. Within a few days we had got nicely settled at Rafa, but then someone woke up and found we should have been at Moascar. Accordingly on the 3 March, we were again entrained and sent back, arriving at Moascar late in the afternoon, after a 16 hour journey. Just made a home again, when on the 15 March, trouble broke out in Egypt. Major MacPherson was sent with a party of 50 to Zagazig and quickly got that place under control, but as the trouble kept spreading rapidly in the provinces the whole Regiment was despatched to Zagazig on the 16th, "B" Squadron being mounted. Two days at this place and then the Regiment was given the sector of railway between Zagazig and Benha to control. Headquarters were stationed at Minet el Gamh a big town about midway in the sector, while "A" & "C" Squadrons were strung out in parties along the line. "B" Squadron (mounted) and a fair reserve being kept at Minet el Gamh. From the date of the Regiments arrival here, there was no further trouble in this district, the only incident of note occurring when a patrol under Lt Lunn, furnished by us to Zagazig headquarters ran into some natives attempting to damage the line. It was a complete surprise and before the natives could get away through the crop about sixty were shot. Within a few days practically the whole of the Delta from Cairo to Alexandria - Port Said was being patrolled by Australian troops and was completely under control, only a very few isolated instances of rioting occurring. Upper Egypt however, was not so quickly put in order and a good deal of sacking and looting was prevalent among the larger towns on the main railway. Towards the end of March the Mounted Squadron was used for patrolling the outlying villages of the Markaz and the 1 April, 100



mounted men were sent to Mit Ghamr and detached to the GOC Zagazig. These returned on the 6 April, but 75 of them were sent on to Bilbeis on the 8th, to help the troops already there, especially at the large Prisoners of War camp. All ranks were enjoying the life here immensely. The duties were practically nil and the opportunities of seeing Egyptian life were great. We were quartered in the heart of the cultivations and just at harvest time. Regimental funds provided eggs and vegetables extra to the ordinary rations and a fair supply of good fish was obtained from the canals. The weather was cool and very pleasant and there was no dust. Cricket proved a great favourite and Squadron and Troop competitions took place every day.

Major Y H Walker (MC) left for Australia early repatriation on the 26 April, and he was followed a few days after by Major Crawford, Lt Jenner and Lt Carrington, and about 70 other ranks who were granted English leave.

Captain W McGrath (MC) was promoted in Major Walker's place to command "B" Squadron, and Captain T S Austin was appointed adjutant, while Lieutenants Cowell & Peppercorn were promoted Captains.

On the 8 May, "A" Squadron took over the horses and mounted duties from "B" the latter then doing dismounted duties at Minet-el-Gamh.

On the 16 May, the Regiment (less "B" Squadron) moved to Zagazig preparatory to a general move back to Moascar for embarkation "B" Squadron remaining to watch the Minet sector. All passed quietly until the end of month and 1 June and 2 June the Regiment concentrated at Moascar. The change from the cool green country to the heat and sand was greatly felt especially by the malaria men. Leave was granted to Cairo and Jerusalem to small parties weekly and sports and cricket and swimming were indulged. There was no drill and indeed the weather was too hot for any work. The troops were beginning to grow restless regarding demobilisation and almost each day brought along fresh rumours regarding dates of sailing. However, exactly after a month's wait on the



1 and 2 July all ordnance stores and equipment were handed in to the Depots and Lt Col Daly and Headquarters staff went to Port Said to take over ship duties on H.M.A.T. "Malta". The morning of the 3rd, saw the Regiment entrained at Moascar at 9am and by noon all had been safely allotted to mess decks aboard the ship at Kantara. Besides the Regimental personnel, the ship also had the following troops on Board:-

and these with the 525 of the Regiment made a grand total of 1015.

The ship was frightfully overcrowded and there was no space available for any exercise or amusements. The narrow mess decks were simply stifling in the fierce Egyptian heat and it was quite impossible to stay below any length of time. The whole arrangements regarding accommodation reflected great discredit on the responsible persons, and in such conditions it is not to be wondered at that the men give trouble or that epidemics break out when such arrangements prevail. Happily the food was both good and plentiful and this meant much.

Kantara was left at 3.30pm, we passed through Suez before midnight and morning found us well down the Red Sea. The days went by with everybody stifled with heat and almost unable to bear the cramped quarters. Luckily the weather kept calm for the first few days so we did not have the horrors of sea sickness added to our misery, until beyond Aden we Struck the monsoons when the weather became rougher and slightly cooler.

It took us until the 15 July, to reach Colombo, where a tour to Kandy had been promised providing arrangements allowed for such. The troops were paid prior to disembarking, so were able to have a good spree ashore. The Kandy trip came off alright and proved most enjoyable, the scenery being magnificent and the weather fine.

Colombo and surroundings was thoroughly explored and cars and rickshaws did a great trade. The troops behaved splendidly and the residents expressed their pleasure at the behaviour of the men. The ship sailed on the 18 July, at 6am and struck fairly heavy weather in the south east trader. It grew much colder and everybody brightened up considerably in spirits and health. The food however, was not nearly so good as it has been, as the ship had been unable to replenish much at Colombo owing to the seaman's strike. The ships staff did everything possible to keep the standard good and on the whole there was very little grumbling, a big improvement being promised as soon as we reached Fremantle, and the promise was fulfilled. Fremantle was reached late in the afternoon of the 29 July, but we were not given a clear ship until the morning of the 30 July. The troops were allowed leave for the day and many met friends and relatives. The people of the west treated us royally and everyone had a very happy day.

Not a soul, but was bubbling with elation and excitement, and Australia as seen at the west fulfilled our expectations.

The South Australian and West Australian troops amounting to \_\_\_\_\_ all ranks, said goodbye to us here and by noon on the 31 July. We were off on the final stage for home. The voyage across the Bight was good, the weather being very bracing, a strong wind from off shore blew, but the sea was not rough.

Feelings can be imagined as we sighted the Heads and there was much chatter as we sailed through the Rip, thence on to Portsea, where we anchored about 2pm. During the afternoon the quarantine authorities came aboard, and after taking our temperature pronounced the ship clean, so at 4.30pm the ship up-anchored and away for the Gellibrand Light, near which we anchored for the night ready for an early disembarkation at the New pier at Port Melbourne, next morning the 7 August, and the anniversary of our great tragedy on Gallipoli.

Everyone was astir at 4am and by 9am all Victorian troops had disembarked, by 10am not a soul was left, all having been quickly whisked away to the Depot in motor cars loaned for the occasion. The parade on the pier was the final parade of the 8th Light Horse, a rather inglorious affair considering the occasion. However, in the excitement of it all, nothing coherent could be done, and perhaps at some future date, opportunity will be forthcoming for the personnel to gather together again. One thing is sure the name of 8th Light Horse shines as bodily and nobly as any Unit of the AIF for work accomplished well and duty bravely done.

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In giving you in the next few minutes some account of your Regiment. I propose to take you quickly over practically the whole of our journeyings from our formation to demobilisation. There will be no time to go into detail tonight, but should any of you desire any particular information or figures at anytime, I would be very pleased to furnish you with those in my possession.

The Regiment was formed at Broadmeadows in October 1914, from about 1000 men. Then in the Light Horse depot, most of whom had been in the camp since early September. At that time it was thought that it would be named the 6th LH and form portion of the 2LH Brigade. Under our exteemed friend General Ryrie. However, in the formation of the different quotes, we eventually came to be called the 8th LH and formed a portion of the 3rd LH Brigade under General Hughes.

We embarked on the 24 February, and teached Egypt on the Easter Sunday 4 April.

TO MENA

28 April	to Heliopolis racecourse
14 May	entrained to Alexandria
15 May	embarked Menommie for Dardenelles
19 May	at 9am Cape Helles near River Clyde

BACK TO LEMNOS

21 May	torpedo boat destroy
24 May	armistice
25 May	"Triumph" went down
27 June	Mjr Gregory, Capt Crawl and 5 O/R Lt Col White and 14 others wounded
29 June	Turkish attack

7 August	"Charge"
	13 Off 157 O/R killed
	4 Off 81 O/R wounded
	Strength before charge over 600 men
6 September	Strength was 5 Officers and 30 O/R killed at <u>Hill 60</u> .
8 September	to Table Top we lost 3 of our Officers here, Major Scott (killed) and Major Nicholas had command consecutively
End of September	Cold weather started
Early in October	1st storm
18 October	Col Maygar took command
13 November	Lt Walker and 41 O/R to Mudios
20 December	Evacuation



Heads list of Casualties	Off	OR	
Joined up	123	2211	
Casualties	56	656	
making all	50%	38%	Approx.

Brigades Casualties	1	123	1760
Dead	2424	2	106
Wounded	5304	3	152
Missing	6	4	57
Prisoners	<u>93</u>	Misc	<u>148</u>
	7897	Total	586
			7241

7827

Of Original Reqt                      38 came home with Unit, 9 of those were Officers promoted in field.

(Andy Crawford went to England)

7 Aug 1915	Walkers Ridge	13 Off 157 O/R Killed	
	"	4 Off 81 O/R Wounded	
	Strength before the charge over 600 men		
	4 weeks after	5 Off 30 O/R	14 fit for work
4 Aug 1916	Romani	2 Off 20 O/R Killed	30 wounded.
	(country in Bada)		
	then Royston came.		
15 Sept	Mazar	29 mile waterless stretch	
23 Dec	Maghdaba	3 Off, 10 O/R Killed & Wounded	1350 prisoners
9 Jan	Rafah	1600 prisoners	
25 March	1st Gaza		
19 April	2nd Gaza	2 Off, 14 O/R Killed & died	Wounded 5 Off, 53 O/R
28 October	Convoy to ESANI	Gen Wilson	
31 October	Beersheba	Col Maygar	
2 November	Khuwelfeh	1 Off 5 O/R, 11 O/R wounded.	

1917

7 Nov

Sheria to Huj

Menshiye - Summeil 1 Killed, 1 wounded missing, 2 Off, 5 O/R w.

30 Nov

El Burj In position at 2200. Fighting at 2400. 2 Off, 5 O/R killed. 2 Off, 35 O/R wounded, 5 died. RSF 1 Off, 1 O/R Killed wounded. Yeomanry 3 O/R wounded. Captures 6 Off, 100 O/R, 8 M Guns, 120 dead.

12 Dec

Horses bombed 48 destroyed, 18 wounded.

14

1 killed, 3 captured,

15

Conscription Poll.

1918

2 Jan

Kefr Rut.

8

Belah

30 April  
to

Es Salt 1 Off, 4 O/R killed 19 O/R wounded

3 May

Total captures Germans 2 Off 48 O/R

Turks 28 Off 713 O/R

Our captures 519, 28 M Guns

22 May

Solomon Pools

16 June

Mussallabeh went in 75 Off 401 O/R

11 Aug

Madhbeh reinfcts 7 Off 190 "

26 Aug

Ludd 32 " 591 "

Evacuated 24 " 317 "

Arrived at Ludd 8 " 274 "

19 Sept

Brokethrough

3 March

Moascar

22

Nazareth

15

Zagazig

29

Sasa

1 June

Moascar

30

Damascus

3 July

Malta

1 Dec

Homs

7 August

Home

10

Tripoli

22 Feb 1919

Rafa

### AFTER GALLIPOLI

The Troops reached Heliopolis and the camp where the horses had been left, as the Regiment went to Gallipoli as infantry. Only one man of the original Unit (Trooper Driver) who had not been off the Peninsula throughout the campaign.

- 13 March 1916 After reorganisation the Regiment moved to the east side of the Suez Canal about 8 miles and on the 21 March, conducted a raid on a small Turkish outpost at Wadi Mucksheib, capturing 40 prisoners and destroying the water reservoirs there.
- Apr & May '16 Trained in co-operation with the Infantry Battalions proceeding to France. 11 of our personnel receiving commissions with the Infantry because of their Gallipoli experience.
- 4 August The Regiment entered into the Romani Battle and with the Brigade pursued the Turkish forces until the 9th, where the chase practically ended at Bada oasis. We had lost 2 officers and 20 killed and 6 Officer and 40 Other Ranks wounded. We returned to Romani camp.
- 21 & 23 Dec El Arish was occupied. Maghdaba redoubt attacked and captured our losses, 4 Officers and 10 Other Ranks killed, 1350 prisoners and 4 guns captured and redoubt destroyed.
- 8/9 Jan 1917 Rafah redoubt raided and destroyed 1600 Turkish prisoners.
- 25 March 1st Gaza attack. This attack was virtually successful but at sundown, complete withdrawal orders came from Gen Murray's headquarters 300 miles back at Cairo and the seige of Gaza was maintained until the end of September. The enormous casualties over these months should never have been.



April/Sept      Various skirmishes, Atoweinch 19 April, being the most  
important Regiments casualties 2 Officers, 14 O/Ranks killed  
and 5 Officer, 54 O/Ranks wounded.

31 Sept      Beersheba our C.O. Lt Col Maygar V.C. killed.

2 & 3 Nov      Khuwelfeh, 1 Officer, 5 O/R killed, 11 wounded.

BEERSHEBA TO JERUSALEM

30 Nov 1917 El Burj. Probably the greatest little fight in this whole front. The Regiment took over a section of the line at El Burj in late afternoon from the Royal Scottish fusiliers and the Gloucester Yeomanry. No. the horses had been sent well back the Regimental strength for line duty was only 108 ranks. A picked Battalion of Turks of 500 strong attacked at midnight. Hand to hand fighting in the rock sangars was terrific. By dawn the whole battalion had been wiped out either killed, wounded or captured. Our losses were 3 Officer, 11 O/R killed and 2 Officers, 33 O/Rands wounded most very servely. The Regiment received immediate awards of 2 Military Crosses, 2 Dist Conduct Medals, and much eulogy from Army Command. Back at the horse lines, 4 O/Ranks and 28 horses wounded and 48 horses killed be enemy air raid.

1918

Up to April

9 April To Belah and on the 19th on route to Jordan Valley.

30 April Es Salt Battle. 1 Officer, 4 O/Ranks killed, 19 O/R wounded. Regiment captured over 800 prisoners, including 50 Germans. Awarded 2 Military Crosses and 3 Military Medals.

June Solomon's Pools camp resting.

10/16 July To Musallabeh in the Jordon Valley.

The Regiment marched in	25 Officers	401 O/R
was reinforced by	7 "	190 "
	32 "	591 "
marched in Ludd Camp	8 "	274 "
Total casualties from wounds	24 "	317 "
and sickness (Malaria)		

19 Sept            The last big offensive culminating in the Capture of  
Damascus and the end of the Turkish campaign on 31 October,  
1918.

1919

23 Feb            Arrived at Kantar from Tripoli thence back to Rafa.

3 March            Returned to Moascar

15 March           Egyptian Nationalist rising  
Regiment to Zagazig and Minet el Gamp

1 & 2 June        Back to Moascar

3 July            At Kantara embarked per SS Malta for Australia.

7 August           Arrived at Melbourne and demobilised  
after 4yrs and 6 Months absence.