

WAR DIARY
1917-1918 3rd County of London Yeomanry
1st Oct 1917 - 30th Apr 1918

1st Oct to 20th Oct 1917

Monday Beach near Marakeb

No 265068 Corporal Albert William PALMER drowned while bathing about 16.00 hours Oct 1st. Buried in Khan Ifumis Cemetary 2nd Oct 1917.

Officiating Chaplain Reverend father LAFFAN (No of Grave 29)

29 Riding Horses and 12 Pack Horses arrived 2nd Oct.

2nd Lieutenant MALLETT reported from overseas 3rd Oct 1917.

2nd Lieutenant FW DELVES (transferred from East Riding of Yorkshire Yeomanry) arrived from SELONIKA and taken on strength dated 7th Oct 1917.

Captain GM FITZ GERALD to Senior Officers Course HELIOPOLIS 13th Oct 1917.

Captain FW CARTER from Selonika (Originally 3rd Line of the Regiment) arrived 14th Oct 1917.

2nd Lieutenant WEBER to ZEITOUN for Signalling Course 19th Oct 1917.

Sergeants JONES EB and EDWARDS EV left for commissioned Royal Flying Corps 20th Oct 1917.

Captain FW CARTER appointed Divisional Burial Officer.

Sun 21st Oct

Instructions received to be ready to move forward.

Mon Thu 22nd – Wed 24th Oct

Removing stores etc continued

Thu 25th Oct.

Regiment left beach at 10.00 hours and arrived HISEIA bivouac area 17.30.

Marching out state: 23 officers, 430 ordinary ranks, 472 horses, 61 mules, 22 donkeys 14 vehicles.

Page 2

Fri 26th Oct.

Whole 8th Mounted Brigade in bivouac area at HISEIA.

Instructions to proceed this afternoon to front line and hold the line through ELL BOGGAR Road, 720, 630 550 510, 310, 300, 280, front of 15 miles (Reference map BEERSHEBA 1/125,000)

This Regiment to hold line from 630 (exclusive) to 280 inclusive – the left sector. Left HISEIA 13.30, arrived 16.30 and took over line.

'B' Squadron (Captain WATSON) from 550 inclusive to 510 inclusive.

'C' Squadron (Major FURGESON) from 510 exclusive to 280 inclusive.

'A' Squadron (Captain FRANCIS) with Regimental Headquarters in reserve.

Sat 27th Oct.

Nothing to report during night but about 04.30 enemy attacked with about 4000 Infantry and two Regiments of Cavalry, battery of guns and two camel guns.

They attacked the sector 720 to 550 inclusive.

2nd Lieutenant Scopes on 550 and Captain WATSON with supports between 550 and 510, both shelled and attacked by machine gun fire. Casualties 5 men wounded, maintained their position

At 7.30 Captain Francis with two troops of 'A' Squadron went to support 630, came under shell fire.

Casualties 4 ordinary ranks wounded, 5 horses.

When he reached Headquarters Middlesex Yeomanry was told he was not required as Infantry had come up.

5th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers, 7th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers and the Hereford Regiment (all 53rd Division) came through Regimental Headquarters on way to 550 and 630.

Heavily shelled by shrapnel. About 12 slight casualties treated by our Medical Officer.

Regiment with the rest of Brigade withdrew 19.00 hours as 53rd Division had taken up One.

'6' Squadron left out to observe on left flank of infantry from point 510 to 280.

Sun 28th Oct. 1917

Casualties in regiment yesterday were as follows:- Sergeant PULZER, Corporal PLANT, Lieutenant MANSFIELD, Fusilier Lieutenant's EVE, TYLER, RAYNER, HILL?, OXFORD, Lieutenant GEORGE WA & SS BARTON.

'A' Squadron (Captain FRANCIS) sent out to relieve 'C' Squadron on left of Infantry at 1700. Brigade Casualties yesterday between 70 and 80 of whom 4 Officers killed and 5 or 6 wounded. 'A' Squadron (Captain FRANCIS) relieved 'C' Squadron on left flank.

Mon 29th Oct.

Communication from 'General Officer Command' congratulating the Brigade on the gallant fight put up and stating that the Higher Command had thanked the GOC. 'B' Squadron (Captain WATSON) relieved 'A' Squadron on left flank

No 265607 Private Egan BK accidentally shot himself in the leg whilst cleaning his rifle.

2nd Lieutenant JD YOUNG to Royal Flying Corps CAIRO for interviews.

Tue 30th Oct.

2nd Lieutenant HG EVEREST to Hotchkiss Course ZEITOUN. Secret communication received that tomorrow being ZERO, the Brigade would be ready to move in half-an-hour's notice.

General idea ANZAC Mounted Division and Australian Mounted Division to make demonstration against the South and East of BEERSHEBA respectively at 0900.

On left of Australian Mounted Division the 7th Mounted Brigade link up with 60th Division and 74th Division (20th Corps) who attack BEERSEBA from the West at 10.00.

On the left of the 74th are the 53rd who protect the left flank. Further to the left are the 21st Corps who make a holding attack on GAZA.

In the event of enemy creating a diversion by trying to break through between the 20th and 21st Corps the Yeoman Mounted Division to come into the gap.

[During the third attack on Gaza, which took place on 31st October, the regiment was held in readiness but was not ordered into action. It finally began to advance a few days later]

Wed 31st Oct.

Standing-to all day. Word received in evening that BEERSEBA had fallen. Strength of Regiment in camp. 22 Officers, 427 other ranks, 440 Riding Horses, 62 Draught Mules & 37 Pack horses, 22 Donkeys, 12 Hotchkiss Rifles. Total men in hospital 47.

Thomas A SALT Lt Col (Location Hiseia)
WAR DIARY
3rd County of London Yeomanry

Page 4

HISEIA Thur 1st Nov

Reference Maps RAFA and BEERSHEBA 1/125000

Further notes received that BEERSHEBA was captured At 17.30 last night and that the water there is good. Standing by awaiting orders.

Fri 2nd Nov.

Communication from Commander-in-Chief and from General Officer Command 20 Corps thanking the Brigade for their services on 27th Oct. Also wire from Chief of Imperial General Staff to same effect. News from GAZA how that line advanced and UMBRELLA HILL taken (21st Corps) 20th Corps occupied IRGEIG and found excellent water supply with new ? and pumping machine, with storage for 10,000 galleons.

Sat 3rd Nov.

Standing by: Dust Storm: Word received at 22.00 hours that Brigade would move tomorrow, starting with this Regiment at 06.15 to position 1 mile North of GOZ-EL-BAZAL.

Sun 4th Nov

Left 06.15. Arrived 08.30. Marching-out state. 23 Officers, 424 Ordinary Ranks, 442 Riding horses, 37 Pack horses, 61 mules, 12 Hotchkiss Guns, 2 two-wheeled and 12 four wheeled vehicles.

Arrived GOZ-EL-BAZAL received orders to move to BEERSHEBA tomorrow.

Mon 5th Nov.

Left Camp 08.15 Whole Yeomanry Division marched to BEERSHEBA arrived there 17.00 hours

Tue 6th Nov.

Arrived in position on BEERSHEBA-ABU KHUFF track about 2 miles North East of Kh.EL-MUWEILEH 53rd Division. Attacked on right and ¼? on left.

6th Mounted Brigade linked up three Divisions. Mounted 22nd Brigade and 8th Mounted Brigade in support.

About 14.00 hours Brigade moved to Kh.EL-MUWEILEH to fill gap there.

At 17.00 Brigade ordered to move back to position 2 miles south of AIN KOLEH and take up outpost line between 53rd Division and 22nd Mounted Brigade. Held line all night.

Wed 7th Nov.

Held outpost line till 17.00, when ordered to extend left flank to touch 22nd Mounted Brigade.

Page 5

Thu 8th Nov.

At 6.30 Brigade left position and moved to take up line between Wadi ABU KHUFF and Wadi KHUWEILEH. Whole Division moved.

Brigade and Regiment shelled whole time crossing hills south of ABU KHUFF.

About 70 shrapnel fired, no casualties in Regiment, arrived in position.

City of London Yeomanry engaged enemy near TEL METADIL several casualties.

'B' Squadron this Regiment covered withdrawal of City of London and acted as rear guard to Brigade which moved at 18.10 to TEL-EL-SHERIA

Fri 9th Nov.

Reference Map PALESTINE Sheet 20 1 inch to mile. Arrived at TEL-EL-SHERIA 24.30

Bad watering. Dead Turks and animals in Wadi.

Lieutenant GLEASON to hospital on 8th Nov. Left TEL-EL-SHERIA at 07.00 for HUJ. No rations or forage.

From HUJ pushed on to JELAMEH (S160) objective to attack SIMSIM.

Information that SIMSIM evacuated. Evidence that many had retreated hastily as tents, guns, war material and stores had been left behind.

Stayed at JELAMEH overnight.

Sat 10th Nov.

Left JELAMEH 05.15 and moved via HUJ to TEL-EL-NEJILEH (H180) Brigade watered there. Information that enemy retreat from coast across to JERUSALEM road and putting up stray flank resistance.

Left NEJILEH 15.00 and arrived at point in neighbourhood of ARAN-EL-ABU-HUSEIN (Z148) where camped for night.

Sun 11th Nov.

Left 04.00. Information that ASKALON had fallen.

Proceeded via TEL-EL-HESY and FALUTEH to EL MEJDEL (East of ASKALON) arriving there at 20.00

Heavy rain, thunder and lightening stormy night.

Mon 12th Nov.

Left 08.30, arrived ESDUD 12.00

Left ESDUD 1600 and acted as support Regiment to the Brigade which had taken up line remaining from ESDUD towards BURKA.

BURKA taken during night by 156 Brigade (52 Division)

Tue 13th Nov.

Instructions to take YEBNA. Two officers patrols sent out at 05.00. They reported that YEBNA defended. Regiment moved 06.30. Engaged enemy at 08.05. Enemy defended with shell fire, machine gun and rifle.

Hampshire Battalion Royal Horse Artillery supported us about 10.30 enemy seemed to be withdrawing and at 10.45 Regiment galloped into YEBNA. No casualties.

Established ourselves there while the 155 and 157 Infantry Brigades (52 Division) attacked BESHSHIT.

Camped for night west of YEBNA. 'A' Squadron outpost line on south lines.

Lieutenant GOWING-SCOPES to hospital.

Wed 14th Nov.

Information that 6th Mounted Brigade to attack MUGHAR south east YEBNA. This Regiment in support.

Two officer patrols sent out 05.30 to clear up tactical situation west of YEBNA.

One squad ('C' Major John-FERGUSON) holding line to Sand Dunes to prevent any attack on left being made immobilised. Gave order at 09.00 for 'C' Squad to be called in.

Left with 'A' and 'B' Squads at 09.15 for position one mile west of NAANE. Shelled by enemy at 11.45.

22nd Mounted Brigade galloped into NAANE (unoccupied) but were very heavily shelled from three sides.

This Regiment (less 'C' Squad) advanced with 1 Squad City of London Yeomanry from ridge to ridge. Enemy holding ridge north west of NAANE.

Engaged with enemy till 16.30 heavily shelled but maintained position. Casualties, 3 men wounded (Appendix A).

At 16.30 orders received not to advance further. Outpost five? held for night on position confirmed during day.

At 22.00 hours wire received that 6th and 22nd Brigades would attack ABU SHUSHE at 07.00 tomorrow and that 8th Mounted Brigade would engage enemy in his present position.

Thur 15th Nov.

Morning patrols reported at 05.30 that many had evacuated position.

6th and 22nd Mounted Brigades attacked ABI SHUSHE at 07.00, severe fighting, heavily shelled. In our hands about 09.00

6th Battalion lost heavily. At 10.45 orders received to march on RAMLE at 11.15.

Arrived there 13.00. Inhabitants friendly. Governor stated that Turkish Army had passed through about 10,000 strong and 7 ?.

Camped outside RAMLE for night.

Fri 16th Nov.

Left RAMLE 09.15 and proceeded to LUDD.

Shelled on journey. Camped at LUDD

Page 7

Sat 17th Nov.

Left LUDD 08.00 for ANNABEH (PALESTINE Sheet 17) with orders to patrol tract of country and report on roads, water, signs of enemy. Arrived ANNABEH 11.00 'B' Squad to BIFILYA (2 miles east). Patrols sent out at once. Reports received in evening and sent to Brigade Headquarters at RAMLE:- No roads, no water (except in village cisterns) and no signs of enemy.

Sun 18th Nov.

Wire received to march on to BEIT UR EL TAHTA and live on country if supplies fail. Left 09.00 proceeded via EL BURJ.

At 12.00 advanced fronts ran into 20 Turks who laid down their arms.

Troops sent to take over but 250 Australian Cavalry appeared and opened fire, allowing Turkish prisoners to escape.

Regiment attacked on right flank and in front. Bodies of enemy (30 to 40 in a body) seen working about. Enemy continued until 16.00

Further progress impossible so resolved to camp for night where we were.

Hillposts put out surrounding bivouac Captured 5 Turks, no casualties.

Quiet night (Position of camp square J35R PALESTINE Sheet 17)

Mon 19th Nov.

Quiet night, morning patrols reported enemy fire during night.

Orders to march to BIREH on JERUSALEM road about 10 miles north of JERUSALEM (Sq U22C PALESTINE Sheet 17)

Left at 12.20 and proceeded with Brigade to TAHTA from which place into WADI SUNT.

Narrow Wadi bed. All battalions. Steep rocky hills rising several hundred feet up. Hills signalled by 8th City of London Yeomen. Horses had to be led in single file.

At 14.00 held up by enemy fire from hills. 'C' Squad sent up from Wadi dismounted to help.

1st Company to dislodge enemy. At 17.00 enemy withdrew. Casualties Lance Corporal WOOD killed. Sergeant DICKINSON wounded.

'C' Squad returned to Wadi 21.00. Camped in Wadi overnight.

Very heavy rain driving night. Miserable cold time.

Tue 20th Nov.

At 6.00 orders to withdraw down Wadi and advance over hills instead. Left 6.30 stayed at TAHTA till 10.30. Had to lead horses in single file over stony mountains.

After passing through BEIT UR EL FOKA proceeded two mile south east and camped for night. Enemy in force in neighbourhood. Put out four troops as higher outposts. 6th and 22nd Brigades in touch with enemy, heavy rain during night, miserable conditions.

Page 8

Wed 21st Nov.

Left bivouac 09.00 6th and 22nd Brigades to continue the attack towards BEITUNIA. 8th Mounted Brigade in reserve.

Held up by enemy when about one mile north east (1g R14d) and halted.

About 11.00 hours enemy guns began to shell very heavily and finally got away.

The Regiments first shelling resulted in three men killed, 9 wounded and 16 horses killed. 6th Brigade hard pressed so City of London Yeomanry Regiment thrown forward to keep heavy fighting enemy and bring in numbers.

Said to be two infantry divisions. Heavy fighting all day till sunset.

Held our position. Yeoman Mounted Division suffered severely.

This Regiment allowed rest of Division to pass through and finally withdrew at 03.15 on 22nd.

Casualties today six men killed (three died of wounds) and one officer Major JOHNSON FERGUSON and nineteen officers wounded (Appendix 'B'). Captain MEADE rejoined from hospital.

Thu 22nd Nov.

Marched at 3.15 to BEITUREH EOKA arriving there at 05.15.

Horses sent on in advance at 18.00.

Previous night, horses casualties fighting 31 killed, 13 missing.

Fri 23rd Nov.

Numbers actually present in Count for fighting purposes 17 Officers, 248 Ordinary Ranks.

Instructions received to be prepared to put all available dismounted men into the field.

Sat 24th Nov.

Dismounted party told off ready to start on half hours notice.

Infantry to attack on right. Dismounted Yeomanry Division to make demonstration on left.

Dismounted party left 13.30 – Three officers Captain WATSON and Lieutenants MATTHEWS and DELVES, 150 ordinary ranks 32 horses.

Orders received that remanent of Regiment and all horses to leave at daybreak tomorrow for RAMLE.

Number of ordinary ranks in hospital – sick and wounded as per Army Book FUZ – 140

Sun 25th Nov RAMLEH

Left FOKA 06.00 13 officers, 81 ordinary ranks, 356 horses.

Arrived RAMLE 12.00

Major GRANVILLE left to command Lincoln Yeoman

Mon 26th Nov.

Assistant Director Veterinary Services reports that Brigade horses will not be fit for work for two months. Sending them in batches to Mobile Veterinary Section.

Page 9

Tue 27th Nov.

Sent fifteen horses to Mobile Veterinary Section

Enemy aeroplane flew low over our camp about 22.30 repeatedly firing her machine gun.

No Casualties. Sixteen remounts arrived four of them pack horses.

Wed 28th Nov.

Still at RAMLEH.

On 29th Lieutenant MALLETT to hospital

Fri 30th Nov.

Twenty horses to Mobile Veterinary Section.

On 30th Captain FITZGERALD returned from Senior Officers course at HELIOPOLIS for which he left us on 13th Oct.

Total strength at this date including seven seven officers, forty four ordinary ranks, and 74 horses retracted is 22 officers 355 ordinary ranks 344 horses.

Operations of dismounted portion of regiment since 24th Nov.

On 24th be ? to SHEIKH AMR (Reference Map Palestine Sheet 17 square R20a)

At 11.30 on 25th relieved 1st County at R21a and R22a.

At 11.30 on 26th relieved by 1st County returned to SHEIKH AMR.

At 11.30 on 27th relieved 1st County and stayed on till 29th.

Severely attacked all the time.

Enemy forced back the left and occupied FOKA getting connected behind our Regiments Brigades Headquarters south of BEIT ANAN (D 29B)

Division Headquarters at TAHTA.

On 27th 'A' squadron sent to neighbourhood of at TIREH to assist 1st Company and City London Yeomanry who were being hard pressed.

'B' and 'C' squadrons remained and held on to R21A and R21B.

On 29th 'C' squad had for ordinary ranks wounded (Appendix C)

On 29th the 60th Infantry Division arrived on right and 74th Infantry Division on left so Regiment relieved and returned to BEIT SIRA on 30th Nov to ANNABEH

Thomas A SALT Lt Colonel

3rd County of London Yeomanry

WAR DIARY

3rd County of London Yeomanry

Page 10

Sat 1st Dec 1917 AKIR

Orders received at 03.00 that horses to be sent to ANNABEH for dismounted party and that Brigade would move to ZERNUKA.

Sent 148 led horses to ANNABEH at 08.30

Left with remainder for ZERNUKA at 09.00

Arrived 11.20 moved from there to AKIR where new camp arranged for dismounted party from the hills arrived 17.30 hours.

Sun Tues 2nd Dec.

Wire from General Officer Command 20th Corps to Yeoman Division expressing admiration of Corps for the gallant way in which the thin cavalry lines held out in the mountains until supplies enabled infantry to relieve.

2nd Lieutenant MILTON and 'B' Echelon transport rejoined Regiment after having been detached since 5th Nov 17.

Mon 3rd-10th Dec

Lieutenant KIRBY returned from leave to England for which he sailed on 21st Sep.

Lieutenant WEBER returned from Signalling Course ZEITOUN

49 ordinary rank reinforcements arrived of which 36 were hospital cases and 13 new men from overseas.

Major E SOPPER (17th Royal Lancers) attached City of London Yeomanry appointed 2nd in command of Regiment

Fri 7th Dec 17.

Seven remounts arrived

Mon 10th Dec 17

Received instructions that Division would move tomorrow to MEJDEL.

Tue 11th Dec.

Left camp 08.30 arrived ESDUD 13.00 bivouaced for night

Marching out state 22 officers, 310 ordinary ranks, 308 horses, 53 mules

Dismounted party walked – 44 ordinary ranks.

Page 11

Wed 12th Dec ESDUD

Left ESDUD 09.00 arrived in vicinity of MEJDEL 12.30.

New Camp situated beside ASKALON half mile from sea.

No 265349 Lance Corporal H ATKINSON and No 265565 Private A PARKER (both 'C' Squad awarded MILITARY MEDAL for behaviour while in charge of Hotchkiss Guns on 27th November with dismounted party in hills 13th Dec.

Lieutenant and Quartermaster BOURNE to hospital.

Near to ASKALON

Draft of 55 ordinary ranks arrived 18th Dec.

29 Riding and 7 draught horses arrived.

Programme of training arranged for during stay in reserve.

Hotchkiss Gun, bombing, musketry, instructional classes, riding school etc.

Wed 19th Dec.

The Commander-in-Chief (General ALLENBY) presented ribbons to officers and other ranks of the Division who had been awarded decorations.

Parade of Division. Marched past at walk and trot.

Sat 22nd Dec.

2nd Lieutenant MELLETT rejoined from hospital

Mon 24th Dec.

Terrible storm of wind and rain.

Tue 25th Dec.

News received that Private CRITCHELL CA wounded on 21st Nov 17 had died of wounds in CAIRO on 20th Dec 17, and been buried in Cemetery, OLD CAIRO (Sec 075) 28th Dec.

Divisional Commander (General BARROW) inspected reinforcements and remounts.

Fri 28th Dec.

News received that Private ANSELL ('C' Squadron) had died of wounds received on 21st Nov in Citadel Hospital Cairo on 21st Dec, buried in Cemetery OLD CAIRO.

Major SOPPER returned from leave.

Sun 30th Dec.

Lieutenant WARNER proceeded on leave to Egypt.

Page 12

Mon 31st Dec.

Wire received that Division would be required to move SOUTH on 2nd January.
Lieutenant SHEDDEN returned from leave in England.

(Squad) Thomas A SALT Lt Col
3rd County of London Yeomanry
WAR DIARY
3rd County of London Yeomanry

Page 13

Tues 1st Jan 1918 ASKALON

Began transporting stores etc to rail for move southward.

Sent off dismounted party of general infantry ordinary ranks to proceed by rail with stores.

Wed 2nd Jan.

Left ASKALON 07.30

Desert Mounted Corps (Less one Division) withdrawing to BELAH.

Marching out state of Regiment. 22 officers, 319 ordinary ranks, 354 horses, 54 mules, 12 donkeys, 14 vehicles.

In addition 91 dismounted men who left 1st Infantry arrived GAZA 12.30 and bivouaced for night.

Six ordinary ranks left for commissions in Royal Flying Corps.

Thu 3rd Jan.

Left GAZA 08.00. Arrived BELAH 12.00.

Lieutenant HR FARNELL-WATSON rejoined from leave in Egypt.

Programme of training arranged on same basis as at ASKALON, with the addition of mounted Drill and Schemes.

Fri 4th Jan. BELAH

Major JOHNSON-FERGUSON and 33 ordinary ranks arrived from hospital – six being wounded cases.

Sat 5th Jan.

Lieutenant Colonel Sir THOMAS SALT Brevet DSO [*Distinguished Service Order*] left for JERUSALEM with Captain GM FITZGERALD

Sun 6th Jan.

Lieutenant Quartermaster BOURNE returned from hospital

Mon 7th Jan.

Lieutenant JD YOUNG left on leave for England. (Port Said)

Lieutenant Colonel SALT returned from JERUSALEM with Captain FITZGERALD.

Tue 8th Jan.

Lieutenant FABER returned from Cavalry Course at ZEITOUN

Sun 13th Jan.

Twenty remounts arrived.

Page 14

Mon 14th Jan

Lieutenant NUTTING rejoined from leave in EGYPT

Tue 15th Jan.

Thirty Remounts arrived

Fri 18th Jan.

Twenty five Remounts arrived.

Sun 20th Jan.

Captain CARTER to Egypt on leave.

Sat 19th Jan.

Lieutenant HR FARNELL-WATSON promoted acting Captain while Commanding a Squadron on 13th Oct 1917 (War Office wire 21/76 dated 8th Jan 1918)

2nd Lieutenant DELVES to Cavalry Course ZEITOUN

Corps Commander (General CHAUVEL) inspected lines

Sun 20th Jan.

Captain FRANCIS left for PORT-SAID for leave to England

Mon 21st Jan.

Major JOHNSON-FERGUSON left for Senior Officers Course ZEITOUN

Tue 22nd Jan.

Fourteen Remounts arrived

Thu 24th Jan.

Captain CARTER returned from leave.

Fri 25th Jan.

Lieutenant Colonel Sir THOMAS SALT Brevet DSO left for ALEXANDRIA for leave to England.

Sat 26th Jan.

Lieutenant WARNER to hospital.

Lieutenant MILTON to CAIRO on leave.

Page 15

Tue 29th Jan.

Lieutenant WARNER from hospital.

Major E SOPPER

Commanding 3rd County London Yeomanry

WAR DIARY

3rd County of London Yeomanry

Training continued on same times as last month

7th Feb. 1918 BELAH

2nd Lieutenant WOOD rejoined from Hospital. 2nd Lieutenant MILTON from leave to Egypt. Eleven ordinary rank reinforcements arrived of which four were old members of Regiment.

9th Feb.

Five ordinary ranks arrived – all old members.

13th Feb.

Captain FARNELL-WATSON left for ALEXANDRIA to await embarkation to England on leave. Captain CARTER took over 'B' Squadron.

17th Feb.

2nd Lieutenant DELVES returned from Cavalry Course at ZEITOUN.

14th Feb.

Lieutenant Colonel Sir THOMAS SALT embarked for England on leave.

19th Feb.

Instructions received by wire that remainder of Yeoman Mounted Division would move to GAZA on 22nd Feb. (6th and 22nd Brigades having already gone.)

20th Feb.

Lieutenant GLEASON rejoined from hospital. (Went there on 8th Nov 1917)

Strength of Regiment at this date: 25 Officers, 465 ordinary ranks, 446 horses, 56 mules, 12 donkeys, 14 vehicles.

Instructions received by wire that advance party proceeds by road tomorrow to GAZA with tents.

That heavy baggage and dismounted party go by rail and that Regiment moves at 10.00 on 22nd Jul.

21 Feb.

2nd Lieutenant MALLETT to KELAB school for young officers.

22nd Feb.

Left BELAH 10.00 hours arrived GAZA (U20? GAZA-SHELLAL ?)

Captain JC FINOLAY to Egypt on leave. Lieutenant A KIRKBY assumes duties of Adjutant in his absence.

Four ordinary ranks arrived, three from hospital.

24th Feb.

Four ordinary ranks arrived, three from hospital.

Page 17

25th Feb. GAZA

Training to be continued on lines previously laid down. Special physical drill and bayonet fighting course for officers. NCO's for purpose of training instructors.

26th Feb.

Lieutenant MEADE to PORT SAID with leave party.

27th Feb.

Three ordinary ranks from hospital

28th Feb.

'A' Squadron, Captain FITZGERALD, 2nd Lieutenant WOOD, WELLINGTON, 109 ordinary ranks, 126 Horses, 6 Mules, 2 Donkeys

General Staff Wagon left to take over duties of Escort Squadron at Desert Mounted Corps.

Head Quarters (REF MAP 1" 071 V35 6C5)

KH DEIRAN Divisional Tactical Exercise to illustrate crossing a defile. [*Narrow pass or gorge between mountains or hills*]

Strength in camp at close of month 17 officers, 327 ordinary ranks, 301 Horses, 50 Mules, 10 Donkeys

Major E SOPPER

Commanding 3rd County London Yeomanry

WAR DIARY

3rd County of London Yeomanry

Page 18

Fri 1st Mar. GAZA
35 Remounts arrived

Sun 3rd Mar.
Lieutenant WARNER to Hotchkiss Course at ZEITOUN.
2nd Lieutenant MILTO to Hospital.
2nd Lieutenant MARTIN assumed Duties of Transport Officer vice MILTON.
Ten Remounts arrived.

Tue 5th Mar.
Orders received that Regiment (Less 'A' Squadron) and ½ 21st Machine Gun Squadron (6 Guns) will proceed to BEIT ELLO (Palestine 1" to mile Sheet 14 Fba)

Thu 7th Mar.
Left GAZA 09.00 marching out state 15 officers, 282 ordinary ranks, 311 Horses, 46 mules, 6 donkeys.
Left behind at GAZA 34 men, 36 animals
Captain BENNETT Rawla, Captain HALLINAN Rawla attached.
Moved via MEDJEL to North of JULIS arriving 17.30 hours.
Major JOHNSON FERGUSON rejoined from course.

Fri 8th Mar.
Left 07.00 reached LATRON 15.45

Sat 9th Mar.
Left 07.00 and marched along the GREAT NORTH ROAD to BEIT ELLO arriving there at 16.00. Attached to 10th Division.
'B' Squadron (Captain CARTER) took over from 6th Lancaster Regiment at dawn. Two posts
1) at BLUFF (C21d) and DEREN NIDHAM (C236) One troop and one Machine Gun at each.
2) Machine Gun's at (C286)

Sun 10th Mar. Orders received to hold one squadron ready to proceed to NEBY SALEH (C12d) at short notice to relieve 5th Connaught Rangers.

Mon 11th Mar.
Infantry advanced to BEIT RIMA (C4a).
232 Brigade (75th Division) moved up to ABUD (C7b)

Tue 12th Mar. BEIT ELLO

'B' & 'C' Squads with two Machine Guns move to C29d.

65 Camels provided for rations and forage.

Orders received to move to DEIRAN NIDHAM at once.

One post (Two troops) at TIBNEH (Due North of NIDHAM) to keep in touch with 5th

Connaught Rangers (29th Brigade) on NEBY SALEH and one post still at BLUFF.

Two Machine Guns at each post and two at NIDHAM.

Transport and QuarterMaster remain at BEIT ELLO

Wen 13th Mar.

Lieutenant MEADE rejoined 'A' Squad from PORT-SAID and fifteen ordinary ranks.

Captain GM FINDLAY reported 8th Mounted Brigade Head Quarters at GAZA on 9th Unit from leave in Egypt and was retained by Brigade.

Fri 15th Mar.

Lieutenant WARNER rejoined 'A' Squad from Hotchkiss Course.

Sun 17th Mar.

Nothing to report. Weather bad. Storms of wind and rain. Roads impassable.

Captain GM FINDLAY rejoined Regiment.

Mon 18th Mar.

Orders received from 29th Infantry. Brigade to move tomorrow and occupy BEIT RIMA (C41) and high ground in vicinity.

75th Division on left to patrol to GHUSSANEH (A27 Central)

29th Brigade to occupy KEFR TUT (A3660) on re-adjunctment of line.

Tue 19th Mar. BEIT RIMA

'B' Squad (Captain CARTER) left camp at 07.30 as advanced guard and occupied BEIT RIMA and high ground 10.35.

No opposition. Rest of Regiment followed in small bodies.

At 13.15 Enemy commenced shelling from north east. Searching position lasted till 14.15

About forty shells both high explosive and shrapnel. Two horses wounded. No other casualties.

Stopped transport camels and remainder of Regiment from entering position till dusk.

Got into touch with 75th Division at SH KAUWASH and 5th Connaught Rangers at KEFR TUT.

Put out four posts and four Machine Guns for night.

Wen 20th Mar.

Enemy shelled position at 07.55 till 08.15. Eight shells. No Casualties.

Serg JJ JOHNSON and Serg ROBERTS to Officers Cadet course at ZEITOUN.

58th Rifles and 75th Division occupied GUSSANEH during night and 6th Lancashire occupied KEFR TUT

Viewed both during morning and fixed patrols to meet at night.

One patrol to GHUSSANEH and second to KEFR TUT.

Posts fixed as follows at BEIT RIMA

1) A34d.95 2) A346.95 3) A29a. 04

Enemy commenced shelling again at 16.30

At 21.15 firing and bombing on left.

Sent out patrol. Met 58th Rifles who reported small raid by enemy on their position at GHUSSANEH. Quiet night.

Patrols met 58th Rifles and 6th Lancashire's on left and right respectively during night

Thu 21st Mar. BEIT RIMA

11.45 Position shelled by enemy. Eight shells high explosive and shrapnel.

No Casualties

13.15 Lieutenant KIRBY and six men reconnoitred Wadi east of BEIT RIMA from A35d to A29 a 93 came under accurate sniper fire.

Casualties nil.

Orders received from Intelligence Agent at BEIT ELLO to arrest the Mughdar of BEIT RIMA.

As two men appeared to answer to that title arrested both namely HASSAN-ES-SENNA and YUSEF and sent them under escort to BEIT ELLO at 14.00

Inhabitants of BEIT RIMA at present number about 450.

Fri 22nd Mar.

09.00 Dispatched Sergeant and five mounted orderlies to act as standard bearers for Duke of CONNAUGHT from BEIT AMMAR to DEIR NIDHAM today.

Also sent seven men to police the camel track. Quiet day.

Sat 23rd Mar.

Nothing to report during night. Considerable shelling by enemy artillery of positions in the right and left between 7.40 and 14.25

Present distribution of Regiment is as follows:

1) In the front line 'B' and 'C' Squadron and Headquarters. 17 Officers, 276 Ordinary Ranks, 313 horses, 46 Mules, 4 Donkeys, 12 Vehicles, 8 Hotchkiss Rifles.

2) At KH DEIRAN ('A' Squad) Escort Squad to Desert Mounted Corps, 6 Officers, 119 Ordinary Ranks, 123 Horses, 10 Mules, 2 Donkeys, 2 Vehicles, 4 Hotchkiss Rifles.

3) At SUKEREIR 45 Ordinary Ranks, 31 Horses, 1 Mule, 6 Donkeys.

4) Detached 19 Ordinary Ranks, 17 Horses and 2 Officers.

Total Strength

25 Officers, 459 Ordinary Ranks, 484 Horses, 57 Mules, 12 Donkeys, 14 Vehicles, 12 Hotchkiss Rifles.

In Addition

4 Officers, 5 Ordinary Ranks in England on leave and one Officer (Lieutenant MILTON) in hospital.

Sun 24th Mar. BEIT RIMA - Map Reference PALESTINE 8. 14 1" to mile

Quiet day. Some movement by enemy snipers about mosques of KEFR AIN.

Enemy shells KEFR TUT but not to any great extent.

Towards evening heavy storm of wind and rain with thunder and lightening broke out.

Mon 25th Mar.

Nothing to report during night.

Rain continued in steady downpour during night and morning.

Miserable conditions.

Slight movement of enemy observed round mosques of KEFR AIN.

Wet night men soaked.

Tue 26th Mar.

Nothing to report during night.

Fine morning but heavy showers during day present Machine Gun men approved drying?

Movement observed in and about mosques of KEFR AIN throughout the daybreak

10.20 slight movement observed about KARAWA-IBN-ZEID (A14d)

14.40 enemy commenced shelling KEFR TUT from north west.

Wed 27th Mar.

Nothing to report during night. Rain ceased., fine morning, quiet day.

About 09.40 heavy firing and guns. Machine guns and rifles – broke out in the vicinity of SH KAUWASH (A20a81) and (A27a87) and continued with violence till 20.45. Intermittent firing during night.

Learned from patrol sent by our support troops to GHUSSANEH that firing caused by ? of 58th Rifles towards EL KEFR (A8C50)

Thu 28th Mar.

Nothing to report in our front during night. Fine day.

No clothing? in camp, sent Regiment ? home only a few septic sores? Quiet day.

At 17.00 enemy fire some shrapnel landing track between NEBI SELAH and BEIT RIMA by which our camels transport stores?

Fri 29th Mar. BEIT RIMA - Map Reference PALESTINE 8. 14 1" to mile

Quiet night. Instructions received to evacuate all the inhabitants and their flocks and herds.

Arranged to commence evacuation tomorrow night. Quiet day. Rained heavily in evening.

About 19.30 enemy shelled GHUSSANEH.

Heavy rain during night. At 03.00 right sub-sector of 233rd Brigade (75th Division) advanced to include EL KEFR and SH NAFUKH.

Orders received from 10th Division at 14.00 that Regiment to be prepared to move at short notice to rejoin Yeoman Division.

Wire from 29th Brigade at 22.00 that we are to move tomorrow night and that all inhabitants of BEIT RIMA [*Bayt Rima*] must be evacuated before we leave.

Sun 31st Mar.

Quiet night. At 03.00 commenced to evacuate inhabitants of BEIT RIMA. Evacuation completed 04.15. Sent under escort to POEIT ELLO.

No 265212 SS BARNETT reported slightly wounded by shrapnel last night while in Wadi with camels.

6th LEINSTER (Infantry platoon) with machine guns to take over from us tonight.

Marching out state:

17 Officers, 274 ordinary ranks, 318 horses, 46 mules, 4 donkeys, 12 vehicles.

Machine Gun Squadron, 3 Officers, 75 ordinary ranks, 120 Horses, 5 Donkeys.

Wire received that 'A' Squad will join us at LATRON on 2nd Apr.

Left BEIT RIMA 18.30 and LEINSTER'S relieving us.

Wet and very dark night. Difficult journey through the passes.

Arrived BEIT ELLO 22.00 no casualties.

Camped for night. Baggage camels arrived 02.00 1st Apr.

Major E SOPPER

Commanding 3rd County London Yeomanry

WAR DIARY

3rd County of London Yeomanry

Page 23

Mon 1st Apr. 1918 BEIT ELLO

Left BEIT ELLO 09.45 arrived KHURBETHA IBN KARITH 11.45 having walked at JOB's WELL.

Very heavy showers and bad going.

Camped at HARITH for night.

Tue 2nd Apr.

Left HARITH 08.00 for LATRON arriving there 12.00. Good march.

Generals BATES and BUTLER inspected our horses and informed us that we were to hand in our horses at BELAH, turned into a Machine Gun Company and proceed to FRANCE.

Wen 3rd Apr.

Left LATRON 07.00 and proceeded to high ground near JULIS arriving there 15.40.

Watered at JUNCTION STATION on the way and halted for one hour to feed.

Message received from 8th Mounted Brigade that Adjutant and Quartermaster to push onto BELAH as rapidly as possible to see to reorganisation.

Thu 5th Apr.

Adjutant and Quartermaster proceeded to BELAH arriving there 14.00.

Regiment left JULIS 07.30 and headed GAZA 14.30 where it camped for night.

Fri 5th Apr.

Left GAZA 07.15 reached BELAH 10.00.

Orders that this Regiment and City of London Yeoman to form one Machine Gun Battalion and Regiment supplying two Companies.

Sat 6th Apr.

Handed in to Remounts 438 horses. Also handed in stores and saddlery.

Colonel SALT to command Battalion.

The Commander in Chief visited officers and said 'Good bye'.

Sun 7th Apr BELAH

Handing in stores to Ordinance.

General ROME bade farewell to Regiment.

Mon 8th Apr.

Handed in remaining animals to Remounts.

Left BELAH Station by train at 20.10.

Marching out state 23 Officers, 410 ordinary ranks.

Page 24

Tue 9th Apr.

Arrived KANTARA 06.30. Joined by Captain MAINWARING, Captain FRANCIS, Lieutenant MT SMITH, 2nd Lieutenant CROUCH, Lieutenant POULTER and 87 ordinary ranks as reinforcements and also by several detached men.

Wen 10th Apr.

Left KANTARA by train at 01.30. Marching out state 30 Officers, 532 ordinary ranks.
Arrived ALEXANDRIA (SIDI BISHR) 06.45.

Thu 11th to Tue 30th Apr SIDI BISHR

Organisation of Battalion proceeded with:

This Regiment's two Companies commanded by Major JOHNSON-FERGUSON (no 3),
Captain FRANCIS (no 4)

Programme of training arranged and carried out consisting of musketry, semaphore [*flag signalling*], manual bayonet, infantry drill, route marches.

24th Apr 1918 Instructions in Hotchkiss Gun started for all Officers and Sergeants
Lieutenant and Quartermaster BOURNE left to report to Headquarters 75th Division.
Strength of Regiment: 29 officers, 527 ordinary ranks.

Major E SOPPER

Commanding 3rd County London Yeomanry