

Shalouf and Suez no attacks materialised, though forces are known to have been in the vicinity of those places.

Headquarters, with the 7th and 8th Battalions, 2nd Brigade, 1st Australian Imperial Force, arrived at Ismailia during the evening of the 3rd February.

20. On the 4th February, as some firing had taken place from the east bank during the night, two companies of the 92nd Punjabis were sent out at 8 a.m. to clear that bank, and located a body of some 200 to 250 men still entrenched there. On the approach of this detachment the enemy made signs of surrender, but subsequently reopened fire. Supports of one double company each of the 27th and 67th Punjabis and 128th Pioneers were despatched under the command of Major Mac-lachlan, 92nd Punjabis, who concentrated his men, opened a heavy fire, and then charged. This time the enemy threw away their rifles and surrendered, six officers, 251 men, and three machine guns being captured; 59 men, including a German officer (Major von den Hagen), were found killed at this point.

21. The trenches in front of Ismailia and Kantara were found to have been deserted, and the Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade, supported by infantry, moved out from the Ismailia Ferry post. A large body of enemy, estimated at three to four brigades, were encountered seven miles east of Toussoum, and another body some miles to the north. Twenty-five prisoners and ninety camels were captured. No other incident occurred along the front.

Reinforcements, consisting of the Herts Yeomanry, 2nd County of London Yeomanry (Westminster Dragoons), and one squadron Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry, arrived at Ismailia the same evening.

22. On the 5th instant our aeroplanes reported that the enemy were retiring towards Katia, while those who had been in front of No. 2 Section appeared to have concentrated about Gebel Habeita. Mabeuik was still occupied, and a reconnaissance from No. 1 Section encountered some of the enemy's infantry near Gebel Murr during the day. There was no change during the 6th, the enemy being still in strength near Gebel Habeita. A reconnaissance by a mixed force, which had been contemplated this day, was cancelled owing to information gathered from prisoners to the effect that considerable reinforcements of the enemy were expected and might be at hand about this time. On the 7th, however, our aeroplanes found this camp deserted. Mabeuik was also found to have been vacated, and the nearest enemy on the northern line appeared at Bir-El-Abd. On the 9th the only enemy located were in camps at El Rigum, Wadi Muksheib, and Moiya Harab. On the 10th instant only some 400 men were left at Rigum camp, and these appeared to be moving eastwards.

23. The actions at Toussoum and Kantara.—I will now supplement the general summary of events given in the foregoing paragraphs with a more detailed account of the fighting that took place at Toussoum on 3rd February, and at Kantara on 28th January and 3rd February.

24. The troops in the Toussoum—Serapeum—Deversoir portion of No. 2 Section on the morning of 3rd February were as follows:—

The 19th Lancashire Battery, R.F.A.,

T.F. (four guns), commanded by Major B. Palin Dobson.

The 5th Battery, Egyptian Artillery (four mountain guns and two maxims), commanded by Major I. D'E. Roberts, R.A.

1st Field Company, East Lancashire Royal Engineers, T.F. (two sections), under Captain J. G. Riddick.

Canterbury Battalion, New Zealand Infantry (two platoons), under Major C. B. Brereton.

2nd Queen Victoria's Own Rajputs, under Lieut.-Colonel F. P. S. Dunsford.

62nd Punjabis, under Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Grimshaw.

92nd Punjabis, under Major T. R. Mac-lachlan.

2/10th Gurkha Rifles, under Lieut.-Colonel F. G. H. Sutton.

128th Pioneers (two platoons, acting as escort to 5th Battery, Egyptian Artillery), under Lieutenant R. A. Fitzgibbon.

137th Field Ambulance, under Major R. W. Knox, I.M.S.

25. These troops were disposed as follows:—

(a) On the east bank, in the posts of Toussoum, Serapeum, and Deversoir, a half battalion in each, furnished by the 92nd, 62nd, and 2/10th Gurkha Rifles, respectively.

(b) On the west bank, from the entrance to Lake Timsah to Deversoir inclusive, 12 posts, each held by two platoons. Each platoon was allotted some 600 yards of front and found three sentry groups, about 200 yards apart.

(c) In reserve at Serapeum, three double companies.

26. At about 3.25 a.m. on 3rd instant, the enemy were seen on the east bank near mile 47'4. As the firing was heavy, a double company of the 62nd Punjabis was sent from the reserve to support this point, and this double company was subsequently reinforced by six platoons of the 2nd Rajputs.

27. The enemy made three distinct attempts to cross the Canal at points between miles 47'4 and 48'4. One boatload of the enemy landed opposite mile 48'3, and were charged by a small party under Major O. St. J. Skeen, 62nd Punjabis. All were killed or wounded. Two more boatloads landed opposite mile 47'6, and these were promptly attacked by Captain M. H. L. Morgan, 62nd Punjabis, who was wounded. Six Turks were killed and four captured at this point, and some 20 who got away and hid themselves under the west bank were captured later by a party of the 2nd Rajputs.

28. At 8.40 a.m. Colonel S. Geoghegan, commanding 22nd Brigade, after a personal reconnaissance of the enemy's positions, sent a detachment consisting of four double companies drawn from the 2nd Rajputs and the 2/10th Gurkha Rifles to clear the east bank. As this counter-attack developed, the enemy fled in large numbers from the broken ground whence they had made their attempt to cross. Meanwhile the enemy, from their camp at Kateid El Khel, deployed a force estimated at two brigades with at least six guns, and formed a line about two miles north-east of Serapeum, and facing that post. Our troops, delivering a counter-attack, now occupied a ridge about half a mile north-east of Serapeum, and formed a line facing the enemy with their left flank drawn back to the Canal. They consisted of two