

arms ammunition, 100 horses and mules, 500 camels, and a large amount of miscellaneous stores and equipment. Two field hospitals, with most of their equipment, were also abandoned by the enemy in his retreat, and large quantities of stores were burnt by him at Bir El Abd to prevent their capture.

Lieutenant-General the Hon. H. A. Lawrence directed the operations throughout, and the warmest praise is due to him and the commanders, staffs and troops concerned in the operations. General Lawrence's staff deserve great credit for their efforts in working out the allotment of camel transport enabling our troops to conduct a vigorous pursuit. Throughout the whole month which elapsed between the enemy's first approach and his final disappearance Major-General H. G. Chauvel, C.B., C.M.G., proved himself a resolute and resourceful cavalry leader. The brunt of the fighting fell upon the Australian and New Zealand mounted troops, to which were attached batteries of R.H.A. I cannot speak too highly of the gallantry, steadfastness and untiring energy shown by these fine troops throughout the operations. The S. Mid. Mounted Brigade came into action successfully on 4th August, and subsequently took part in the cavalry pursuit. The Scottish troops, commanded by Major-General W. E. B. Smith, C.M.G., not only showed great steadiness under heavy artillery fire, but were responsible for the assault which recaptured Wellington Ridge on 4th August, and for clearing Abu Hamra on the 5th. Of the E. Lancs. troops, commanded by Major-General Sir W. Douglas, K.C.M.G., C.B., only two battalions were in action on the 4th, but the force carried out a march under very trying conditions on the subsequent days. Detachments of the Bikanir Camel Corps were invaluable in reconnaissances and as escorts to small parties, besides bringing in much of the material captured.

Most excellent work was done by Lieutenant-Colonel C. L. Smith, V.C., Officer Commanding Camel Corps, and by all ranks composing the Mobile Column under his command. He executed the rôle ascribed to him with great energy, and carried out his instructions with the highest intelligence. The arrangements made for mobilising and maintaining his column reflect the greatest credit on Major-General A. G. Dallas, C.B., and his staff.

I cannot speak too highly of the work of the Royal Flying Corps during the whole period. Their work was extremely arduous and exhausting. The average total daily reconnaissances during the period amounted to 23½ hours, and during the first five days of August to as much as 31½ hours. Many pilots and observers were out two or three times a day for several consecutive days under very accurate anti-aircraft fire, and were frequently engaged in air combats with enemy machines of superior power. Special commendation is due to Lieutenant-Colonel P. B. Joubert, Officer Commanding Royal Flying Corps, and to Major H. Blackburn, Royal Flying Corps, who commanded the detachment at Kantara.

I wish also to bring to notice the good work done by H.M. Monitors, under the command of Lieutenant-Commander A. O. St. John, R.N., and Commander E. Robinson, V.C., R.N., respectively. The shooting of these ships was consistently good, and they were very

successful in reducing the fire of the enemy's heavy howitzers on the 4th August.

7. With the exception of the operations described in the preceding paragraph, there is little to record beyond reconnaissances and patrols for the remainder of the period under review.

On 16th and 17th September a mounted force of Australian Light Horse, Imperial Camel Corps, R.H.A. Batteries and a Mountain Battery, under the command of Major-General Chauvel, carried out a successful reconnaissance in force against the enemy's camp at Bir El Mazar. At dawn, on the 17th, the camp was attacked from the west and from the south and south-east. On the west our troops occupied a ridge about 800 yards from the enemy's second line trenches; several small posts were rushed and taken. Our batteries came into action in a favourable position, partially enfilading some enemy trenches, which were seen to be occupied in strength, and inflicted considerable loss. The enemy replied actively with shell fire and heavy rifle fire. On the south and south-east our troops drew the enemy's fire on a front of two miles, and in many instances occupied the enemy's original first line trenches. My instructions were that a general action against the enemy in entrenched positions was to be avoided, and the column, having successfully carried out its mission, withdrew without any attempt on the part of the enemy to molest it. The Royal Flying Corps co-operated effectively throughout the operation, and the gallant action of the seaplanes of the Royal Naval Air Service off El Arish diverted the attention of the enemy's aircraft from our troops at Bir El Mazar. Our casualties were slight, and our captures included one officer and thirteen men of the enemy's camel corps, besides a number of camels.

The success of this operation, apart from the casualties inflicted, which were heavy, lay in the fact that it gave the enemy a new and unexpected proof of our extended radius of action, and induced him, in the course of the next few days, to evacuate his camp at Bir El Mazar and withdraw the troops to camps near El Arish.

During the month of September various small reconnaissances were made. The most important of these was carried out against Bir El Tawal (about 30 miles west of El Kubri) by a column under Brigadier-General A. Mudge, between the 14th and 21st September. The approach march was excellently carried out over very broken and intricate country. The enemy's position was reached on the 17th, and, after a preliminary reconnaissance on that day, an attack was made early the next morning. The infantry advanced with great dash, and almost immediately the enemy took to flight, but pursuit was impossible, owing to the nature of the ground. An inspection of the enemy's camp showed that he had been completely taken by surprise, and had left behind all his stores and personal effects, which were captured. After the wells had been emptied, and such stores as could not be brought away had been destroyed, our troops withdrew, reaching Kubri railhead on 21st September. Our total casualties were three other ranks killed and two other ranks wounded.

On the western front during the months of August and September there has been little