

CHAPTER II

THE DOUBLING OF THE A.I.F.

UPON his return to Egypt General Godley—who by reason of holding the corps command was then also commander of the Australian Imperial Force¹—had found himself confronted at once by two urgent problems. The first was how to absorb between 35,000 and 40,000 Australian and New Zealand reinforcements then in Egypt. He estimated that after the three Anzac divisions from Gallipoli had been made up to strength there would still be 40,000 Australian and New Zealand troops unallotted,² not counting the 50,000 new troops promised by Australia and the further reinforcements—"about 12,000 per month"—who would accompany and follow them.

Godley proposed that this situation should be met by forming out of the surplus several new divisions. As commander of the New Zealand force, he had long hoped that it might some day be possible for that Dominion, instead of providing only a part of a composite "New Zealand and Australian" division, to furnish a complete division of New Zealand troops. A second brigade of New Zealand infantry was then actually arriving from the antipodes, and the accumulation in Egypt of New Zealand reinforcements seemed to afford the opportunity of supplying the other units necessary for such "a purely New Zealand division." It appeared to him that the difficulty of absorbing the Australian reinforcements could be solved by similarly creating in Egypt two new Australian divisions, which could be officered and trained by experienced soldiers of the divisions from Gallipoli. The new divisions could be formed into an "Australian Army Corps," the older divisions remaining in the "Anzac Corps." Upon the arrival of the additional 50,000 men from Australia, yet another division might be constituted.³

¹ See pp. 145, 147; and Vol II, p. 418

² These include the 8th Infantry Brigade and four light horse and mounted rifles brigades.

³ Godley further suggested that the Australian "training brigades" in Egypt should be merged into the new divisions. For the divisional commands he mentioned the names of Generals Walker and M'Cay (both then convalescent after wounds) and possibly General Spens, the British officer commanding the Australian and New Zealand Training Dépôt in Egypt.

But Godley was also faced with a second problem—how he, in addition to his active work on the Canal, could administer and organise the spreading branches of the A.I.F. The task would include not only the creation of the new divisions, but the daily administration of all divisions, line-of-communication units, headquarters, and returned wounded and reinforcements. The control of all these, it seemed to him, should be the duty not of a corps commander, but of an army commander. Moreover, this administrative task not being one which he had voluntarily undertaken,^a he conceived a desire—even more natural than that of Bridges—to disencumber himself of it. Accordingly, in two memoranda to Murray dated January 13th and 14th respectively, he put forward his suggestion—first, that the unallotted troops should be formed into two new divisions, constituting a new army corps; and, second, that the administration of the A.I.F. might, with advantage to the efficiency of the force, be vested in a special army commander.^b

The report of Murray's staff on these proposals illustrates the attitude which, though not deliberately hostile, forced the Australian and New Zealand leaders to seek administrative independence. "The Australian Training Dépôt in Egypt," it said, "has always found the greatest difficulty in producing officers of any value, and non-commissioned officers of any sort at all." This was likely to be an "insuperable difficulty" in the way of hurriedly forming the new divisions. As for the army commander and staff, all that was really required appeared to be an Australian and New Zealand training centre and base, and, if Murray approved, the staff offered to work out and submit a scheme for "an Australian and New Zealand Training Centre and Base" which, it thought, "could be managed to meet all requirements much more economically, appropriately, and satisfactorily."

The value of some of these arguments may be judged by the fact that within seven months the 4th Australian Division, whose projected formation was thus opposed, was making its brilliant advance towards Mouquet Farm, in the thick of

^a He was also administrative commander of the N.Z.E.F. Of this, largely his own creation, he had no wish to resign control.

^b Godley's memorandum suggested merely "an army commander," but it seems clear that a specially appointed army commander, not an already existing one, was intended.

the First Battle of the Somme.⁶ Fortunately the Commander-in-Chief, far from rejecting Godley's suggestions, intimated that he would favour any workable scheme likely to assist the two objects he had in view—the protection of Egypt against invasion from Sinai, and the provision “of as large and efficient a force as possible, available for a strenuous campaign in France.”

Two days after Godley's original proposal had been sent to him, Murray—as one of his first duties after reaching Egypt—visited Tel el Kebir and inspected the 1st and 2nd Australian Divisions, each massed before him in a magnificent review.⁷ He appears at the same time to have discussed the suggestions with Godley and White. Murray himself had been at the War Office when the Australian Government's offer of three additional divisions had been received, and he was probably aware of the subsequent correspondence and of the fact that, though more than seven weeks had elapsed, the form of the new contingent was still undetermined. The War Office had inquired whether the divisions could be sent complete with artillery, signallers, pioneers, and divisional cavalry (involving an addition of over 15,000 officers and men), and the Australian staff had replied that, if the contingent was to be formed into divisions, the War Office must provide the artillery, both guns and men. This matter was thus still unsettled, and there seemed to Murray no impediment to the adoption of Godley's suggestion; indeed to most persons on the spot it appeared unwise that the formation of new divisions should be attempted in Australia while surplus reinforcements sufficient to create two of them were “kicking their heels” in the Cairo camps.

Four days later, on January 19th, Birdwood, returning to Egypt after the breaking up of his Dardanelles Army, seized with enthusiasm upon the proposal to create not merely a new army corps, but an Australian and New Zealand army. There were in Egypt sufficient Anzac troops to form one as large at any rate as the original British Army in France. In addition to the infantry divisions there would be the mounted troops—whether formed into a mounted division or

⁶ The reader may also withhold judgment of the Australian officers until he has read the narrative of the battle of Fromelles (*Chapters xii and xiii*).

⁷ See *Vol. XII*, plate 173.

not—the heavy artillery brigade, the flying squadron then about to arrive in Egypt, and a number of other units. Both Birdwood and Godley, having been in daily contact with the Anzac troops, knew how keenly the notion of an Anzac army would appeal to the majority of officers and men. If organised merely in army corps, they would probably be allotted to different parts of the front, or even to different theatres of war; but, if combined into an army, they would naturally be kept, as far as possible, together. This, though at times inconvenient, would have advantages which the British staff as yet imperfectly realised. The national pride of these troops was intense, and they possessed a strong mutual affection and complete trust in each other's qualities, conditions of the utmost importance when troops have to support one another in battle. Murray favoured the proposal, both as promising a most valuable reinforcement to the mother country and incidentally as a means of bringing into control and vigorous training the mass of reinforcements whose presence in Cairo so greatly troubled him.

A scheme further elaborated by Birdwood was accordingly cabled on January 21st by Murray to the War Office:

I find we now have a very large accumulation of Australian and New Zealand reinforcements here, which cannot be absorbed in existing organisations. It is essential that these should be formed into definite units with the least possible delay, both for reasons of discipline and training. . . . (Then follows Birdwood's scheme, which is explained below in greater detail.) . . . If these proposals are agreed to it means that we will very shortly have four Australian divisions and one New Zealand division all with the nucleus of a complete organisation. I strongly recommend that these be formed at once into an Australian and New Zealand army of two corps under Birdwood. From the Secretary of State for the Colonies' telegram of 26th November⁸ it is apparent that Australia contemplates raising the equivalent of three complete divisions. My proposals give us two out of these three immediately, and I hope that Commonwealth Government may be informed that one more only will be expected from Australia, the balance of numbers enlisted being diverted to reinforcements to meet wastage of the five divisions. . . . Australian Government are of course unaware of the large number (of) unabsorbed men here, or of urgent necessity of forming this surplus into organised bodies.

Murray added that he understood that Birdwood had the confidence of the Australian and New Zealand Governments.

⁸ Apparently the telegram *received from Australia* by the Secretary of State is meant.

He further stated that, if the suggested scheme was agreed to, he proposed to let Birdwood arrange all details by direct communication with them.

It will be observed that Murray, who had long since been promised the Anzac Mounted Division for the defence of Egypt, did not include it in the proposed army. Birdwood himself, on the other hand, never gave up the hope of so combining it, and the men of the light horse themselves were at this stage keenly expectant that, as a mounted force, they would accompany their infantry wherever it might be employed.

For the formation of the new infantry divisions the scheme proposed by Birdwood was as follows:

(1) New Zealand Division. A new brigade of New Zealand infantry—the "Rifle Brigade"—was then arriving. By using the New Zealand reinforcements then in Cairo, and by transferring others from the mounted rifles, there could be formed a third infantry brigade and additional artillery, together with transport, engineers, and ambulances sufficient to furnish a complete and independent New Zealand infantry division. This would release the Australian portion of the N.Z. & A.—the 4th Brigade.⁹

(2) Two new Australian divisions. The existing Australian infantry comprised two divisions (1st and 2nd) and two brigades (4th and 8th). Birdwood proposed that each of these latter brigades should form the nucleus of a new division,¹⁰ and that four new brigades should be created—two for each new division. In order to form these he adopted a plan with which he had been associated in another service—that of splitting certain of his existing battalions into halves, and then expanding each half, by means of reinforcements, into a complete battalion. Sixteen new battalions were required, and it happened that the original Australian force employed at the Landing had included exactly sixteen. The units of the 2nd Division which had been subsequently raised had never yet received complete training. Consequently the

⁹ The 1st and 3rd Light Horse and New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigades, which had formed part of this division at Anzac, had been withdrawn from it since the Evacuation, and were to form (together with the 2nd Light Horse Brigade) the Anzac Mounted Division.

¹⁰ This was originally suggested by Godley in his memorandum of Jan. 13. The plan of splitting the veteran brigades into two was, however, Birdwood's.

sixteen "veteran" battalions of the 1st Division and 4th Brigade were selected for breaking up. White, who feared that too great a blow would be struck at the pride of the veteran units, urged that it would be better to transfer selected officers and N.C.O's; and the same objection was vehemently taken by divisional and other commanders, when the news was broken to them. But Birdwood held to his decision. An even more difficult problem was that of providing artillery, a service requiring numerous specialists and longer and more careful training. The problem was rendered even more difficult by the fact that the Anzac divisions had little more than half the artillery that was now being provided for all divisions moving to the Western Front. The War Office was at this time supplying its New Army divisions with three brigades (each of four batteries) of field guns and one brigade of howitzers, whereas the Australian divisions had only three brigades (each of three batteries) of field-guns and no howitzers—this being a lower scale specially authorised for Territorial divisions serving in Egypt.¹¹ The New Zealanders had even less; the British divisions in Egypt also were short of artillery. Murray was strongly of opinion that any divisions which were to be sent from Egypt to the Western Front should be provided with artillery and all other services¹² on the same scale as those already there. This, if actually possible, was obviously the right course, but it would practically necessitate quadruplication. Birdwood and White were afraid that the task of doubling the existing artillery was the most that could possibly be undertaken in the short time available. Consequently at a conference with Murray's staff it was decided that the Anzac divisions should for the present continue to be provided with artillery on the lower scale. In the Australian divisions this would be achieved by each of the older divisions—the 1st and 2nd—giving up an artillery

¹¹ Technically known as the scale authorised by War Establishments 1915 (Part VIII) for Territorial divisions serving in Egypt. The higher scale was that authorised by War Establishments 1915 (Part VII) for New Army divisions.

¹² The "establishment" of the Australian and New Zealand forces was also to differ from that of the New Armies in the following respects: First, the divisional cavalry was to consist of one regiment (instead of one squadron) per division. Second, the mounted troops were to be organised on the Australian and New Zealand establishments respectively. Other differences, in the medical establishments, are mentioned later (pp. 43, 164).

brigade and raising from other units and from reinforcements a new brigade to replace it. The two brigades given up would be allotted, at least temporarily, to the new divisions. The artillery staff of each of the new divisions was also to raise, with the help of other large transfers from the old artillery, two new brigades. The necessary new field companies, ambulances, transport trains, and other divisional units were to be created in a somewhat similar manner.

These proposals, especially the raising of so much new artillery, would of course, if sanctioned, prevent any of the Anzac divisions from being ready for transfer to France for several months. The 1st Division would be rendered almost as raw as the new formations, which, however, would have the compensating advantage of being nearly as experienced as the 1st. The projected task of organisation—to double the Australian and New Zealand force within a couple of months—was obviously a very heavy one; indeed it proved by far the greatest in the history of the A.I.F. In order that no time might be lost, Birdwood, who since the dissolution of the Dardanelles Army had been a commander without troops, borrowed White from Godley's staff, and with the approval of Murray commenced to settle the lines of the reorganisation. Meanwhile Murray's telegram suggesting the scheme had reached the War Office,¹³ which had forwarded to Australia and New Zealand the proposals for creating the new divisions. "The third new division, less artillery," it added, "would be raised in Australia." A hope was expressed that Australia would agree, and about the same time Birdwood also cabled direct to Australia urging consent. On February 2nd the Commonwealth Government agreed, undertaking to raise in Australia the third new division, and also its artillery personnel, which, however, would be untrained. Meanwhile Murray had telegraphed to the War Office that he proposed to appoint Major-General Fanshawe, "as being specially suited to deal with Australians," to command the second corps

¹³ The argument as to who should provide the artillery for the three new Australian divisions was still proceeding. The War Office had asked again that the men should be Australian, even if only partly trained. The Military Board in Melbourne was divided. The Chief of Ordnance (Col. Dangar) urged that the only way in which even partially trained men could be provided was by raising them from the reinforcements then in Egypt and training them there. Senator Pearce, however, had approved of the advice of the Chief of Staff (Col. H. Foster) that the men must be provided even if reinforcements had to be omitted, when he received the cable forwarding Birdwood's proposals.

of this army. But in the opinion of the military authorities in London consideration of the formation of an army was premature. Murray was so informed, and the proposal was not passed on by the War Office to the Dominions.¹⁴ To Birdwood, as to all members of his staff and of the force who were aware of the proposal, this came as a sharp disappointment. The project had become widely known, and among officers and men of the corps the reorganisation was generally, in its earlier stages, referred to as the "forming of an Australasian army." That proposal having for the present been rejected, it followed that the main force would be organised in two army corps. It was decided that these should be called the "I and II Anzac Corps,"¹⁵ of which Godley would continue in command of one, and Birdwood, when he had finished his task of reorganisation, would take the other.

While the general scheme was still being considered by the War Office and Dominions, the detailed plan was worked out by Birdwood and White. The cautiousness of the New Zealand Government, which was not sure whether future reinforcement drafts would be adequate, delayed until February 17th definite sanction for the "formation" of the New Zealand Division. As, however, all authorities in Egypt were satisfied that the numbers would be ample, Murray decided not to wait for formal consent. But, unlike Maxwell, he was not seized of the principles of colonial self-government; and at this stage, when the first steps were about to be taken, it became clear that his staff took for granted that every important change in the organisation or command of the A.I.F. must be initiated and controlled by itself. It was only after a strong statement of the case for Australian self-government, made by White to Murray's chief-of-staff and

¹⁴ The copy of this reply in the available records speaks of the projected "Australian" army, an obvious mistake for "Australasian." It is on account of just this confusion that the people of New Zealand were understood by some to object to the term "Australasian," and to the association of their force with that of the Commonwealth. The first objection was naturally shared by the New Zealanders at the front, but the great bulk of the Australian and New Zealand troops always preferred to fight and live together.

¹⁵ The title of the original corps had been "Australian and New Zealand Army Corps." The new titles were "1st Anzac Corps" and "2nd Anzac Corps." The fact was not ignored that the last two letters of "Anzac" already stood for "Army Corps"; but "Anzac" had become a recognized term, and the new name was deliberately adopted as being simpler and less liable to confusion than any of the possible alternatives. (See also Vol. I, *Glossary*, p. 609.)

quartermaster-general, that it was agreed at the end of January that Birdwood, with White as his staff officer (technically D.A. & Q.M.G.), should temporarily have control of the whole Australian and New Zealand force and commence reorganisation. Godley would have the field command of the three veteran divisions of the corps on the Canal. Furthermore, being administrative commander of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, he would superintend the formation of the New Zealand Division at Moascar. The two new Australian divisions, on the other hand, would be formed at Tel el Kebir, the actual training and control of them during this process being entrusted to that capable veteran Major-General Sir H. V. Cox. For the formation and training of his two divisions (to be known for the present as "Australian Provisional Formations") Cox was given a staff similar to that of a division. ~~This staff, being at the beginning, like that of the A. & N.Z. Army Corps, a purely British unit formed by Murray for the control of this portion of his army, was composed largely of officers selected by Murray's staff.~~¹⁶

The task of directing this great reorganisation fell upon General White, with Major Griffiths to assist him. For putting his decisions into force by means of flawless procedure he relied entirely upon Griffiths. In matters affecting the transport and allied services he was further assisted by an able young British officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Gibbs,¹⁷ who had been lent shortly before the war for the purpose of reorganising that service in Australia. The crucial work—that of laying down the method and principles—was achieved by White through the publication of a series of some fifty "Circular Memoranda," of which the first two, issued on February 12th, ordered the formation of the new Australian infantry brigades; the fifth ordered the creation of two Anzac Corps instead of one;¹⁸ the remainder, issued at almost

¹⁶ Many, however, already belonged to the A.I.F. Thus Lieut.-Col. G. C. E. Elliott, originally C.R.E. of the 1st Division, was allotted to organise new companies of engineers; Lieut.-Col. H. L. Mackworth, who had trained the signallers of the 1st Division, and Major F. D. Rossiter, were to organise the signal companies; and Lieut.-Col. G. W. Barber (under the direction of Surgeon-General Howse) the field ambulances.

¹⁷ Lieut.-Col. S. G. Gibbs; R.A.S.C. D.A.Q.M.G., 1 Anzac Corps, 1916/17. Officer of British Regular Army; of Kensington, Eng., and Sydney; b Southampton, Eng., 19 March, 1886. Killed in action, 20 Sept., 1917.

¹⁸ The corps staffs, however, still remained British formations.

daily intervals from February 14th to the end of March, prescribed the method of forming the new artillery, the field ambulances, the companies of engineers, signallers, and train, the pioneer battalions, the sanitary sections, the railway supply detachments, bakeries, butcheries, and other "supply" units on lines of communication, the machine-gun companies, the ordnance corps, postal services, cyclist companies, veterinary units, and corps of military police. They ended with two memoranda establishing the Anzac Mounted Division and the dépôt units in which reinforcements for the A.I.F. were henceforward to be trained.¹⁹

The memorandum providing for the increase in the infantry was dated February 12th:

Out of the sixteen veteran battalions in the A. & N.Z. Army Corps (1st to 16th) it is intended to form 16 new battalions.

This will be done by dividing the veteran battalions into two wings as shown below—a headquarters wing and a second wing. Both wings will then be filled up by reinforcements. . . .

(1) Headquarters will not actually be divided, but the following details will be transferred to the second wing—

Pioneers 5

Signallers 12

(2) Machine-gun section will not be divided; it will remain with Headquarters wing.

(3) Companies will be fairly divided into two parts. . . .

The whole of the regimental transport, all specialist equipment—and individual specialists where there was only one of a particular rank—were to remain with the headquarters wing. With these exceptions a clean cut was to be made through each company, platoon, and section, so that every battalion, on the day after being divided, could be paraded in two parts, each complete in practically everything except the headquarters and transport of the "second wing," but at half strength. In the second circular, published the same day, were laid down the regimental numbers immediately to be assumed by these half-battalions, and the new constitution of the infantry of the A.I.F. As the division to be formed in Australia was being named by the Commonwealth Government the "3rd," Birdwood numbered the Egyptian divisions

¹⁹ There appear to have been fifty-one memoranda in all.

"4th" and "5th,"²⁰ and the battalions were numbered as follows:

OLD DIVISIONS.		OLD UNITS.		NEW UNITS.		NEW DIVISIONS.
		<i>H.Q. Wing.</i>		<i>Second Wing.</i>		
"Veteran" units (to be divided)	<u>1st Division</u> ..	1st Bde. to form		14th Bde.		To be combined with the unattached 8th Brigade to form the <u>5th Division.</u>
		1 Btn. " "		53 Btn.		
		2 Btn. " "		54 Btn.		
		3 Btn. " "		55 Btn.		
		4 Btn. " "		56 Btn.		
		2nd Bde. " "		15th Bde.		
		5 Btn. " "		57 Btn.		
		6 Btn. " "		58 Btn.		
		7 Btn. " "		59 Btn.		
		8 Btn. " "		60 Btn.		
		3rd Bde. " "		13th Bde.		
		9 Btn. " "		49 Btn.		
		10 Btn. " "		50 Btn.		
		11 Btn. " "		51 Btn.		
		12 Btn. " "		52 Btn.		
		From the old N.Z. & A. Division (now to form part of the 4th) ..	4th Bde. " "		12th Bde.	
	13 Btn. " "		45 Btn.			
	14 Btn. " "		46 Btn.			
	15 Btn. " "		47 Btn.			
	16 Btn. " "		48 Btn.			
	<u>2nd Division</u> (unchanged) ..		5th Bde. (17th-20th Btns.)			
		6th Bde. (21st-24th Btns.)				
		7th Bde. (25th-28th Btns.)				
Unattached (now to form part of the 5th Division) ..		8th Bde. (29th-32nd Btns.)				
		9th Bde. (33rd-36th Btns.)				
		10th Bde. (37th-40th Btns.)				
		11th Bde. (41st-44th Btns.)				

To provide engineers, the 4th and 5th Field Companies, which had been raised in Egypt for the 2nd Division and had served with distinction at Anzac, were transferred to the new divisions, the 5th being renumbered the 8th;²¹ and four new companies were to be formed partly by transferring officers and N.C.O's from the existing ones, and partly from engineer reinforcements. The eight companies of horse-transport required for the new divisional trains were provided by dividing into eight parts three companies which happened to be surplus,²² and bringing them up to strength with spare men from the trains of the older divisions and also from the

²⁰ He had at first proposed to call them the "3rd" and "4th."

²¹ A new "5th" had been sent from Australia (*see p. 16*).

²² These were—two duplicate companies which had been formed for the 2nd Division, and one belonging to the broken-up 4th Light Horse Brigade.

Reserve Park of the 1st Division, which was disbanded for the purpose. The expansion of the train was rendered easier by the fact that the British system of "pair-horse" waggons was at this juncture substituted for the Australian "four-horse" system. General White was insistent that in every possible way the organisation of each branch and unit must conform to that adopted in the British forces, of which the A.I.F. in France would form a part. The only important deviation other than those previously mentioned²³ was in the field ambulances, to each of which, on the urgent advice of Surgeon-General Howse, a small dental unit was now attached under a dentist with rank of lieutenant. This provision, which was more ample than that adopted in the British Army, proved to be of the utmost value. Howse also succeeded in obtaining White's consent to a change by which Australian ambulances were to be reduced from three sections to two. This rendered easy the creation of the four new ambulances, the detached third-sections of the eight already existing being simply re-combined into four new units. The result, however, was that the British authorities of the base, who were responsible for "issuing" stores, instruments, drugs, and other supplies to Australian ambulances, never knew on what scale to provide them. Upon the arrival of the A.I.F. in France—where it was of the first importance that every Australian unit should fill exactly the same camping or billet space, take on the same duties, and receive the same gear as the British units with which they constantly changed places—the system was immediately abolished by order of G.H.Q., and the Australian ambulances were again expanded to three sections. Though it was not always popular, the wisdom of White's policy of standardisation, without which the quick reliefs, so important in later years, could not have been smoothly accomplished, is not open to question.

Of at least equal importance for the creation of the new units was the choice of the right divisional, brigade, and unit commanders. The impossibility of finding them in Australia had been one of the two reasons for the Government's inability to offer, on November 25th, complete Australian-raised divisions. Even in July the Defence Department had been

²³ In the artillery and divisional light horse (*see p. 37*).

forced to refuse to send a senior officer²⁴ specially asked for on the creation of the 2nd Division, and to inform the War Office that officers for the divisional headquarters, and to command the artillery and engineers, could not be supplied from Australia. In November it repeated this intimation, but on each occasion suggested that these staffs should be, if possible, obtained by appointing officers from the Australian forces overseas.²⁵ The intention of the Government that Australian commands should as far as possible be filled by Australian officers had been clearly represented to Hamilton and Birdwood at the time when General Walker was appointed in August to command the 1st Division.²⁶ But now, when it became necessary to appoint two generals to train and command the new divisions, Birdwood could see only one of his available subordinates in whose capacity for this position he felt complete confidence. He believed that White could admirably fill the position, but felt that it was strongly in the interest of Australia that he should continue, as chief of staff of the A.I.F., to advise its commander in Australian matters as well as in the operations of the force. M'Cay had already, at Anzac, been picked for a divisional commander, but immediately afterwards had to be invalided to Australia, where he was now acting as Inspector-General. To Chauvel, who had shown his capacity in commanding the 1st Division, Birdwood had already determined to allot the Anzac Mounted Division.²⁷ The high administrative ability of Monash he recognised, but was not sure of his power to face sudden difficulties with resolution, or to inspire troops with a fighting spirit. Holmes, of the 5th Brigade, Birdwood personally liked, being attracted by his great courage and frank, generous disposition; but, though Holmes had shouldered great

²⁴ Col. Dodds, then Adjutant-General in Melbourne.

²⁵ It was from this source that the Government, when offering the 50,000 troops, had intended to provide a large proportion of the brigade and regimental commanders. Steps were taken to recall for this purpose some of those who were in England convalescent.

²⁶ The Government asked why Chauvel (whose qualities had not at that time sufficiently impressed Birdwood and Hamilton) had been passed over. While concurring on that occasion in the appointment of a British officer, the Government strongly emphasised "its desire for the appointment of Australian officers wherever possible to command Australian units."

²⁷ Godley, when commanding the A.I.F., had first urged upon Murray Chauvel's claim to the command of this division. Murray appears to have suggested giving it to Maj.-Gen. A. H. Russell, then of the N.Z. & A. Division, who was Chauvel's junior. Chauvel commanded the 1st Division from Nov. 6 to March 14.

responsibilities in New Guinea, and, against Godley's advice, Birdwood had given him command of the 2nd Division at the Evacuation, no fighting had yet occurred in which he could be tested.

Thus, in Birdwood's view, there was no officer of the A.I.F. whom he could suitably recommend for the new commands. There were, however, in Egypt several British generals already recognised as men of outstanding capacity. Two of these were Cox, the hardened, tried, sardonic Anglo-Indian who was already in charge of the new brigades training at Tel el Kebir, and H. A. Lawrence,²⁸ a British cavalry officer, who, after retiring from the regular army, had joined the yeomanry, and whose services had been much in demand during the Gallipoli campaign. Knowing their reputation Birdwood was anxious to secure both, and on January 31st submitted their names to the Australian Government for the command of the new divisions in Egypt, adding a hope that M'Cay would be given the command of that forming in Australia.

To the Minister and military staff in Australia the fact that no Australian brigadier, even after the experience in Gallipoli, was considered capable of commanding a division came as a surprise and a disappointment. Senator Pearce telegraphed to this effect, and expressed a desire that M'Cay, who was now fairly fit, should receive one of the Egyptian commands. Meanwhile he accepted Cox and Lawrence on condition that one of them awaited the arrival of the 3rd Division from Australia. Birdwood, recognising that this would lose him Lawrence, continued to press his recommendation that M'Cay should take the 3rd, but the Minister remained firm. Among his advisers Colonel Dodds stood out with special stubbornness for the appointment of Australians. He urged that

the appointments of these (British) officers can only have a heart-breaking effect on Australian officers in being debarred from attaining the high distinction. . . . I feel sure that, were this matter made known at the present time, the result would be an expression of public indignation. . . .

With this protest Senator Pearce fully agreed.

²⁸ Gen. Hon. Sir H. A. Lawrence, G.C.B., p.s.c. C.G.S., British Armies in France, 1918/19. Officer of British Regular Army; of Middlesex, Eng.; b. Southgate, Eng., 8 Aug., 1861. Youngest son of the first Lord Lawrence of Indian Mutiny fame.

At the present time (wrote the Minister) I realize how dangerous it is to unduly interfere with the liberty of action of the G.O.C., General Birdwood, who is on the spot and who knows the capacity of the officers under him, and upon whom will fall the responsibility of any failures due to incompetency of commands. . . .

He telegraphed to Birdwood that, if Lawrence could not be retained for the 3rd, White or Monash should be considered. Accepting this decision, Birdwood asked that the command of the 3rd Division should for the present be allowed to remain vacant, in order that he might have a further chance of testing his brigadiers in France.

The stand taken by the Minister and Colonel Dodds was of importance chiefly because it strengthened Birdwood's inclination to appoint Australians to A.I.F. commands. There is no question that he was already unfeignedly in favour of this policy. Indeed, he went further than White, in that, if he were fairly confident of an Australian's adequacy, he would prefer him to a British officer of greater ability. White, on the other hand, realising deeply the need for good staff work, was actuated by the desire to obtain men of high training and proved quality. It was unavoidable that a number of the higher staff officers, especially of the general staff, should be borrowed from the British, the trained Australian staff being very small and the number of officers to whom the actual planning of operations could be safely entrusted being still few. But in his choice of brigadiers—which had been made before Pearce's protest—and of battalion commanders Birdwood practically restricted himself to officers of the A.I.F.²⁹ The new brigadiers were Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott of the 7th Battalion (in civil life a Melbourne solicitor), Lieutenant-Colonel Glasgow of the 2nd Light Horse Regiment (a Queensland grazier), Brigadier-General Irving³⁰ (an Australian permanent officer recently sent from Australia to command the troops at the base),³¹ and Lieutenant-Colonel Glasfurd (a British staff officer who had been appointed to the A.I.F. in Australia and had risen to be chief of staff of the 1st Division). The command of the 6th Brigade also becoming

²⁹ As an instance of the many difficulties with which this matter was surrounded, it was by no means easy for Gen. White, while constantly making requests to the British authorities for general-staff officers, to refuse all offers by them of suitable men for other positions.

³⁰ Maj.-Gen. G. G. H. Irving. Commanded 14th Inf. Bde., 1916. Officer of Aust. Permanent Forces; b. Melbourne, 25 Aug., 1867. Died, 11 Dec., 1937.

³¹ See pp. 146-8.

vacant by the appointment of Brigadier-General Gwynn as Godley's chief-of-staff in the I Anzac Corps, the appointment was given to Gellibrand, whose extraordinary influence over officers and men was recognised by Birdwood, though he was not attracted by his outspokenness and unconventional dress. The new brigadiers were all comparatively young men. Several of the older brigadiers originally appointed, but subsequently relieved of active commands, were about this time recalled.

The choice of the sixteen battalion commanders for the new brigades, and of a few others to fill vacant commands of the old battalions, was made by Birdwood and White from among officers recommended by the existing brigadiers. In several cases the appointments were thus given to picked men, either those who had performed outstanding service—such as Leane of the 48th and Cass of the 54th—or young officers of an especially fine character who had come to the front in hard fighting at Anzac, as, for example, Howell-Price of the 3rd and Humphrey Scott of the 56th. Such selections were in every case justified; with Australian material a commander of the right character quickly created a magnificent battalion. But though many proved and splendid young officers of the type of Scott and Price were undoubtedly available among the junior majors and captains, it was held that, in the interests of a contented service, the claims of seniors of satisfactory service, or against whom nothing at present was known, could not be overlooked. This undoubtedly resulted in not a few units being saddled with commanders who were both entirely lacking in the right spirit, or morale, and also incompetent to select subordinates with those qualities. All these commanders were eventually flung out in the stress of actual trial. But in the meantime the preservation of the morale and discipline of a unit too often fell upon the shoulders of some more spirited and high-minded subordinate, usually a company commander. Such battalions began their existence under a heart-breaking disadvantage, and it is at least arguable that the efficiency of the force would have been more quickly achieved had seniority been to a greater extent ignored and the command been given in every case to picked officers, even though of junior rank.

By February 7th all these decisions as to method and personnel having been made, and the main part of the scheme worked out, White was given four days' holiday at Luxor before returning to supervise its execution. On February 12th the first memoranda were issued, and the splitting up of the infantry immediately commenced. The announcement that their beloved units were to be divided came as a blow to all officers and men of the sixteen battalions, but especially to those who two days later found themselves with the "second wings." The greater part of the 1st and 2nd Divisions had by then been working for a fortnight in the desert; but it happened that the 1st Brigade, with which the process began, had, in consequence of the water shortage at Serapeum, been left at Tel el Kebir, where the new brigades were to be formed and trained. A warning that the old battalions were to be split up had been sent to the brigadier on February 10th, and the battalion commanders had learnt the news next day. Action was immediate. Two days were spent by the commander of each battalion in making, with his second-in-command and adjutant, a fair division of the roll of his battalion.³² The method varied in different battalions, but there was keen interest in the creation of the daughter battalions, and the division was therefore scrupulously fair. In the 12th, Gellibrand, who both as battalion commander and later in higher positions set an outstanding example of "playing the game," completed the division before deciding which wing should form the new battalion and which the old; it was eventually settled in the officers' mess by the toss of a coin.³³ The commander of the 13th created the daughter battalion—the 45th—by simply handing over "two splendid companies."³⁴ The separation in each case followed immediately. The sight of half the old battalion marching away from the desert camps was distressing in the extreme, not only to the half which was being divorced, but to their former comrades who watched them go. "I felt," said an officer of the 12th, "as though I were having a limb

³² Gen. Smyth's first order (Feb. 11) was "in view of an early move to the theatre of operations" (probably the Canal theatre was meant) "battalion commanders will select the best trained soldiers for retention in the 1st Brigade." On receiving the full instructions next day, however, this was altered by an order that "companies will be fairly divided into two parts."

³³ *The Twelfth* (History of the 12th Bn.), by L. M. Newton, p. 158.

³⁴ *The Thirteenth* (History of the 13th Bn.), by Captain T. A. White, p. 58.

amputated without any anæsthetic." In the 1st Brigade at Tel el Kebir, however, the old and new units were for a time camped close to one another. The diary of the 3rd Battalion reads:

February 13 (Sunday). Battalion paraded for various Church Parades. About 11 a.m. word was received that Major McConaghy,^{**} C.M.G., and 17 other officers were transferred to the 55th Battalion. The separation of the 3rd Battalion and 55th Battalion was carried out at 6 p.m. The remaining 3rd moved on to a fresh camp site. Major O. G. Howell-Price assumed command.

The new (14th) Brigade was next day officially separated from the 1st. In some units training began that day. The diary of the 56th Battalion (daughter of the 4th) says:

The battalion was formed to-day. Capt. A. J. Simpson, 4th Bn., commands temporarily. . . . Training companies under company commanders as per syllabus. Combined mess of both battalions' officers. 4th Battalion kindly lent two limbers for drawing rations, etc.

Within forty-eight hours both the parent battalions (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th) and the daughter battalions (53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th) had been brought up to strength by trainloads of drafts from Cairo. Meanwhile the other "veteran" brigades out in the desert east of Serapeum were being split up, and their "second wings" sent to Serapeum ready for transfer to Tel el Kebir. In order to economise rolling stock, which was then urgently required for other movements of Murray's divisions, two battalions were to be dealt with every three days, the train which brought from Cairo the reinforcements for the "old" battalions being used to carry back the "second wings" of those battalions to Tel el Kebir. Two days later these "second wings" were expanded by further trainloads of reinforcements. The order of formation was:

14 Feb.: 1, 2, 3, & 4 Bns. split up; and 53, 54, 55, & 56 Bns. formed.

21 Feb.*: 5 & 6 Bns. split up; 57 & 58 Bns. formed.

24 Feb.: 7 & 8 Bns. split up; 59 & 60 Bns. formed.

27 Feb.: 9 & 10 Bns. split up; 49 & 50 Bns. formed.

1 Mar.: 11 & 12 Bns. split up; 51 & 52 Bns. formed.

4 Mar.: 13 & 14 Bns. split up; 45 & 46 Bns. formed.

7 Mar.: 15 & 16 Bns. split up; 47 & 48 Bns. formed.

* A delay of three days was caused at this stage by G.H.Q., which had to give precedence to certain other movements on the railways.

^{**} Major McConaghy had been the commander of the old 3rd Battalion. The fact that a commander might be transferred to the "second wing" operated as an additional inducement to ensure an absolutely fair division, though such an inducement was hardly necessary.

The new units had heavy work ahead. It is true that in most cases tents had been pitched for them, and their brigade-camp prepared by fatigues of troops already at Tel el Kebir. The brigade staffs had by then been formed, and by General Cox's orders the "second wings," coming by rail from the desert, were met at the camp siding, usually by the brigade-major, and conducted to their camp. Next day each would parade, organising itself as far as possible into the skeleton of a battalion complete except in numbers; on the day following that, the reinforcements would arrive from Cairo, bringing the new battalion practically to full strength, except in officers. There was, however, no regimental transport, and they had for some time to carry all stores by having been unable to approach in its output the numbers of hand. Moreover the large drafts from Cairo were of very raw material. The Lithgow factory in New South Wales rifles required even for training, the reinforcements had not only been sent to Egypt without rifles, but some had never yet held a rifle on parade.³⁶

As an example of the manner in which this material was welded into battalions, there may be taken the case of the 56th. Some 450 men under fifteen young officers separated from the 4th Battalion on February 14th. On the evening of the 16th there arrived from Cairo 508 men and three reinforcement officers to complete the unit. Thus the staff of the new battalion, though mostly consisting of veterans of the Landing and Lone Pine, was a mere handful of youngsters. The commander, Major Humphrey Scott of Lone Pine fame,³⁷ was himself only twenty-four, and, eighteen months before, had been a clerk in Dalgety's office in Sydney. He noted next day: "Men a mixed lot³⁸ and very raw. Rifle exercise very bad; fixing and unfixing bayonets worse. Men stood surprisingly steady during inspection." Later in the same day

³⁶ The equipment of most of the reinforcements at this stage was made of leather, and was much inferior to the "web" equipment of previous contingents.

³⁷ See Vol. II, pp. 538, 540-1, 554.

³⁸ In the 55th Battalion, on the other hand, the reinforcements were drawn very largely from a single source—a big draft of employees of the N.S.W. railways and tramways. That battalion, to the end of its existence, included a considerable proportion of these men.

he wrote: "Reinforcements worse than first appeared, some 100 never having handled a rifle before." He himself was for the next few days employed in organising the framework of his unit and its headquarters, and in attending brigade conferences concerning the best plan for rapid training; but on the 19th he again noted: "Visited battalion and found great improvement in rifle exercises; they are an undisciplined lot, however." On the 20th, after church parade: "Lack of discipline again apparent, principally accounted for by shortage of officers and N.C.O's." The battalion's camp, however, was found "neat and tidy and rifles in good condition. Men smarter than previously. Kitchens and quartermaster's store clean and orderly." Three days later: "marching improved. Brigadier inspected camp. Quite satisfactory." Next day there was a route march: "men held on with few stragglers." On February 26th the "G.O.C." complimented the battalion on its rifle exercises. During the succeeding fortnight many of the men were still without felt hats and had to parade in caps, and badly-fitting boots accounted for large numbers on sick parade; but the brigadier had commented on the cleanliness of their lines. A regimental sports club had been formed. Moreover, by orders from Headquarters of A. & N.Z. Forces, the new battalions had been permitted to bear on their sleeves the colours of the old battalions, the only difference being that, whereas in the old units these were worn horizontally, in the new they were worn vertically. The shape of these patches was afterwards varied to conform with a system by which the branch or unit of every member of the A.I.F. could be ascertained at a glance.²⁹ The adoption of the old colours did more than anything else to soften the first bitterness of separation from the parent units, and bound the daughter and parent battalions even

²⁹ In the infantry the shape of the patch indicated the division, the lower or rearmost colour the brigade, and the upper or foremost colour the battalion. The complete system is shown in diagrams at the end of this volume. The 6th Division, whose colours are included, was partly formed in England in 1917 but never sent to France. In the 4th Division, the 12th and 13th Infantry Brigades at first wore vertically the colours of the parent battalions; the circular patch was, however, adopted in Feb. 1917. The 4th Brigade, being part of the original Anzac landing-force, was allowed to retain to the end the old shape of its colour patch.

more closely together in a relationship which remained firm throughout the war. In the 56th, as in all the new and the reconstituted battalions, the shortage of officers was at first a great handicap. During the first fortnight of March, however, to the fifteen who had been received from the 4th Battalion, and the three who had arrived with the reinforcements, there were added a captain of the light horse, two infantry subalterns from the 2nd Division, and seven N.C.O's and privates, mostly picked from light horse regiments and—after a month's trial—promoted to commissions. By the middle of March the 56th, with its youthful personnel (though with a strong Anzac seasoning), its sports fund, and the beginnings of its band, was, though still very raw, in a fair way to become as fine a unit of infantry as any in the A.I.F.

The raw material for the battalions being—as always in the A.I.F.—very nearly even, whatever part of Australia it came from, the quality of the new units was likely to depend almost entirely on their officers, especially the regimental commanders. Some of these, as has already been stated, were, in the opinion of their brigadiers, too elderly or otherwise unsuitable. Several of the brigadiers, themselves men of strong character, determined almost from the first to secure changes in their subordinates. Both Glasfurd and Gellibrand, whose great values as commanders lay largely in their accurate judgment of men and their strength in enforcing their judgments, obtained by gradual process subordinates of whom they approved. Elliott characteristically attempted within a fortnight of his appointment to replace three of his four battalion commanders by younger men of whom he had some knowledge, at the same time reorganising his brigade (the 15th) to correspond exactly with the 15th Brigade in the Australian home-defence force. This precipitancy, and a somewhat headstrong method of making his demands, brought him immediately into conflict with Birdwood and White; but, though forced for the time being to accept the officers allotted to him, he eventually had his way, and undoubtedly succeeded in producing a brigade marked for its fighting spirit and *esprit-de-corps*.

For the provision of junior officers, who were required in very large numbers—the parent and daughter battalions each wanting half their complement, and many hundreds also being needed for artillery, pioneers, engineers, and other services—brigadiers and unit commanders were allowed to obtain suitable candidates not only by searching through the whole of the infantry but also from other arms, especially the light horse. The method of providing officers for the A.I.F. was at this time becoming settled, it having been laid down in Australia that, with a few recognised exceptions,⁴⁰ no candidate was to be commissioned unless he had first enlisted and qualified in the way open to all others. Thus in Australia as well as at the front practically all commissions, except those given to Duntroon graduates, must henceforth be obtained from the ranks. Battalion commanders searched their companies for men of outstanding character and sufficient education; these, whether sent away as “cadets” to an officers’ school (as was shortly to become the usual practice), or promoted in the field, did not as a rule change their battalion, but became officers over their old comrades—a practice entirely opposed to the practice in the British Army. This difference was rooted in the deeper dissimilarity between the conditions of English and Australian society. The traditional respect of a British soldier for his officer being admittedly based partly on class distinction, it would not readily be accorded to a “ranker” by his old mates. In the A.I.F., however, as in the Australian people, such distinctions hardly existed at all, and though it was found that, for good discipline, a newly commissioned officer must break with his old associates, the break was no different from that which happens between school-mates at a great public school when one of them becomes a prefect. As a rule the newly appointed officer gave a dinner in the nearest town—a “last night”—to his old mates, and from that time forward their relations were formal. A few men on promotion found it difficult to maintain this attitude, or failed through lack of character, but their proportion was very small. The officers of the A.I.F. were a strong and determined set, and were never separated

⁴⁰ For example, the small annual quota of Duntroon graduates; also officers of the Commonwealth forces or cadets who were such on or before 1 Jan. 1915.

from their men by any marked distinction in comfort and mess luxuries. The result—deliberately aimed at—was, in all well-commanded units, a really close friendship between them and their men. These qualities, obvious in 1916 when the officer corps was so greatly expanding, were to become even more marked in later years, when the difficulty of obtaining suitable officers under the British system was admittedly increasing.

At this particular stage, however, the frequent combing of units for men with the character and education for leadership had, in the opinion of some commanders, rendered them difficult to obtain.⁴¹ As a result there occurred during the last two weeks of February such competition to secure good officers that Glasfurd, himself punctiliously considerate of the needs of others, noted:

Some C.O's and even Brigade Commanders exceeded the limits of courtesy and common-sense by sending emissaries to my lines (*i.e.*, those of the 12th Brigade, itself one of the new formations) to offer my officers better positions in other units.

Nearly three-quarters of the men in both "veteran" and new battalions were now reinforcements. Had it been possible to give these units a clear course of eight or even six weeks' training, they would rapidly have become compact efficient units. But the work was hampered by the formation, at this stage, of several important services newly added to the British Army. For military works requiring for their construction training less expert than that of engineers, but more skilled than that of infantry, "pioneer battalions" were being formed⁴²—one for each infantry division. These, though organised as infantry, were not intended, except in emergencies, to live in the trenches, but usually came up for their daily, or nightly, task, returning to their camps or billets when it was ended.

⁴¹ It is interesting to note that, in securing the host of new officers, required, commanders in the 1st and 14th (N.S.W.) Brigades—who themselves had originally been selected by MacLaurin partly on social grounds—had recourse largely to the light horse, in which a larger proportion of youngsters educated at the great public schools were serving in the ranks. On the other hand, the Victorian brigadiers such as Elliott, and most commanders whose brigades were drawn from the other States—MacLagan, Monash, Glasfurd—selected their subalterns from their own infantry. Glasgow, himself a light horseman, brought in a number of officers from the light horse. While the youngsters thus picked from the light horse made magnificent officers, it cannot be observed that their units in any way surpassed those officered by men selected from the infantry, among whom "state school" boys were probably more numerous. As has already so often been pointed out, variations in the value of a unit depended, far more than on any other factor, upon the strength and moral character of the commanding officer.

⁴² Acting on his Indian experience, Lord Kitchener in 1914, included in the organisation of his new divisions provision for pioneer battalions. They were in August 1915 introduced in the territorial—and, later, in the regular—divisions.

A second new service was that of the machine-gunners. An air-cooled automatic rifle, known as the "Lewis gun," was at this time being introduced into the British Army, to be used as an infantry weapon in place of the much heavier water-cooled and tripod-borne Maxim or Vickers machine-gun. The heavier machine-guns (lately increased from two to four per battalion) were to be taken from the infantry and allotted to specially formed machine-gun companies, one company in each brigade. In addition to these two important services—then being formed throughout the British Army—Birdwood determined, in response to an enquiry from the War Office, to form certain units, which none of the new Australian divisions so far possessed, for dealing with supplies on the lines of communication. No definite arrangement had been or ever was made between the British and Dominion Governments as to what services each would provide,⁴³ but Birdwood was now forced to consider the matter. He and White recognised that the A.I.F. could not supply all the L. of C. units necessary for its existence, and they therefore adopted, both now and later, the principle of forming—subject to the approval of the Australian Government—all those which were essential if the force was to be autonomous. Birdwood accordingly undertook to raise thirteen dépôt units of supply (that is, small clerical units for dépôts on the lines of communication), two field butcheries, and two field bakeries. Sanitary sections for five divisions had also to be provided. On top of this the artillery—as will be explained later—had again to be nearly doubled. To form these new units, every battalion had, first, to detach its machine-gunners; second, to provide about fifty tradesmen and pick-and-shovel men for the divisional pioneers; third, to furnish volunteers for the bakeries and other supply units. In addition each battalion of the newly formed divisions had to provide 100 men suitable for the artillery. The interruptions thus caused to training and organisation were almost heart-breaking to the regimental officers of the new units. Moreover, training was further delayed by mumps and measles, and by other childish

⁴³ In July 1915 the Australian Government asked whether it was desired that Australia should supply a complete medical service "and make full provision for all Australian invalids," adding that it would be pleased to do so. The War Office replied that this was not desired, but that it would welcome any contributions which Australia was prepared to furnish.

epidemics to which Australian soldiers, having seldom suffered from them in childhood, were especially subject. Nevertheless, under that wise commander, General Cox, who to a large extent grounded their discipline upon a strict and sensible training in sanitation, the greater part of the two new divisions was ready for service on the Canal within six weeks.

The units emerging from this reorganisation were full of high hopes and keenness to learn; but that their discipline was not of the sort which commended itself to Murray, or to others reared in a similar atmosphere, goes almost without saying. Murray's own headquarters were now opposite Ferry Post, near Ismailia, in the centre of the Anzac area. A high officer, whether riding with his pennoned orderlies or driving in his car, was always an object of curiosity, to be stared at with frank interest as one of the many shows of those interesting times; but only a few thought of according him the salute on which British discipline insisted. The Commander-in-Chief was constantly passing untidily dressed men, lounging on the footpaths. Those on the roads were not infrequently seen violating sound military rules against cantering horses along the road or riding on horse-transport waggons. Troubles occurred even at the officers' club. While none of these offences were entirely peculiar to the Australian force,⁴⁴ Murray could not help observing that they were far more general in that force than in any other. In particular, the failure of the troops to salute him—though no real discourtesy was intended—must have been felt almost as a whiplash by the Commander-in-Chief. Apparently from the unguarded and foolish boasting of some of the officers, he concluded—probably with justification—that the Australians had conceived the notion that they were superior to the general run of the troops in Egypt. Maxwell also had experienced constant trouble with the Australians—his letters frequently refer to it; but he had been wise enough to recognise that a good deal of it was unimportant. So seriously, however, did Murray regard their shortcomings that he drafted to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London a letter of which, in the second week of February, he sent a copy to Birdwood. This letter, which was overwhelmingly damnatory, referring

⁴⁴ There was a good deal of trouble—more sanitary than disciplinary—among British troops in Port Said.

to the extreme indiscipline and inordinate vanity of the Australians, was handed by Birdwood to White, who at once urged that if the letter represented Murray's considered opinion of the value of Australian troops for service in France, then, in justice to Australia, the opinion should be made known officially to the Commonwealth Government. Such a "reference" from one commander to another could not, White protested, be properly withheld from the government supplying the troops, which might thus have an opportunity of considering whether a force of such a character should not be withdrawn from France. Whether Robertson received Murray's letter—either altered or unaltered—is not known. The incident was, however, followed in Egypt by results of some importance. Birdwood wrote to Godley strongly urging the need for better discipline, and especially stricter observance of the rules as to neatness of dress and the saluting of officers, which, he insisted, were not small matters, especially if the troops were destined for France. Godley distributed this letter to his officers, covered by one from himself:

Our future now undoubtedly depends on the impression in these matters which we give to those highest in authority, and it is by such things as the appearance and bearing of the men, the turn out and efficiency of guards, . . . that battalions are judged.

In France, he added, the Canadians were now second to none in discipline, smartness, and efficiency. In addition to these warnings Murray himself, on the occasion of his second inspection of the desert lines of the 1st and 2nd Divisions, spoke strongly to the various commanders, hinting that he would be unable to recommend that such troops should be sent to France, where their behaviour, especially towards the French people, and their courtesy in saluting French and British officers, would be matters of real consequence. In the 1st Division Chauvel immediately called a conference of brigadiers and battalion commanders at railhead. The opinion of this conference was that "men who disgrace the Australian uniform are a small minority, well known to company officers." It was accordingly decided to classify the troops into two categories:—

those who can be relied on to behave themselves, and those that have proved unreliable. In the event of the division being ordered for service in Europe, the latter category will be drafted into training battalions in Egypt with a view to further training.

This decision was a weak one, since men whose character was such that it was desirable to discard them should have been sent back to Australia for discharge, and not to be training battalions, which were the reserve of reinforcements. The sequel, which was not unimportant, will be described in its place.⁴⁵ A further result of Birdwood's letter was that unit commanders began to insist upon their men dressing correctly and saluting officers. At Anzac these practices had come to be regarded as immaterial—which they really were, provided that cleanliness, order, and obedience were maintained by other means. Men of the A.I.F. were never in the least convinced by the explanation generally given of the need for saluting—that it was “an honour paid to the King's uniform.” Its true import, as was explained by General Cox to his officers, lay rather in the fact that it was a constant admission by the men of that subordination and readiness to obey which are the first essentials in war. For the purpose of instilling and maintaining obedience the practice was useful, if not overdone. The British regulations, however, insisted upon this observance between soldiers and officers, wherever met, to a degree which was not enforced in all armies—in the French, for example—and which to Australians appeared humiliating. The attitude of any troops towards the observances of military discipline depends largely upon the environment and conventions among which they have been brought up. Where a political system contains elements of feudalism—which was directly evolved out of an army-system, the leaders and officers in war becoming in peace-time a class apart, to which, in recognition of its spirit and its responsibilities, reverence and a measure of obedience were rendered—men naturally take readily to the forms of military subordination; and at the time of the Great War the political system of England, though democratic in form, was still largely feudal in practice and tradition. General deference was still paid by other sections of the nation to the classes from which military officers were primarily drawn; and, although those classes were relatively small, the responsibility for government, and especially for leadership in the army

⁴⁵ See Chap. x; and footnote 3 on p. 73.

and navy, was still largely in their hands. Forms of military subordination, such as saluting, therefore came more easily to English soldiers, the majority of whom had been brought up to consider themselves inferior, socially and mentally, to their officers. It is possible that, if the war had lasted for a generation, even the most advanced of modern democracies would have found themselves evolving a system of recognised social classes based upon the qualities which made for leadership in war. The beginnings from which such a system might conceivably have developed were distinctly observable in the A.I.F. before the war ended. Nevertheless it may be doubted whether a society constituted on lines of military subordination, even if such a condition is inevitable in war, will produce, in the generations after the war, the most efficient leaders or the best material for soldiers. Where officers are as a matter of custom largely selected from a comparatively restricted class, the limit placed upon competition tends to reduce the level of ability; and, where the pretension to leadership is generally forgone by the largest section of the community, the qualities of decision and initiative, normally developed by men who freely determine their own actions, are apt to become atrophied. Paradoxical though it may appear, there is reason for believing that, while the feudal principles of subordination are favourable to the orderly control of an army in war-time—and, indeed, the more closely the individual regiments of the A.I.F. adhered to these forms, the better regiments they were—yet genuine democratic equality will in peace-time produce a stronger raw material. It probably follows that the democracy is subject to a correspondingly greater need for training its soldiers to the subordination which is a first essential in war, and possibly the process is more difficult. But the precise forms of discipline suited for a nation imbued with the feudal tradition were not found to be, in their entirety, well suited for such people as Australians, among whom the sharp social distinctions and inequalities of the older nations are practically non-existent.

It must not be imagined that the average Australian soldier, whose discipline was at this stage a matter of such concern, had any articulate conception of these principles.

Like a colt from a large paddock, he at first resented all restraint, and the true objection to the adoption of British rules as to saluting was that, even when he had been adequately tamed, over-insistence upon this practice—when, for example, he was on leave in London—seemed to him mere pin-pricking. As, however, the Australians were to serve among British troops, the authorities of the A.I.F. were not free to allow of practices which might be suitable exclusively to their fellow-countrymen; the greatest measure of punctiliousness was obviously desirable. A strong effort was accordingly made at this stage to enforce saluting. In the 3rd Battalion, for example, Howell-Price instituted "saluting drill," to be carried out "individually and by squads," sometimes for an hour on end. In Holmes's 5th Brigade there was adopted a "saluting scheme," under which a captain walked through the town and men who passed him without saluting had their names taken by N.C.O's told off for the purpose. Adherence to the regulation dress was also enforced. Men were prevented from wearing "shorts," and Colonel Elliott, in an order relating to the proper rolling of blankets and to the carrying of more than the regulation kit, laid it down that his battalion commanders

will send for court-martial any man disregarding any orders of this kind, and also any platoon and section commanders who wilfully connive at such breaches of discipline. . . .

In the case of the older troops, who had grown accustomed to what they considered the vagaries of military authorities, these measures had the effect of gradually weaning them from the laxness of Anzac. But in some of the units which had not seen service, this insistence upon what seemed to the men utterly trivial formalities and unnecessary indignities caused strong feeling. In the 6th Field Company, newly arrived from Australia, the result was (as one of its members recorded) some of the "blackest days in the company's history" and "a dreadful state of misunderstanding between officers and the men"—only to be dispelled when they found themselves a few weeks later marching together towards the trenches on the Western Front.

Besides the difficulties of formal discipline there were others caused by the presence in the A.I.F. of a proportion of "hard cases" and of bad characters. The former—the

men in the ranks who drank heavily when they could get the liquor—though troublesome, did not necessarily make bad soldiers in battle.⁴⁶ But at Tel el Kebir it had become obvious that there had also been enlisted a certain number of criminals, some of whom had entered the force with the intention of running gambling “schools” or of escaping from punishment in Australia.⁴⁷ As time went on it was found that many of these men had no intention of reaching the firing line. They were a mere handful in number, and gradually became well known to their officers and their comrades; but their presence, now first noted, was the cause of atrocities which occasionally blackened the name of Australia. As the Australian Government about the middle of 1916 indicated that its policy was against the return of men to Australia for disciplinary reasons, the A.I.F. was forced as far as possible to digest its own bad characters, and the existence of these men afforded a problem increasing in difficulty as the war went on.

As a step towards dealing with this side of the problem Murray appointed on his own staff a special Australian assistant-provost-marshal, and under this officer the whole of the police of the A.I.F. were shortly afterwards formed as a separate corps, comprising two companies of footmen and a mounted squadron. The measure was not, however, completely successful, neither Murray’s staff nor Birdwood having grasped the fact that, for a “provost corps,” officers of exceptionally fine character were required. The higher authorities—British and Australian—tended occasionally to rely on a bombastic and even brutal type of police officer, with the result that the Australian police corps came more than once into grave scandal. Steps were afterwards taken to ensure that practically all men in the provost corps had at least some field service, and in Egypt further scandal was eventually avoided by placing at its head Major Bisdee,⁴⁸ a Tasmanian who had won the Victoria Cross in the South African War, and whose character was known and respected throughout the A.I.F.

⁴⁶ A heavy-drinking officer, however, was always a danger and a source of demoralisation.

⁴⁷ In the boredom of camp life, if other recreation was not sufficiently provided, soldiers tended to spend their whole time gambling. At dusk the line of Arabi’s old rampart at Tel el Kebir was crowded with groups of Australians playing “two up.”

⁴⁸ Lieut.-Col J. H. Bisdee, V.C., O.B.E.; 12th L.H. Regt. A.P.M., A.I.F. in Egypt, 1918/19. Pastoralist and farmer; of Green Ponds district, Tas.; b Hutton Park, Tas., 28 Sept., 1869. Died, 14 Jan., 1930.

These reforms were in progress; some of the British divisions were still concentrating or being re-equipped; the new Australian divisions were forming, and the others were working in the desert and awaiting an advance of the Turks; Murray had planned fully to meet Robertson's demands by retaining all divisions until March and then commencing to send six of them to Europe: then, on February 21st, the whole position was suddenly changed by the great German attack upon Verdun. On the 26th Murray received from Robertson a "clear-the-line" telegram—

We find it necessary that we should give the French early proof of our intention to support them in every visible way.

Murray at once promised to send troops, the 31st Division to embark first, followed by the 29th and 11th. His message was answered by one from Robertson, asking him to rush on his preparations for sending five or six divisions.

Things at Verdun going none too well. . . . We must accordingly be prepared to risk something in Egypt. . . . Originally it was intended by you and us that the Australians should come (to France) first, but they have gradually taken fourth place.⁴⁹ Do not allow idea of forming an Australian army to influence matters as that cannot materialise in any case for months, and you should generally work on the principle that three Australian divisions in France in April may be worth six at a later date. . . .

Events in France, he added, seemed likely to move rapidly in the next three months, whereas there appeared to be no danger of an attack on any large scale against Egypt.

Murray agreed; the capture of Erzerum by Russia had made that danger more remote. He promised to send the six divisions "as fast as the Admiralty can provide ships."

I have no wish to keep back the Australians (he stated) or to form them into an army. I have latterly placed them in order of departure behind the British divisions because they are most backward in training and discipline, and I am trying to wheel them into line.

Murray undoubtedly regarded his Anzac divisions at this time as less fit for service than any in Egypt except the Territorial—which were short of men and, in most cases, less well staffed or commanded. On February 10th he had placed

⁴⁹ Robertson on Feb. 9 had cabled asking Murray which six divisions were likely to be first ready—if possible, some of them in March. He added—"29th Division comes first for consideration, and then Australians and New Zealanders." Murray in his reply had agreed with this order.

them second in order of sailing: "Order of Divisions—29th, three Anzac Divisions, 31st, 11th." On the 18th he had cabled that he now thought the 31st had better follow the 29th.

It is a very good division and has done . . . better work than any other division in my command.

It was to this division and to a brigade of yeomanry that he had so far entrusted the key-sector of the Canal defences—that facing the northern or coastal route into Palestine. He had now marked the 11th Division also for departure before the Anzac divisions; but, as he indicated that his remaining infantry, consisting of four Territorial divisions (42nd, 52nd, 53rd, and 54th), would be dangerously weak, the War Office gave him permission to hold back this division. Nevertheless his telegraphed reason for postponing the departure of the Anzac divisions was, like some others of his written statements, utterly misleading, since it contained no reference to the fact that, within the past month, two of them had been called on to convert themselves into four,⁵⁰ all containing a large majority of reinforcements. The British divisions—except for the formation of machine-gun companies and a slight expansion or re-grouping of artillery—had been merely training and refitting.

Orders were issued for the 31st Division to embark immediately, and the 29th on March 6th. Although the reorganisation of the Anzac forces had begun only a fortnight previously, it was proceeding along such smooth lines that Murray was able, on February 29th, to warn Birdwood that the I Anzac Corps would be required to begin moving to France within two weeks. At the same time, in accordance with the desire of the War Office, Murray decided that the Australian and New Zealand artillery must be brought up to the scale adopted for all "New Army" divisions then proceeding to France.

It is probable that neither Murray nor the War Office fully appreciated the task which they were setting the Anzac artillery by insisting upon this expansion. It is true that New Army divisions were at this stage being permitted to go to the front short of one howitzer battery; that is to say, the

⁵⁰ That is, the 1st and N.Z. & A. into the 1st, N.Z., 4th, and 5th.

howitzer brigade was allowed to consist of three batteries instead of four. But, even so, the Australian artillery, which on February 18th had comprised only eighteen batteries and had since been increased to thirty-six, was now, at the end of the month, required to expand to sixty. There was only one way by which this could be done: the older divisions, which were to go to France, must be equipped by robbing the new. The latter would have again to set about raising their artillery, and would inevitably be delayed by the process; but Robertson's telegram had indicated that, if the arrival of the I Anzac Corps could thereby be hastened, this delay must be incurred. This course Murray therefore adopted, overriding the protests of Birdwood and White. His action was probably right, although some ill consequences were felt in the Battle of Fromelles. The 1st and 2nd Divisions absorbed the two artillery brigades which they were forming for the 4th and 5th Divisions, and also took back the two brigades which they had lent them. This gave the 1st and 2nd each their full quota of field-gun batteries. For their howitzer batteries men had to be obtained from the ammunition columns and elsewhere, and taken to France untrained.

At the time when this heavy increase in the artillery was ordered, the pioneer battalions, machine-gun companies, bakeries, butcheries, and dépôt units of supply were also just being created. Steps were taken to complete their formation while the 1st and 2nd Divisions were actually concentrating prior to leaving Egypt.⁵¹ The two new divisions at Tel el Kebir were at this stage robbed of practically all their artillery; but they were otherwise so complete that it was possible for Murray to order that, when the 1st and 2nd left, the 4th and 5th should take their places and continue training on the

⁵¹ The MACHINE-GUN COMPANIES were easily formed, chiefly by the transfer from the battalions of the old regimental machine-gunners; after these men had left the battalions their places were taken by teams of Lewis gunners (seven men to each of the four guns allotted to the battalion). Lewis gunners could be quickly trained, an officer and N.C.O. of each battalion being specially sent to a training school at Ismailia, afterwards instructing the Lewis gun teams of their unit.

To provide a skilled nucleus for his four PIONEER BATTALIONS, Birdwood proposed to break up a mining battalion which, it was understood, was sailing from Australia about the beginning of March. The remainder of each pioneer battalion would be formed by volunteers from the divisions. The MINING BATTALION, however, had been formed for a particular purpose on the suggestion of Professors David and Skeats, who had urged that the exceptional resources of Australia in miners, mining engineers, and special machinery should be utilised at the Dardanelles or elsewhere. An offer was accordingly made to the British Government

Canal. In the meantime, in order to advance the training of the divisions ordered to France, they were directed to relieve twenty-five per cent. of their men from work on the Canal defence-line and to put them through a hurried course in the desert.⁵² As the 2nd Division, being the one least affected by the reorganisation, was to go first, its artillery, part of which was now in gun-positions behind the desert line, was practised for the first time at shooting.

On March 5th and 6th the two divisions began to move in from the desert.⁵³ As there was no apprehension of the enemy attacking, the whole of the actual front line of the corps was, by order of G.H.Q., handed over to two brigades of the Anzac Mounted Division, which were to garrison it until relieved by the 4th and 5th Divisions. Among the men of the 1st and 2nd it was not yet generally known whither they were moving. Many still thought that their destination might be Salonica, although lectures to the officers upon "gas precautions" and "billeting" seemed to point to a

and accepted, and much enthusiasm was spent in providing the unit with special machinery. This corps, under the command of Lt.-Col. Fewtrell, sailed in March direct for England. Senator Pearce, on receiving Birdwood's proposal that it should be broken up as a nucleus for the pioneers, cabled to the War Office asking that "in view of the expense and ingenuity which created it for a particular purpose," this should not be done. The War Office had, however, no intention of employing the corps otherwise than for mining. Birdwood, upon being informed that it was not available, ordered the pioneer battalions, then at three-quarter strength, to be completed from troops available in Egypt. (An account of some of the tunnellers' achievements is given in *Vol. IV* of this series. See also index to this volume).

The divisional commanders, to whom the raising of the PIONEER BATTALIONS had been delegated, had ordered each of their three infantry brigades to provide one company comprising a specified number of tradesmen, and the balance "pick and shovel" men. Some infantry battalion commanders did not neglect this opportunity to exercise a certain short-sighted "cleverness," traditional among old soldiers, by passing on to the divisional pioneer battalion a large proportion of their indisciplined or difficult men, thus saddling several of these important units from their birth with an undue proportion of bad characters. Fortunately there were many commanders of a higher type who, like Gellibrand of the 6th Brigade, insisted upon carefully picking out "the best and most qualified men," and specifically ordered that "no man of bad character" should be handed on to the pioneers. To each of these new units there was allotted a commander (generally a major from the infantry), four other infantry officers, and one from the engineers. The commander had a slow and difficult task, selecting for his other officers infantrymen or engineers with high-class engineering or mining experience, and then setting to work to break down the notion among his own men that their battalion was merely a labour unit. By these means a high spirit was instilled into these fine battalions, their reputation spreading and a real approach being made to their ideal—"that a battalion of Australian pioneers was as good as a battalion of engineers." Actually the five Australian pioneer battalions were always regarded in the force as akin to engineer units, and more closely resembled the American "engineer regiments" than any units in the British organisation, with the possible exception of the Scottish pioneer battalions.

⁵² This included musketry, bomb-throwing, and attacking with bayonets from a line of trenches. Rifle ranges were laid down in front of the line.

⁵³ See *Vol. XII*, plate 168. The New Zealand Division from Moascar changed places for a few days with the 2nd, marching to Ferry Post, but not taking over the desert line.

transfer to France. During the short period of concentration at Moascar and Serapeum, however, while hurried endeavours were being made to put some polish on the force, Birdwood visited one brigade after another, generally at church parade, and appealed to the men to uphold the good name of Australia among the people of France. They would be going among the homes of a people whose young men were mostly fighting for their country, but whose old men, women, and children would be living in the countryside which the Australians would occupy. He appealed to the men's honour to ensure that—both among these helpless people, and among the British, Canadian, and French soldiers—the good name which they had won on Gallipoli should be untarnished. The troops, in spite of their external cynicism, were strongly affected by these speeches. Birdwood in those days was at the height of his popularity; and, as he rode through the lines with the Prince of Wales—who was then serving in Egypt, and came for the first time among Australians—the warmth of feeling shown towards him was as whole-hearted as that which was always evoked in men of the A.I.F. by the natural boyish friendliness of the King's son.

The 2nd Australian Division began to leave on March 13th, the troops being sent by night and mostly in open trucks to Alexandria, where they at once embarked. The artillery took their horses and harness, but left their guns, these being required in Egypt. The transport similarly left their waggons. Guns and waggons were to be supplied anew in France, as was also the regular motor-transport, which the Australians in Egypt did not possess.⁵⁴ The 7th Infantry Brigade went first, followed by the 5th and 6th with the artillery, and by some 3,000 reinforcements who would be held in readiness at the 2nd Divisional Dépôt at the Base in France. The 1st Division followed, starting to embark on March 21st. On the 28th the staffs of the I and II Anzac Corps exchanged their designations. Godley, to whom Birdwood had delegated certain administrative powers over the A.I.F. in Egypt, remained at Ismailia to command the 4th and 5th Divisions, now forming the II Corps; Birdwood, who hitherto had

⁵⁴ Certain Australian motor-transport had, however, been sent to England, and was already serving in France. (See footnote 26, pp. 115-6.)

nominally commanded the II Corps, embarked for France with the I Corps on March 29th.⁵⁵ During the past few days White, having completed the formation of the last units of

⁵⁵ See p. 153. The staff of the A.I.F. about this time is shown in *Chap. vi*. Those of the two Anzac corps and of the 1st and 2nd Divisions were.

I ANZAC CORPS.

Lieutenant-General Sir W. R. Birdwood, commanding. Captain H. Champion de Crespigny, Indian Army, and Captain R. G. Churnside, **A.I.F.** (*Aides-de-camp*); Brigadier-General C. B. B. White, **A.I.F.**, Major S. S. Butler, South Staffordshire Regiment, Major R. B. Smythe, N.Z. Staff Corps, Captain C. C. M. Kennedy, Herts. Regiment, Lieutenant H. G. Trust, Intelligence Corps, Lieutenant J. J. W. Herbertson, Honourable Artillery Company (*General Staff*); Brigadier-General R. A. Carruthers, Indian Army, Lieutenant-Colonel M. G. Taylor, R.E., Lieutenant-Colonel S. G. Gibbs, R.A.S.C., Captain J. G. MacConaghy, Indian Army (*Administrative Staff*); Brigadier-General C. Cunliffe Owen, R.A. (*Artillery*); Brigadier-General A. C. de L. Joly de Lotbinière, R.E. (*Engineers*); Major L. Evans, R.E. (*Signals*); Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Austin, A.O.D. (*Ordnance*); Colonel C. C. Mamford, Indian Medical Services, and Major A. G. Butler, **A.I.F.** (*Medical*); Lieutenant A. W. Ross, **A.I.F.** (*Postal*); Major J. Williams, **A.I.F.** (*Police*); Major J. S. S. Churchill, Oxford Yeomanry (*Camp Commandant*); Lieutenant G. Levy, French Army (*Interpreter*); Lieutenant P. E. Coleman, **A.I.F.** (*Superintending Clerk*).

II ANZAC CORPS.

Lieutenant-General Sir A. J. Godley, commanding. Lieutenant C. B. A. Jackson, Suffolk Yeomanry, and Lieutenant C. Gordon, Scottish Horse Yeomanry (*Aides-de-camp*); Brigadier-General C. W. Gwynn, R.E., Major W. Marriott-Dodding, Oxfordshire and Bucks. Light Infantry, Captain M. C. Ferrers-Guy, Lancashire Fusiliers, Lieutenant T. C. Macaulay, R.F.A. (*General Staff*); Brigadier-General A. E. De la Voye, R.A.S.C., Lieutenant-Colonel A. Erskine-Murray, R.A., Captain F. A. U. Pickering, 2nd Dragoons (*Administrative Staff*); Brigadier-General W. D. Nichol, R.A. (*Artillery*); Brigadier-General W. B. Lesslie, R.E. (*Engineers*); Major W. T. Dodd, R.E. (*Signals*); Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Howell-Jones, A.O.D. (*Ordnance*); Colonel R. E. Roth, **A.I.F.**, and Major C. W. Thompson, **A.I.F.** (*Medical*); Lieutenant E. S. Hazeldine, **A.I.F.** (*Postal*); Lieutenant-Colonel F. S. Tatham, South African Defence Force (*Police*); Captain the Hon. M. B. Parker, Reserve of Officers, ex Grenadier Guards (*Camp Commandant*).

1ST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Major-General H. B. Walker, commanding. Captain T. Hastie, **A.I.F.**, and Lieutenant A. E. Dean, **A.I.F.** (*Aides-de-camp*); Lieutenant-Colonel A. H. Bridges, Indian Army, Major L. F. Ashburner, Royal Fusiliers, Captain R. G. Casey, **A.I.F.** (*General Staff*); Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. Foott, **A.I.F.**, Major G. C. Somerville, **A.I.F.**, Captain T. G. Millner, **A.I.F.**, Captain R. A. Ramsay, **A.I.F.** (*Administrative Staff*); Brigadier-General J. J. T. Hobbs, **A.I.F.** (*Artillery*), Lieutenant-Colonel A. M. Martyn, **A.I.F.** (*Engineers*); Captain G. G. S. Gordon, **A.I.F.** (*Signals*); Lieutenant-Colonel J. T. Marsh, R.A.S.C. (*Supply & Transport*), Colonel A. H. Sturdee, **A.I.F.**, and Major J. Espie Dods, **A.I.F.** (*Medical*); Major T. Matson, **A.I.F.** (*Veterinary*); Captain J. C. Kinimonth, **A.I.F.** (*Ordnance*); Lieutenant G. F. Mason (*Police*).

2ND AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Major-General J. G. Legge, commanding. Captain F. K. Officer and Lieutenant A. C. Colman, **A.I.F.** (*Aides-de-camp*); Lieutenant-Colonel G. H. N. Jackson, Border Regiment, Major L. F. Arthur, Indian Army, Captain B. V. Mair, Manchester Regiment (*General Staff*); Lieutenant-Colonel T. A. Blamey, **A.I.F.**, Major J. L. Whitbam, **A.I.F.**, Major S. Brugg, **A.I.F.** (*Administrative Staff*); Brigadier-General G. J. Johnston, **A.I.F.** (*Artillery*); Major S. F. Newcombe, R.E. (*Engineers*), Captain S. H. Watson, **A.I.F.** (*Signals*); Major C. H. E. Manning, **A.I.F.** (*Supply & Transport*); Colonel A. Sutton, **A.I.F.**, and Major H. K. Fry, **A.I.F.** (*Medical*), Major L. C. Whitfield, **A.I.F.** (*Veterinary*); Major E. T. Leane, **A.I.F.** (*Ordnance*); Capt. A. B. Douglas-Brown, **A.I.F.** (*Police*).

The staff of the 3rd Division is shown in *Chap. vi*; those of the 4th, 5th, and Anzac Mounted Divisions in *Chap. 5*.

the field army, had drawn up and filled the establishments for the training dépôt, which for the time being was to remain in Egypt. Certain important questions concerning the base and control of the A.I.F. remained still undecided;⁵⁶ but the great work of expansion was finished. Within six weeks of its inauguration the 1st and 2nd Divisions were on their way to France; the New Zealand Division was preparing to follow them; the new 4th and 5th Divisions were actually marching to the Canal, and the Anzac Mounted Division was assembling there. Australia was now maintaining a force of nearly 100,000, and when the 3rd Division—then forming in Australia—had arrived, the number would be reached which, in the opinion of the Australian Government, would represent the country's full effort. But it is interesting to note that the new divisions had in fact been provided not from the 50,000 men (or three divisions) promised by the Hughes Government after considering the War Census, but from the flood of recruits who had come forward during the previous months, when Australians first began generally to recognise the vastness of the Allies' task and their own responsibility for assisting to shoulder it.

⁵⁶ See p 149 et seq.