

1.20 a.m., and by 7.45 a.m. the leading battalion was across. Till dawn this crossing was unperceived by the enemy, but subsequently the troops had to be ferried across, and a bridge constructed, under fire. The bridge was completed by 8.30 a.m. Further troops crossed, but it was found impossible to enlarge the bridgehead till dark, owing to the enemy's fire and the thickness of the scrub.

A further attempt to cross at Ghoraniyeh during the night of the 22nd-23rd was again frustrated by the current and the enemy's fire. Early in the morning, however, a New Zealand regiment crossed at Hajlah, and, galloping northwards, drove back the enemy and formed a bridgehead at Ghoraniyeh. The current having diminished, three bridges were constructed during the day, and by 10 p.m. the whole of the infantry of the 60th Division and the greater part of the mounted troops were east of the Jordan, but owing to the swollen state of the river much valuable time had been lost.

On March 24th the 60th Division attacked the enemy and drove him from his position at El Haud and Shunet Nimrin, covering the entrance to the pass leading to Es Salt. Three guns were captured by a battalion of the London Regiment, the teams being shot down by the fire of the Lewis guns. Following on the heels of the retreating enemy, the 60th Division advanced four miles along the road to Es Salt, which was occupied the following evening without opposition.

In the meantime the mounted troops, followed by the Camel Brigade, made their way along the tracks towards Ain es Sir and Naaur. Early in the day all wheeled transport had to be sent back. Even so, the tracks had been rendered so slippery by rain, which fell continuously on the 25th, that progress was slow. In many places horses had to move in single file, and had to be pulled or pushed up the slippery slopes.

Naaur was reached late in the evening of 25th March.

The rain continued to fall on 26th March. At 5 a.m. the New Zealand and Australian Brigades met at Ain es Sir. The Australians moved on to Suweileh, north of the Es Salt-Amman road, capturing 170 Turks there. Both men and horses were, however, too exhausted by their exertions to admit of more than demolition parties being sent on to the railway.

On 27th March the advance was resumed. The ground favoured the enemy, the rocks and scrub on the hills affording excellent cover to his riflemen. The wadis could only be crossed at a few places, and then only in single file.

By evening the New Zealanders had reached the railway south of Amman, their demolition parties working southwards. In the centre the Camel Brigade advanced direct on Amman, but were checked some 1,500 yards west of Amman village. On the left the Australians were unable to reach the railway north of Amman, being heavily counter-attacked; but during the night a demolition party succeeded in blowing up a small bridge seven miles north of Amman.

On 28th March a brigade of the 60th Division arrived from Es Salt accompanied by mountain artillery. The road was too soft to admit of field guns being brought. In fact, twenty-two Turkish motor lorries and other vehicles found along the road were so embedded in the mud that they had to be de-

stroyed. On its arrival this brigade attacked along the Es Salt-Amman road, the Australians attacking on its left, the Camel Brigade on its right, while the New Zealanders attacked Hill 3039 just south of Amman.

Little progress was made. The enemy made several counter-attacks, especially against the Australians, who were forced back a short distance.

On 29th March Turkish reinforcements arrived, and the counter-attacks were renewed, but without success.

During the afternoon two more battalions of the 60th Division and a battery of Royal Horse Artillery arrived after a long and arduous march.

The attack on Amman was renewed at 2 a.m. on 30th March. The New Zealanders captured a portion of Hill 3039, but were unable to drive the enemy from the northern and eastern ends. Parties of New Zealanders entered the village, but were fired on from the houses. Elsewhere the attack met with only slight success. It was apparent that without greater artillery support further attacks could only succeed at the cost of heavy losses. Moreover, Turkish troops from Jisr ed Damieh and from the north had begun to make their presence felt at Es Salt. Orders were therefore issued for a withdrawal to take place during the night. This was carried out without interruption, after all the wounded had been evacuated.

By the evening of 2nd April the whole force had recrossed the Jordan, with the exception of the troops left to hold the bridgehead on the east bank.

Although no permanent damage had been done to the Hedjaz railway, the raid had succeeded in drawing northwards and retaining not only the Turkish troops which had been operating against the Arabs, but in addition a portion of the garrison of Maan and the stations further south.

Before the raid was carried out the enemy's strength in the Amman-Es Salt-Shunet Nimrin area was approximately 4,000. By the middle of April it had increased to over 8,000.

13. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Sherif Feisal commenced operations against Maan. The railway was first cut both north and south of Maan at Ghadir el Haj and Jerdun. At these places 270 Turks and three machine guns were captured. On 13th April, Senna, a Turkish post 4,000 yards south-west of Maan Station, was captured, and on 17th April the station was entered and 100 prisoners made, but the attack was unable to make any impression on the strong Turkish position 400 yards north of the station. This position was of considerable strength, and was provided with concrete machine gun emplacements. The Arabs then withdrew to a strong position at Senna to await the arrival of further ammunition for their artillery.

In the meantime another column attacked the line between Batn el Ghul and Kalaat et Mudawara, 70 kilometres south of Maan, and destroyed 100 kilometres of line so effectively that at least a month's uninterrupted work will be required to repair it, and then only if large gangs of labourers are available. The damage to the railway north of Maan was not so thorough, but was sufficient to prevent through traffic for several days.

14. After the troops employed in the last raid had been withdrawn to the west bank of