

Private Raymond Bassett ARGUS (service no. 2244)

Raymond Bassett Argus was a son of William Bassett Argus and Mary Anne Argus (nee Trewin). He was born at Tallygaroopna, Victoria, on 6th August 1885.

At the age of 30, he left his selection in the Warwick district of Queensland to join the 2nd Light Horse Regiment on 20th November 1915. As part of the 15th Reinforcements of the Regiment, he embarked from Brisbane for the Middle East on 23rd March 1916 on *HMAT Commonwealth*.

The Australian War Memorial website describes the involvement of the 2nd Light Horse Regiment which, as a unit of the 1st Light Horse Brigade, was part of the ANZAC Mounted Division, in the following way:

“Between January and May 1916, the regiment was deployed to protect the Nile valley from bands of pro-Turkish Senussi Arabs. On 18 May, as part of its parent brigade, it joined the forces defending the Suez Canal. The 1st Light Horse Brigade played a significant role in turning back the Turkish advance on the canal at the battle of Romani on 4 August. In ensuing days the regiments of the brigade participated in the immediate follow-up of the defeated Turks, but were soon withdrawn to rest.

The 2nd Light Horse Regiment rejoined the Allied advance across the Sinai in November and was subsequently involved in the fighting to secure the Turkish outposts on the Palestine frontier - Maghdaba on 23 December 1916 and Rafa on 9 January 1917. A stint of protective duty along the line of communications through the Sinai followed. The 2nd's next major engagement was the abortive second battle of Gaza on 19 April. Gaza finally fell on 7 November, after a wide outflanking move via Beersheba, in which the 1st Light Horse Brigade played a part.

With the capture of Gaza, the Turkish position in southern Palestine collapsed. The 2nd Light Horse Regiment participated in the advance to Jaffa that followed, and was then committed to operations to clear and occupy the west bank of the Jordan River. It was involved in the Amman (24-27 February) and Es Salt (30 April-4 May) raids and the repulse of a major German and Turkish attack on 14 July 1918.

The final British offensive of the campaign was launched along the Mediterranean coast on 19 September 1918, with the ANZAC Mounted Division taking part in a subsidiary effort east of the Jordan aimed at Amman. Turkey surrendered on 30 October 1918. The 2nd Light Horse Regiment sailed for Australia on 13 March 1919 without their horses, which were either shot or transferred to Indian cavalry units. “

Raymond Bassett Argus returned to farming in Queensland.

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