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NAVAL MEMOIRS,
1910-1915


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From the portrait by de Laszlo

Roger Keyes A.F.

THE NAVAL MEMOIRS

of

ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET

SIR ROGER KEYES

The Narrow Seas to the Dardanelles

1910—1915

LONDON
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TO MY WIFE

But for whose help this book would never have been written

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The official telegrams and other confidential matter quoted in this volume have already been published in the Dardanelles Commission's Reports, Sir Ian Hamilton's "Gallipoli Diary," Lord Wester Wemyss' "The Navy in the Dardanelles," Mr. Winston Churchill's "The World Crisis," or the Naval and Military Official Histories.

I am greatly indebted to the authors of these books, but above all to Brigadier-General C. F. Aspinall-Oglander—the Military Historian—for much valuable help and advice.

R. K.

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FOREWORD

" *Dream dreams, then write them, ay, but live them first.*"
—CERVANTES.

(Newdigate Prize Poem, 1921, by James Laver.)

AFTER the war the great Universities honoured a number of soldiers and sailors by conferring honorary degrees upon them. My education, except in technical subjects, practically ceased when I joined H.M.S. *Britannia* as a naval cadet, at the age of twelve. It gave me much pleasure, therefore, to be made an Honorary LL.D. of Cambridge, Aberdeen, St. Andrews and Bristol, and an Honorary D.C.L. of Oxford—honours which greatly intrigued my French naval friends, who wondered how I could have found time to win such high scholastic distinction during an active career at sea.

I was invited to the Encænia at Oxford in 1920, but was unable to attend, as the Battle Cruiser Squadron, which I commanded, was in the Baltic; but the following year the invitation was renewed, and I had the great honour of being made D.C.L. in company with M. Clemenceau, the only other recipient.

After listening to the Public Orator telling us what he thought about us, which I must confess conveyed very little to me, as I had my last Latin lesson when I was eleven, we watched other distinctions being conferred, including the Newdigate Prize won by James Laver, a Commoner of New College, who from a rostrum recited his poem opening with the words I have quoted above.

I was thrilled, and listened with amazement to a youth telling, with easy assurance, a brave tale of high adventure, fierce fighting at sea, great hardships bravely borne, and ardent, passionate love.

I remember thinking that so young a man must have lived it all in some previous existence, so truly rang the musings of " Cervantes in his dungeon cell at Seville," dreaming the dreams he had lived.

" *Far from the coast he knew the town to be,*
But smelt the full salt savour of the sea."

Well, I live in no dungeon cell, but in a pleasant country house in the heart of England "far from the coast," with much to occupy me, but still with leisure to dream dreams I have lived in "the salt savour of the sea"; so I will try to "write them" in the hope that, if they meet the eye of the younger generation, they will help them to avoid the mistakes we made, when they seize the torch and strive, as ardently as we did, to live up to the glorious tradition we inherited from the great sea captains of old.

When the Great War ended our Empire emerged mighty and powerful. The hammer blows of our armies had been a decisive factor in the winning of a victorious peace. Our gallant young knights of the most powerful air force in the world had won golden spurs. Our sea services had maintained the communications of our armies, carried troops from every outpost of the Empire and the United States of America, and had kept the seas in the face of unseen and unforeseen difficulties.

Our race was indeed at the very zenith of its prestige; and we who had fought, perhaps above all others, were determined to maintain the peace which the devotion of our people had won, and to take the necessary steps to safeguard the sea routes from the heart of the Empire to the Dominions which had played such a valiant part in the struggle.

Where do we stand today?

Despite the sorry example of Southern Ireland, sentimental idealists and politicians are busily engaged in dissipating the Indian Empire which our forbears won, and are striving to impose on India's many irreconcilable races an imitation of a Western parliamentary system, in which so many powerful Western countries have lost faith.

In 1930, supported by so-called pacifists and sailors too amenable to political requirements, they bound our sea forces in trammelling agreements, which are not in the interests of efficiency, security, peace or even economy; bonds moreover which were wisely rejected by our more practical Continental neighbours.

In the vain hope that their example would be followed, they have steadily reduced our naval, military and air forces, the only real guarantors of peace and security in this turbulent and unchanging world, while the armed forces of almost every other power have as steadily increased. Yet, when the dictates of the

League of Nations were recently ignored, their pacifist supporters clamoured for belligerent action, which could only have resulted in war—a war in which our navy will never be in a position to engage until its route to the East is provided with an efficient defended base.

What blind folly it all is!

To crown the unhappiness of those who fought, we see thousands of our good comrades in the great army of unemployed. Subjects of the King, regular soldiers and sailors, pensioners, reservists, and civilians in every walk of life, from all parts of the world, sprang to arms when the Empire needed them. I had many opportunities of watching them—light-hearted and confident—defiant and determined—shattered and almost broken, perhaps even terribly afraid—and yet, in the face of incredible hardships and cruel sufferings, dogged and unbeaten. In the last year of the war I watched the daily stream of hospital transports passing through my command at Dover, carrying thousands of wounded; and the leave boats bringing men from the Front for a few days at home, often weary and haggard with the mud and grime of battle still on them. I saw men going back from leave, under no illusions as to the hell awaiting them, with a look that filled one with pride and sympathy; so different to the gallant bearing of the early days, but a bearing of even greater value in the critical time, when the issue hung in the balance.

Then came the Armistice, and our men returned, in the words of our old naval prayer, "to enjoy the blessings of the land and the fruits of their labours," and now, after fifteen years, with a heartache we see thousands of them tramping about with a look of dull hopeless despair, seeking for work.

Surely there is a way out of the evil pass into which we have been led?

I have one more dream, which I have not yet lived, but please God I will before I join my good companions who have passed.

A dream of a leader of proved courage, with a vision to see beyond the barbed wire of No-man's-land through which we are still staggering in the wake of short-sighted, sentimental idealists. A leader who will rally the youth of all parties and classes, and all who tried, endured, and still hope confidently for a happy issue for our race out of the world crisis which threatens

to engulf us. A leader who will form and lead a real National Government which is not afraid to govern, or to stamp out the unfettered treason to King and Country which is allowed to flourish unchecked. A government with the courage to treat employer and employee alike, and to see that men who want to work are allowed to work. A government which will put the welfare of our Country, Colonies and Dominions, and the Throne which unites the Empire, before all other considerations. A government which, deaf to the cry of misguided pacifists, will maintain sufficient armed forces to secure the sea communications and guard the outposts of the Empire—and *ensure peace*.

Such a government cannot fail to solve the problems which beset us, restore the prestige of our Empire, and find a way of disbanding our army of unemployed.

Then, and not until then, will we who fought have kept faith with our men who died.

R. K.

Tingewick House,
11th November, 1933.

PART I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBMARINE SERVICE

NAVAL MEMOIRS, 1910-1915

CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBMARINE

Naval Intelligence Work; Trouble with Sir John Fisher; Naval manœuvres of 1910; Appointed Inspecting Captain of Submarines; Submarine construction.

In the summer of 1903 I had just given up command of a flotilla of eight destroyers, and was waiting on half-pay for another sea-going appointment, when I was offered one in the Naval Intelligence Department at the Admiralty. I thought this would be a useful experience, and so it proved, for I found myself in charge of a section which was concerned with the Navies of Russia and Japan. Within a few months my two countries were at war, and as we were in alliance with Japan, to the extent of coming to her aid in the event of the interference of a third power, my duties brought me into intimate relations with the Japanese Naval Mission in England, and I obtained a very valuable insight into the character and aims of that warlike Island race, which is destined to play so great a part in the future of the East.

Prince Louis of Battenberg, the Director of Naval Intelligence, was a wonderful Chief, and looked after the interests of all who had the good fortune to serve under him. At the end of 1904, he offered me the appointment of Naval Attaché in Rome, Vienna, Constantinople and Athens, a delightful post which I held for three years and enjoyed immensely.

I hunted in Rome, played polo on the shores of the Bosphorus, shot in Austria, made friends with interesting people of every nationality, and, as the records of the Naval Intelligence I hope show, reported very fully on the naval policy, navies and the naval defences of the countries to which I was accredited.

I was promoted to Captain in 1905, and when I was at home on leave I ran into Sir John Fisher—the First Sea Lord—whom I had met once or twice before, but hardly knew; so I was pleased and surprised when he recognised me, and said in a very friendly way, "We had to promote you, as every one said you were going to be promoted." I don't quite know what he meant, but gathered that my good fortune had his blessing. Two years later I was at home on leave, and at a Court ball at Buckingham Palace I found myself alongside Sir John; remembering his kindness two years before, I spoke to him and was about to introduce him to my wife, but refrained, as he gave me a most ferocious glare and turned his back! I was very much surprised and wondered why. I learnt a few days later.

At that time I had been Naval Attaché two and a half years, and felt that although I was very happy and gaining most useful experience, it was time I went to sea again; so I called on the Naval Secretary—Captain Evan-Thomas—to ask for a ship, but I realised at once that I was not likely to get a command for some time. As my contemporaries and one or two Captains junior to me had already been appointed to cruisers, and I knew there would be some vacancies in the next few months, I asked why I was being passed over. He was obviously uncomfortable and after some hesitation asked me if I had ever taken sides in the Fisher-Beresford controversy. I replied that I had not and never meant to. He then asked me if I ever wrote to the papers. I replied "No, why?" He said "Well, someone here in a high position is certain that you do; of course I have no right to ask you such questions, but I do so in your own interests." He then asked me if I had ever had anything to do with *The Times*. I told him I knew *The Times* correspondents in Rome and Vienna, they practically had the entrée of the Chanceries of those Embassies; we sometimes exchanged naval information, but I had had nothing whatever to do with *The Times* or any other newspaper. He admitted, in answer to my question, that the person was Sir John Fisher, and went on to say that someone in *The Times* office had told Sir John that I had tried to get an article against him published on behalf of Lord Charles Beresford. He said that Sir John knew that my mother lived at Hampton Court Palace, not far from the Beresford's house at Chobham, and "no doubt the plot

was hatched there." I told him that as a matter of fact I had only met Lord Charles once in my life, and that was in Rome.

Evan-Thomas told me that Sir John's belief that I was working against him had done me much harm; in fact, it was the reason I was not to be given a ship. He told me he would now tell Sir John that the whole story was untrue, and asked me to leave the matter in his hands. I said I did not think that was good enough, and told him why; he admitted that Sir John was unlikely to believe in my innocence without definite proof, but when I told him that I would go and have it out with Fisher at once, he begged me to do no such thing; he ought not to have told me, it was a breach of confidence on his part; so then I said I would go to *The Times;* he said that would be just as bad. By that time I was feeling very angry and said, "*Times* or Fisher? I don't mind which." He begged me to pause; I thought hard for some moments and then the solution came to me; the name of Lord Charles Beresford's Naval Secretary was John Keys. Whoever it was who went to *The Times* must have described himself as Lord Charles' Secretary. The mischievous busybody in *The Times* office must have found John Keys' name in the Navy List, and then told Fisher that Keys was trying to get an article against him published.

When I suggested this to Evan-Thomas, he said at once that it was now all clear; he could not understand why he had not thought of it before. He had been Lord Charles' flag captain (with Keys), a fact that had made his relations with the First Sea Lord very difficult at first, but he had managed to steer clear of trouble. He then asked me if I would now leave the matter in his hands. He showed me a list of ships that would come vacant, and told me to select one. I chose the *Venus* and went to her a few months later. But for Sir John Fisher's intervention I would certainly have gone to some other ship before the *Venus* fell vacant, and would have missed the opportunities that appointment gave me.

I learnt some years later from John Keys that it was not he who went to *The Times* on Lord Charles' behalf, but the latter's stenographer.

When I came home in January, 1908, I tried to have it out with Sir John. He sent me quite a friendly message about my work as Naval Attaché, but was obviously determined not to see me. It

was indeed fortunate for me that I had already been promoted to Captain when all this occurred.

The *Venus* was a second-class cruiser serving in the Atlantic Fleet, under the command of Vice-Admiral the Hon. Sir Assheton Curzon Howe, and later Prince Louis of Battenberg. I had a very happy time in the *Venus*, which came to an end in the autumn of 1910. Normally, after a spell of half-pay, I would probably have been given the command of an armoured cruiser, but in the meantime the naval manœuvres carried out that summer altered the whole course of my career.

These were of peculiar interest. The Red Fleet under the command of Admiral Sir William May, Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet, consisted of 23 battleships, armoured cruisers, light cruisers, destroyers, Submarine *D*1, and some torpedo boats and submarines for local defence.

The Blue Fleet was under the command of Sir Edmund Poë, the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean Station, who had come home with practically the whole of his fleet, which was augmented by the Atlantic Fleet under the command of Prince Louis of Battenberg. The battleships only numbered 15 and the armoured cruisers and destroyers were numerically considerably weaker than those of the Red Fleet.

The Blue Fleet was based on the West Coast of Scotland. By dint of shutting off certain waters, and a little imagination, the area was ingeniously turned into a very fair geographical reproduction of the Heligoland Bight. The Kiel Canal was reproduced by the Sound of Mull, and vessels passing through it were subjected to the same restrictions, as to numbers entering and time of passage, as vessels passing between Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. Of course no reference was made to this in any orders or reports, and it was not supposed to be generally known in the fleet, that the manœuvres were designed to test our dispositions for a war with Germany, and the close blockade of the Heligoland Bight; but it can hardly have escaped the notice of any student of war.

I was fortunate enough to be given command of the light cruisers, scouts, destroyers and some Admiralty colliers representing transports, based on Gigha Island with instructions to be ready to carry out a raid on Red territory on the south side of the Bristol Channel, when ordered to sail. The remaining light

cruisers and destroyers were based on Colonsay, and when hostilities commenced they had several actions with the enemy's blockading craft, and inflicted, but also suffered, considerable loss. I hid the whole of my force behind Gigha Island, which, like Colonsay, was supposed to be fortified, and watched the Red patrols from a lookout station on the hill. I decided to leave the enemy alone until I had some definite object in view. With the exception of a small watching patrol of destroyers, to report any movements to the northward, my force lay quiet for five days, much to the annoyance, I was told, of the destroyers who were spoiling to go out and attack the enemy's patrol.

When I was ordered to sail, my scouts and destroyers under the command of Captain Godfrey Paine in the *Sapphire* fell on the right flank of the enemy's patrol line and rolled it up to the westward and northward, while I escaped with the transports and four cruisers, keeping close inshore, unseen and unreported.

I had always thought the close blockade of our war plan was unpractical and invited attack in overwhelming superiority at any selected point.

At that time our submarine service, with the exception of *D*1, consisted of small craft, really only fit for local defence. *D*1, however, the only submarine we possessed capable of operating at any distance from our coast, proceeded under her own power from Portsmouth to the west coast of Scotland, and in spite of having one engine disabled, cruised off the Blue base for two or three days and torpedoed two of the Colonsay cruisers. *D*1's enterprising exploit opened the eyes of the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Arthur Wilson, to the offensive possibilities of submarines, which he had hitherto regarded as defensive vessels.

A couple of months after the manœuvres, I was summoned to the Admiralty and offered the appointment of Inspecting Captain of Submarines. I protested that I knew nothing about submarines except second-hand from my brother, who was one of the pioneer submarine officers; that the existing Inspecting Captain and his two predecessors were torpedo specialists; that it was a highly technical service, and I was a mere "Salt Horse" without any specialist attainments. The Naval Secretary, Rear-Admiral Troubridge, replied that that was just what Sir Arthur wanted, a sea-going officer who had every prospect of being a young Admiral, who could be relied upon to bring the submarine

service into close touch and co-operation with the fleet. I felt highly honoured and accepted the appointment, and that was the beginning of my long association with a splendid body of officers and men whose deeds of enterprise, endurance and valour fill one with admiration and pride.

When Lord Fisher decided to embark on the construction of submarines, he placed a gifted torpedo officer with a genius for invention (Captain R. Bacon) in charge of this new branch of the service, with a free hand to experiment, develop and organise it.

It was originally evolved from the American Holland boat, five of these being built, under American supervision, at the works of Messrs. Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness during 1900-1902. The success of these boats encouraged the Admiralty to proceed further, and the " A " type was designed, which was still a purely Holland type boat, but a little larger and more seaworthy.

I don't think anyone at the Admiralty in those days, or indeed for some years to come, realised the immense possibilities which lay in submarine warfare. Now some people, who have not the knowledge to gauge their limitations, credit them with powers they certainly do not possess.

In June, 1904, Mr. Alan Burgoyne, an amateur naval expert, gave a lecture at the Royal United Services Institution on the " Future of Submarine Boats," to a number of Naval Architects and Officers, including Captain R. Bacon, the Inspecting Captain of Submarines. After an interesting historical sketch on the development of submarines, the lecturer had the temerity to criticise our latest, the " A " class, as being too small and possessing insufficient reserve of buoyancy; he even made suggestions as to improvements in detail, such as subdivision, a watertight hatch in the conning tower, telescopic periscopes, etc. He expressed a hope that he would soon hear of 600- to 800-ton vessels being laid down, and eventually visualised vessels of about 1,000 tons, declaring that there was no reason why a large submersible should not have a surface speed of 26 and even 30 knots. He certainly made some technical blunders, but the hopes he expressed fell far short of achievement in a few years, and his ultimate vision is very little ahead of it today. However, it was all too much for Captain Bacon, who

alone of all those present, knew anything about the practical working of a submarine, and he smothered the poor amateur with scornful ridicule.* Two years later he upbraided his successor for building *B*1; the " A " class, for which he was responsible, he declared, were the largest vessels which could be usefully manœuvred submerged! (*B*1 was 142 ft. in length, with a surface displacement of 285 tons, 37 ft. longer and 100 tons greater displacement than the " A " type.)

In 1910 when I succeeded, Captain S. S. Hall had been Inspecting Captain of Submarines for four years, and the submarine service owed him a great debt for the organisation he had built up, and the training he had introduced; which had produced an invaluable body of officers and men, who provided the nucleus and the leaders for the service which expanded and developed so rapidly during the next few years. The second senior submarine officer was Captain F. Brandt, also a torpedo officer who, like Captain Hall, would have been a good deal senior to me, but for my good fortune in getting early promotion during the war in China in 1900. He was a most devoted and energetic officer, who never spared himself, and did much for the submarine service.†

The technical knowledge of Hall and Brandt was immense, there was no small detail in which they did not concern themselves. To me machinery and *matériel* detail were a closed book. At first this filled me with concern, but I soon came to the conclusion that as I must necessarily always be an amateur, the best thing I could do was to collect a small staff of highly expert submarine officers, and the best available engineer officer and constructor, to advise me in technical matters, leaving myself free to devote all my energies to submarine performance and training for war; incidentally to fight the battles in the interests of the submarine service and its personnel, which my records show were endless.

On taking charge I inherited a highly selected body of officers and men, credited in the navy generally, with an inclination to regard themselves as almost a separate service; 12 " A's," 11 " B's," 37 " C's " and *D*1; eight other " D's " completing

* *Journal of the Royal United Services Institution*, Vol. XLVIII, July-Dec. 1904.

† Captain Brandt commanded the *Monmouth* under Admiral Craddock at the Battle of Coronel, and went down like his gallant Admiral with his colours flying. Not one soul of that devoted company was saved by the enemy.

and on the stocks, and eight " E's " projected and about to be laid down. It was a goodly heritage for a young captain.

I am very conscious that the following record of the development of *matériel*, and the training of personnel, during the three years preceding the war, may be rather dull reading to the layman, and I recommend anyone not interested to skip these pages. I have included them because I am anxious to place on record the great efforts that were made by the submarine service to fit itself in every possible way for any duty it might be called upon to perform. It will be seen later that the enterprise, devotion and self-sacrifice of the " Submariners " in peace time, enabled them to add a splendid page of achievement to the history of our Navy.

During the development of these classes of submarines, other nations, including the French and Italians, had been seriously considering the necessity of giving a higher percentage of surface buoyancy in order to increase their sea-worthiness. In France this led to a controversy and a series of trials were carried out between the two types " Sousmarin " and " Submersible." The result of these trials was all in favour of submersible or high-buoyancy type, and the French therefore adopted it. The Holland type did not lend itself to the development of a high-buoyancy boat, and our designers, while evidently accepting the principle of high buoyancy, were in difficulties as to how to apply it without departing too drastically from the type hitherto employed. In order to obtain the high buoyancy, French designers adopted a form of double hull; that is to say, they kept the hull where the machinery was stored, and where the crew were to live and control the boat, as small as possible, and placed outside the pressure hull a thinner hull of torpedo boat shape. The space between the two hulls provided the ballast tanks, and enabled a high percentage of buoyancy to be obtained. The Italian designer Laurenti had a portion of his boat on this principle, with single hulled ends. He obtained a very high buoyancy by means of a water-tight superstructure which automatically filled as the vessel trimmed and emptied as she rose. The Germans in the " Germania " design placed most of the double hull on the top and at the ends.

Our designers, recognising the necessity for more longitudinal stability on the surface, evolved the " D " design which proved

the value of the high-buoyancy boats, and were a considerable improvement so far as sea keeping qualities went. The " D's " were single hulled, reserve of buoyancy being obtained by imposing saddle tanks on the hull. When *D*1 was tried it was felt that the limit of length had been reached as regards end-on attack, as it was found difficult to manœuvre her submerged into a position of safety after she had fired her torpedoes, at the short range necessary to secure success, as she took roughly three times her own length to turn. My predecessor was very strong on this point, and was responsible for the " E " class which had sufficient beam to take broadside torpedo tubes. These were about to be laid down when I joined.

It was intended that they should have no bow tubes, but misgivings as to their ability to deliver bow attacks were considered rather exaggerated by submarine officers, after further experience had been gained with the " D " class, and it was not too late to incorporate these in the original design. The " E's " proved admirable submarines—submerged; but the " hard lying " money to which all submarine ratings were entitled, was still well earned!

It was decided in 1910 to prepare designs for submarines carrying four broadside tubes, and to consider these early in 1911, with a view to settling the 1911-12 programme. The Director of Naval Construction, Sir Philip Watts, produced three designs; they were described as " French," " Italian," and " Improved E." The first was closely copied from a Laubeuf design, the second from a Laurenti design, which the FIAT Company had widely advertised, and the third was simply an enlarged " E." There were no two opinions among serving submarine captains as to the superiority of the two former over the latter, but the Director of Naval Construction was unable to recommend the construction of so large a vessel, involving entirely new and, so far as we were concerned, untried principles, so eventually it was found necessary to repeat the " E " type.

It was felt by the submarine officers I had formed into a small advisory committee, that our " E " design, though a good one in many ways, could not by any means be regarded as the last word. I was advised by the technical experts, that the " E " design could not be driven at a higher speed than about 15 knots, without considerable risk of diving while running on the surface,

but the French and Italian types could be driven safely at considerably higher speeds. In order to give effect to these views I felt it was most desirable to study designs abroad, since our constructors were very naturally not prepared to embark on the construction of such vessels without experience and experiment. But time was passing and I felt very strongly that we could not afford to wait for the laborious procedure which this entailed.

Other considerations made it desirable to go abroad for designs. Messrs. Vickers had shown great enterprise at a time when other firms would not undertake the construction of submarines, and they were rewarded by a contract which practically gave them a monopoly in Great Britain. This contract was valuable to us in the early days, when requirements were small and secrecy was considered essential, but its terms debarred us from ordering vessels of Admiralty design, involving Holland patents, from any other firms. These restrictions were intolerable when it became evident that Vickers not only would be quite unable to meet our future requirements, but were getting seriously behindhand in their current orders.

To terminate the contract it was necessary to give two years' notice at the end of a financial year. I managed to get this done on the 31st of March, 1911. Vickers, who were naturally loath to lose such a valuable monopoly, used every argument to get the notice withdrawn and I was much afraid they would succeed. In the meantime we were getting more and more behindhand, and if other firms were to be brought into the field of submarine production, it was necessary to go abroad for designs as soon as possible, since, at the earliest, our existing designs could not be given to them before April, 1913.

The submarine was Lord Fisher's child, and his dynamic energy overrode all naval and departmental obstruction and gave it a good start in life, but Lord Fisher had passed into retirement, and it was extraordinarily difficult to make progress towards the provision of a large force of submarines, capable of blockading the enemy's coast, in the face of the ponderous machinery of a departmental Admiralty, and the doubts of many senior naval officers as to the value of submarines in war.

And then came Winston Churchill and the whole atmosphere changed.

Shortly after he took office as First Lord in 1911, he visited my headquarters at Gosport, and I took him to sea in a submarine for some hours. He asked me if I had any requirements. I told him of the difficulties I have just outlined, and how vital it was to shake off the binding monopoly, in order to widen the field of production, introduce competition, and be in a position to develop and build any number, or type, of submarines that we might require. He was keenly interested, and from that moment the Submarine Service had a warm friend and supporter.

The next few years were full of interest. In the light of German declarations and ambitions, war seemed to some of us inevitable, and we strained every nerve to fit ourselves for the great ordeal, should war be forced upon us. Under the energetic drive of Winston Churchill, we made tremendous strides towards efficiency and readiness. His methods were not always popular, indeed they were sometimes deeply resented, but he possessed foresight, courage and unbounded energy, and I think few, if any, of his most bitter pre-War naval critics, would deny that we owe him a great debt for the determination and vision he displayed in preparing the Navy for the great struggle before it.

When I was Naval Attaché in Italy I made friends with an Italian officer, who had since become Managing Director of Messrs. FIAT'S Works, where the Laurenti type of submarine was built. He invited me to send any expert officers I liked to Spezia to inspect the latest type of Italian submarine. I had told him that as there was not the remotest chance of our ever buying one I did not like to accept his offer. He assured me that there would be no obligation to buy, though he felt certain we should wish to after seeing one. I was now able to arrange the visit, and officers representing the Director of Naval Construction, Engineer-in-Chief, and my principal assistant, went to Spezia and inspected FIAT vessels under all conditions. They were very favourably impressed with many points in the design and as the result of their report, it was decided to order a vessel of this type from Messrs. Scott, of Greenock, who were licensed by Messrs. FIAT, in order that the advantages and disadvantages of this type over our existing vessels could be compared. She was named *S1*. A visit was also paid by the same officers to Messrs. Schneider's Works at Toulon, where vessels of the

Laubeuf type were inspected. Although there were many points of interest in these craft the design was not recommended. They were of a design built for the Greek government for service in the Mediterranean, and were not adapted to our requirements in the North Sea coast patrol; moreover they compared unfavourably with their contemporaries in our service. Monsieur Laubeuf could, given time, no doubt have produced a vessel answering to our requirements, but the Admiralty, in their desire to start Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., the licensees of the Schneider Co., building at once, placed an order for two submarines of the type inspected, in spite of the objections raised by submarine officers, which I had strongly supported. They were named *W*1 and *W*2.

In 1905, when I was in Italy, I visited an exhibition in Florence and saw what was described as a "Cleptoscopio," a submarine periscope in fact. I had looked through a periscope in my brother's submarine. This one struck me as being greatly superior, so I sent details of it to the Admiralty, remarking that I knew nothing whatever about periscopes, that its apparent superiority might be due to the clearer atmosphere of Florence, but I thought it well worth an expert's inspection. My report was sent by the Admiralty for remarks, to the firm which made all our periscopes under the Vickers monopoly, with the result that no competition ensued, and the reply I received did not encourage me to pursue the matter further. Remembering this incident, I arranged to send my experts to inspect Italian, German, and French periscopes. They reported that all three were superior to ours, both optically and mechanically. We were able to purchase a French periscope for trial, and it was arranged for a British optical firm to work the Italian patents. After 12 German periscopes had been purchased, similar arrangements were made for their manufacture in this country. The threat of competition spurred our periscope maker to make strenuous efforts, and before long he was able to embody all the latest improvements in his instruments. Thus when war broke out we not only had a vastly improved periscope, but the ability to meet the rapid expansion of the submarine service.

For a successful attack it is vital for a submarine to remain unseen and unsuspected, the importance of her periscope therefore can hardly be exaggerated, and it is interesting to note the

many stages through which periscopes passed in the process of their evolution.

In the early boats the image was inverted, and the submarine captain had to attack a target which he saw "upside down"!

In all our small submarines the periscope could only be used fixed, and when the captain wished to raise or lower it, in the course of an attack, the vessel had to "porpoise"!

Vessels of the size of the "D" class could not "porpoise" without risk of disturbing the surface and being discovered—a disadvantage the smaller craft shared to a lesser degree—so the early "D's" steered a steady course and the periscope was raised and lowered jerkily with cumbersome tackles, the position of the captain varying from standing tiptoe on a stool, to crouching on the deck.

When I pleaded for mechanical, or better still, electrical devices which would overcome these handicaps, I was told they were luxuries we could not afford. In the early stages of the battle for the improvement of periscopes, I pointed out to the holder of the purse strings, that the military value of a submarine which cost over £100,000 depended entirely on the skill of her captain, the clearness of his vision, and his ability to raise and lower his "eye" swiftly. Surely it was bad policy to save £200 or £300 on the price of his "eye" or to give him only one "eye" when two could be fitted. If he lost his "eye" the military value of the submarine disappeared.

Before the war descended on us, the captains of our larger submarines were able to sit on stools, swing round, raise and lower, without any effort, the finest periscopes in the world.

In connection with the purchase of the German periscopes, I had an unpleasant experience. My experts considered that they were optically superior to any others and we were very anxious to try them. The makers had a shop in England for the sale of telescopes, cameras, etc., and the manager—a German—was most anxious to arrange the sale. He came to see me two or three times, but the price was considered too high by the head of the department which had to authorise the purchase, and the matter hung fire. Eventually I was told that if I could get the price lowered by 5 per cent. I could have six of them. I sent for the manager and he came into my room with a large leather case slung

over his shoulder. I told him the Admiralty decision; after a little hesitation and looking at me queerly, he asked me how I would like the 5 per cent. discount paid. I replied that I had nothing to do with such matters; the purchase would be made by the Director of Contracts. He then put his leather case on my table and asked if I was interested in reflex cameras. It suddenly dawned upon me that I was being bribed. My expression must have alarmed him, as he picked up his case and hurried from the room and never came near me again. I must confess I felt physically sick, and it was a lesson to me not to mix myself up in the financial side of administration—but we got our periscopes and that was really the only thing that mattered.

When the German came to speed up the sale, armed with a camera worth about £40, it must have been a nasty shock to him when he thought I wanted a commission of 5 per cent.—over £300!

As a result of the inspection of the Laurenti and Laubeuf submarines, and the reports thereon, I was ordered to form a committee of submarine officers, to put forward definite recommendations as to future design. I included the officers already advising me, who had the entire confidence of the Submarine Service, and heard the opinions of other submarine captains. The recommendations we made in February, 1912, were to build two types, "Oversea" and "Coastal," the former of about a 1,000 tons displacement with a large reserve of buoyancy ("E's" were about 660 tons).

As the best results could not be obtained by increasing the displacement of the "E" class, and it would be necessary to depart widely from our existing design, we recommended that every advantage should be taken of considering the design of private constructors in conjunction with Admiralty proposals.

We stressed the importance of habitability from the point of view of the health and endurance of the personnel. The lack of habitability in our submarines, we declared, placed a limit on their range of action. (The submarine captains associated with these recommendations were to prove, within three years, that it was almost impossible to place any limit on the endurance and hardihood of the crews of the submarines they commanded so brilliantly.)

We recommended that the "Coastal" should have a displacement of about 250 to 300 tons, following as closely as possible the characteristics of the "Oversea" type.

In submitting our proposals for an "Oversea" type we had in view a high-buoyancy ship-shaped vessel of sufficient speed to accompany a battle fleet, and capable of keeping the sea for extended operations in all conditions of weather. We knew that Germany and France were building large vessels but we understood that these were not fitted with broadside tubes; this no doubt would enable their designers to give them finer lines and obtain comparatively high speed for their displacement. At the time, our submarine officers undoubtedly placed an exaggerated tactical value on the possession of broadside tubes and were ready to make sacrifices in other directions in order to have them.

Vickers and Scott were invited to submit designs for an "Oversea" submarine conforming to our recommendations. Vickers' design was of considerably higher displacement than was anticipated, with a speed of only 17 knots. Scott, who employed Laurenti, produced a design of much smaller displacement and guaranteed 18 knots, but hesitated to guarantee the reliability of the FIAT engines, which were to propel the vessel, suggesting as an alternative steam turbines.

About this time we were experiencing many difficulties in connection with the internal combustion engines of the "D's" and early "E's." We viewed with misgivings the much more powerful engines necessary to propel Vickers' "Oversea." Other nations had experienced similar difficulties with high-power internal-combustion engines. It was known that the completion of a large number of German submarines had been delayed on this account, and that France, after much experiment, had reverted to steam for all her larger submarines. These were difficulties which we knew would be overcome in time, but time was passing and we were most anxious to produce a submarine capable of working with the Fleet. We welcomed, therefore, with relief the introduction of such a simple and well-tried means of propulsion as a steam turbine.

Orders were then placed for a Vickers' "Oversea," which was named the *Nautilus*, and one from Scott which was named the *Swordfish*. It was considered advisable to await the trials of these vessels before repeating them, or proceeding further with a

large "Ocean" type of submarine, which had been designed by the Director of Naval Construction.

In the meantime, accepting generally our recommendations, the Admiralty included in the 1913-14 estimates, "Coastals" for the Coast Patrol; from Scott "S's," from Vickers "V's" (their "Coastal" design), and from Armstrong, Whitworth a new "W" class, designed by Laubeuf to meet our requirements. In our opinion these latter compared unfavourably with the two former. In order not to lag behind in larger boats, "E" class were ordered up to *E*18.

For some years before the war the German vote for submarine construction had been approximately equal to ours, but thanks, no doubt, to the fact that the defence of their harbours was not dependent on submarines, as ours was to a great extent owing to the abolition of defensive minefields, they had devoted the whole of their vote to the construction of "Oversea" submarines, with the result that they had more built, building, and projected than we had or could build, a statement of fact which I reiterated ceaselessly during the years which preceded the war.

In December, 1913, the First Lord presided over a conference at which the German programme was discussed; after which it was decided to devote nearly the whole of the sum available for submarines in 1914-15 Estimates to the construction of "Oversea" vessels of the high-buoyancy, subdivided type of approximately the same displacement as the "E" class.

As it was desired to bring other firms, experienced in the construction of destroyers, into competition, Admiralty designs for a "Coastal" and an "Oversea" were prepared. The Director of Naval Construction, and the officer of his department connected with the design of submarines, approached the subject in the most open-minded manner, welcomed the co-operation of the Submarine Committee, and made every endeavour to follow its recommendations.

The Admiralty "Coastal" was named "F" and was the result of the study of "S," "V," and "W" designs, coupled with our own experience. Orders for one "F" were given to Chatham Dockyard, Messrs. White of Cowes, and Messrs. Thorneycroft. The Admiralty "Oversea" was called "G" and Vickers, Scott, and Armstrong Whitworth were invited to tender for them for the 1914-15 programme. That was the

situation in the summer of 1914. At that time I was expecting to be succeeded in September by Captain Reginald Hall (Director of Naval Intelligence throughout the War) and I prepared a memorandum for his information, the gist of which is in the foregoing account.

To sum up, as long as submarines were only required for local defence, which seems, at that time, to have been the limit of vision of Lord Fisher and his technical adviser, the Holland boat was, I think, unquestionably the best type to adopt. The main object Lord Fisher seems to have had in view, was to employ submarines for the defence of harbours, and abolish defensive minefields, a policy which he had carried into effect before I came on the scene. As the material developed, and our vision cleared and extended to the enemy's coasts and the high seas, it became more and more evident to the officers who had to live in the vessels, that better sea-going qualities and surface habitability were essential.

The definitely limited speed of the "E" type made it desirable to build submersible, rather than submarine, vessels for work with the Fleet and on the high seas.

As we had no time to experiment, surely it was a good policy to buy our experience from those who had expended years in experimenting with the submersible type, add this to our unrivalled experience in the submarine type, which we had developed to the highest pitch in the "E" class, and then trust our constructors to produce the finest submarine submersible in the world.

That was the policy which crystallised under the advice of my small body of experts, and which I pressed with all the energy, persistence and blarney in my being. It was condemned by Lord Fisher who felt, I suppose, that the policy of those who preceded me was being indicted, but I hope it is clear from the foregoing that what we did was really only a short cut in the natural evolution of submerged vessels. Also that our policy could only have been built up on the sound foundations which had been laid by those we succeeded.

There was one objection which was insistently advanced; the loss of prestige we would sustain by going abroad for designs. I thought that rather absurd; after all, our original design came from America ready-made. Anyhow, loss of prestige, however

mortifying, must be ignored; it was the price we had to pay for the monopoly under which we suffered long after its utility had ceased to exist.

In this connection, at an opportune moment in the battle I was waging for submarine development, the Electric Boat Co., of the United States, from whom we obtained the design of our first Holland submarine, had an advertisement in an American engineering journal of a double hull, subdivided submarine which, they claimed, embodied all the features of the Laurenti and Laubeuf types, adding with characteristic modesty, but "better than either."

Before leaving these technical matters I would like to place on record the names of the submarine committee which I formed to advise me, and whose recommendations I championed.

Commander P. Addison, my principal technical assistant throughout four and a half years—now Director of Dockyards.

Commander C. Little, a very experienced submarine officer and one of the original Holland boat captains—now a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.

Lieut.-Commander Lawrence, commanded *D*1 in the 1910 manœuvres and *E*2, the first British submarine to enter the Baltic, where he torpedoed the battle cruiser *Moltke* and other German ships—now Rear-Admiral in command of the Submarine Service.

Commander M. Nasmith, won the V.C. for his glorious exploits in the Marmora, where he spent 97 days during the Gallipoli Campaign and sank 100 enemy vessels. Rear-Admiral in command of the Submarine Service, 1929-31—now the youngest admiral afloat and the Commander-in-Chief of the East Indian Station.

Lieut.-Commander C. Craven, rendered invaluable service as a submarine captain, and instructor of young submarine officers —now a Director of Messrs. Vickers and Managing Director of all their Works.

Engineer-Commander Skelton, to whom the Submarine Service is greatly indebted for the development of internal combustion engines and submarine machinery generally—Engineer-in-Chief of the Navy, 1928-32.

Their recommendations were supported at every step by

Mr. A. Johns, who, under Sir Eustace Tennyson D'Eyncourt, the Director of Naval Construction, designed all our latest submarines—now the Director of Naval Construction.

The introduction of new firms and new designs proved exasperatingly slow, with the result that when the war burst upon us, we had a number of submarines on the stocks and projected, which were as yet untried. This was unfortunate for the working out of our experimental designs, because of course our so-called foreign excursion came in for a good deal of criticism, as every departure from the stereotype always does. It is a fact, however, that the Submarine Service and our designers reaped many advantages from the pooling of new ideas, both British and foreign, which the breakaway from the Vickers monopoly made possible. The *Swordfish*, for instance, made the design of the "K" class a practical proposition, and our submarines today have many features which can be traced to the various designs we were studying when the war came.

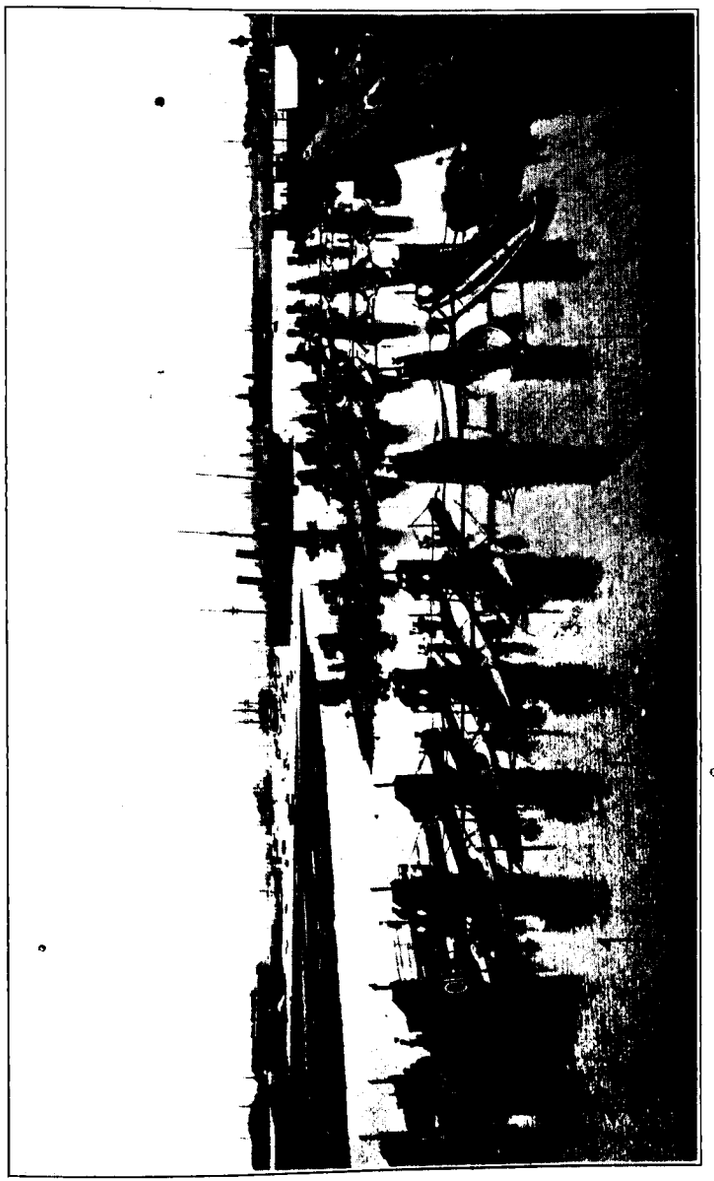
Before the end of the war we had submarine vessels of 334 ft. long, 1,883 tons surface/2,560 submerged displacement, driven by steam turbines at a speed of 25 knots, armed with the largest torpedoes in existence, and quick-firing guns, fit to accompany the fleet in all weathers—diving destroyers in fact. We had three large submarines of 1,600/1,950 tons displacement which possessed admirable diving qualities, and were armed with a 12-inch gun of the pre-Dreadnought battleships; these were really submarine monitors. *X*1, which was laid down immediately after the war, can only be described as a submarine cruiser, her length being 369 ft. and displacement 2,425/3,600 tons.

When I was Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean Station, in 1928, *X*1 and *K*26 were in my fleet, and when inspecting them I took the opportunity of testing their powers. We were diving at a depth of 100 feet in *X*1 when the order was given "Surface, engage the enemy." In one minute she was on the surface and had fired simultaneously her two four-inch guns, controlled as a salvo from the director tower, two hits being obtained on a target 2,000 yards distant. In *K*26 we were steaming at a speed of 23.5 knots when the order was given to dive. In three minutes 12 seconds she was at a depth of 80 feet.

The present Director of Naval Construction—Sir Arthur Johns—told me that, but for the ready-made experience we

bought, he could never have produced our diving destroyers and monitors for use in the war. Vessels, I may add, which raised our prestige and placed him among the Olympians of his profession.

I have tried to give an outline of my only connection with *matériel* during my career in the Navy. I do not think that *matériel* is much in my line, but the battle to get the very best in the world for my gallant "Submariners" was of absorbing interest, and became an obsession. After all, the efficiency of their vessels and weapons was a matter of life and death to them, for in the course of our exercises and manœuvres they ran almost every risk they would have to face in war—short of destruction by gunfire if caught on the surface, and deliberate ramming—and our Roll of Honour includes many gallant pre-War pioneers.



SUBMARINES WITH *MERCURY* IN BACKGROUND
FORT BLOCKHOUSE, 1910

CHAPTER II

TRAINING FOR WAR

Peace and War dispositions; Submarine exercises; Training for War; A skirmish with Lord Fisher.

THE post of Inspecting Captain of Submarines was unlike anything else in the Navy.

I had an office at the Admiralty, my headquarters were in H.M.S. *Dolphin*, an old hulk secured alongside the submarine depot at Fort Blockhouse, and I was nominally in command of H.M.S. *Mercury*, a hulk moored head and stern off Haslar Creek. There were seven submarine sections, as they were called in those days, and these were maintained by :

Fort Blockhouse, which had very primitive living quarters for officers and men, and none of the amenities of the naval barracks and other shore establishments ; plant for charging submarine batteries, workshops, torpedo store, etc., and a floating dock. All officers and Portsmouth ratings were trained there.

H.M.S. *Forth*, a sea-going depot ship and the *Onyx*, a small hulk at Devonport. West-country ratings were trained by this section.

H.M.S. *Bonaventure* and *Antelope*, sea-going depot ship and tender based on Portsmouth.

H.M.S. *Mercury* (hulk) depot ship, and *Hazard*, sea-going tender based on Portsmouth.

H.M.S. *Thames* and *Sharpshooter*, sea-going depot ship and tender based on Harwich. East-country ratings were trained in this section.

H.M.S. *Vulcan* and *Hebe*, sea-going depot ship and tender, based on Dundee.

The depot ships, which were old cruisers, provided living quarters for officers and men; they were fitted with charging plant, workshops and store-rooms for spare torpedoes and submarine stores.

The tenders were old torpedo gunboats.

The crews of the submarines only lived in their vessels on passage.

That was the situation when I assumed command. My first step was to find a technical assistant, and I had no difficulty in selecting Commander Percy Addison, after inspecting his and other sea-going sections.

I then visited the outlying units, embarked in the depot ships and tenders for cruises, watched submarine attacks from the surface, and took part in many, submerged.

As I have already said, the military value of a submarine lies in the skill of her captain and, I would add, his powers of leadership. It is given to some to excel at ball games, to others to be first-class shots with gun or rifle; if you can add the "hunter's" instinct to a first-class eye and steady nerves, you will probably have a first-class submarine captain. But skill in attack is not enough. Unless the captain has the absolute confidence of his crew, unless the crew is trained to the highest pitch, and the machinery and weapons are maintained in a state of efficiency, you will not have a first-class submarine.

It was so interesting to stand beside a captain when he was delivering an attack and to watch his crew, they knew in whose hands their fate lay, and one could soon assess the military value of an individual submarine. In the very rare event of its being clear that the atmosphere was not a happy one, I had no hesitation in taking immediate steps to correct it.

They were the salt of the earth those pioneer submariners and I felt very proud when I found myself in command of a personnel, knitted by the nature of their service into such a band of good comrades.

Before Captain Hall left, it had been arranged to send three "C's" to Hong Kong, where they would be mothered by H.M.S. *Rosario*, a sloop which had been fitted as a small sea-going depot ship. As he was taking a cruiser out to the Mediterranean, it was arranged that he should convoy the submarines so far. All went well, but their voyage across the Indian Ocean was a great adventure, attended by some risk, and I think the shades of our great navigators of old must have saluted their crews as brothers. I know that the hardy fishermen of the North Sea hailed the

submarines of those days as comrades and always threw fish to them when conditions permitted, for they had often watched two or three oilskin-clad figures clinging to their tiny conning tower, washed down by seas like a half-tide rock.

In January, 1911, I received a memorandum from the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet giving the war stations of all the submarines. This was sent to me through the Vice-Admiral commanding the Third and Fourth divisions of the Home Fleet, under whom the "sea-going" side of my command was administered. That struck me as a very unsatisfactory arrangement. The Vice-Admiral lived during most of the year in the old Admiralty house at the Nore, quite out of touch with us, but all my correspondence in such matters, had to pass through him. From the Commander-in-Chief's order it was clear that the sole duty of the submarines was to co-operate with the older destroyer flotillas for coast defence. The sections were allotted areas from the Firth of Forth to the Dover Straits.

War orders are of course a strictly guarded secret and I do not know who was responsible for this disposition, I am sure it was not my predecessor, and certainly I was never consulted. The disposition had no relation to the peace-time training headquarters of the submarines or the capabilities of the various classes.

In the course of the next few months, a thorough reorganisation of the flotillas was approved, and on 3rd June, 1911, there being no orders in existence for the employment of submarines in war, I submitted a memorandum giving the allocation of all the submarines in home waters, and my views as to their employment in peace and war.

I pointed out that in order to get full value out of the submarines, it was absolutely essential that they should dive before they were sighted by an enemy. In clear fine weather, provided a good look out was kept, they should always be able to do so, and under such conditions it was preferable that submarines should not be accompanied by surface craft, while lying waiting for an enemy, or proceeding to attack some definite object, as they would be ready to dive at short notice and could attack unsuspected. In hazy weather, such as often prevailed in the North Sea, however, they were certain to be seen and avoided

by an enemy, before they could get into a position to attack, they also ran great risk of coming under the gunfire of fast vessels before they could dive. Under such conditions, or when making a long passage, when there was a possibility of falling in with an enemy, they should be accompanied by fast surface craft to scout for them. For this duty whenever possible, one or more destroyers from the flotilla operating in the same area should be attached to each group of submarines.

The " D " class were able to proceed under their own power on the surface about 2,500 miles at ten knots, they should be able to remain self-supporting on an enemy's coast for some days.

They would be most valuable a few miles behind an inshore blockading squadron, ready to dive and attack any large vessels which might come out to drive it off (which shows that as far as I knew the close blockade policy, referred to in my account of the 1910 manœuvres, was still in existence, despite the risk the blockading ships would now also run from enemy submarines).

In this memorandum I gave an account of our routine training and concluded by begging for frequent opportunities to attack battleships and armoured cruisers, both in the interests of the submarines and the fleet. Three months later I was informed that my proposals were approved generally.

In the meantime, however, before the end of June, I was directed to take some submarines to Berehaven and place myself under the orders of Rear-Admiral L. Bailey, in command of the Battle Cruiser Squadron. Admiral Bailey had been Commodore of the Home Fleet Destroyer Flotillas, and later Head of the War College. His command, consisting of his squadron, an armoured cruiser and some light cruisers, was based on Berehaven, which was invested by enemy destroyers supported by light cruisers and armoured cruisers. The old war plan in fact! The object of these exercises was to test the ability of submarines to get past the investing destroyers in order to attack the supporting ships in the offing. This, of course, would have presented no difficulties a year or two later, but the safety restrictions still in force were such that the exercise was rather unreal. However, the most ardent supporter of the close blockade could have been left in no doubt as to the menace of submarines to such a disposition.

My office in the Admiralty was of the greatest value to me, and gave me to all intents and purposes the status of an Admiralty officer. There I was able to deal direct with the First Sea Lord in matters of policy, training and tactics; with the Second Sea Lord as regards personnel, which was voluntary and highly selected; with the Third Sea Lord and Controller of the Navy (to give him his full title) in all questions of *matériel*; and with the Fourth Sea Lord for supplies. Also I had ready access to all Naval and Civil Departments.

Above all this great organisation stood the First Lord—when Winston Churchill assumed the office in October, 1911. He interested himself in every conceivable detail connected with the service, its efficiency and preparation for war. (Incidentally the latter part of the Third Sea Lord's title was abolished.) One has heard Mr. Churchill condemned for interfering in technical matters and overriding technical opinion. There is no denying he frequently did, but I think his quick brain and vivid imagination were invaluable and, in the majority of cases, his intervention was in the best interests of the Service.

I do not suppose that any officer fell foul of him more acutely than I did, on two or three occasions, mainly in connection with the use he made of the opinions of young officers whom he encouraged to talk. Also at the time of the Curragh incident, being an Ulsterman, I felt bitterly about the risk he ran of dividing the Navy by the order he issued for the employment of a squadron, or I think it would be fairer to say, the interpretation that was put on that order. When these incidents occurred I avoided having anything to do with him, though I don't suppose that bothered him much!

However, all that passed, and I have nothing but gratitude for the help he gave me in my heavy responsibilities, and, I would add his sympathy—for it was not too easy to ask the personnel to run all the risks they so cheerfully faced, as our training for war developed, even if one shared them.

He was so accessible, it would have been all too easy to overcome many of the difficulties and obstructions I experienced, by an appeal to Cæsar, but in our Service loyalty is the foundation of discipline and tradition—those who have been led into forgetting this fundamental axiom have generally fallen by the way—anyhow I felt it a point of honour to sail down the Service

channel on the surface, reserving the power to attack "unseen and unsuspected" like one of my submarines, for the King's enemies.

This did not prevent me, however, when I found one Service channel blocked, trying to reach my objective through another. In connection with my anxiety to devote all our energies and resources towards providing oversea vessels, I found a valuable ally in the Second Sea Lord, Sir John Jellicoe. In addition to helping me in every possible way in the provision and selection of officers, he shared my view that submarines would be able to take the place of the inshore blockading squadron and the look-out frigate of old, and at an opportune moment he came to my assistance with an admirably lucid paper which helped to clear the way for the building programme I wanted.

One of the first things Mr. Churchill did was to form a War Staff, and to go very fully into war orders. It is satisfactory to record that the disposition of the submarines and their proposed employment in war, for which I obtained approval in August, 1911, stood the test of the most searching investigation by the First Lord and his War Staff, and, ultimately, the crucial test of war.

With the exception of *A3*, *A7* and *B11* which were lost with only two survivors, the patrol sections remained unaltered throughout the next three years, the only change being in nomenclature, "Flotilla" being substituted for "Section," as a more naval term, and the flotillas were numbered from west to east. When the First Lord introduced "Flights" of seaplanes, he aptly suggested "Shoals" for submarines, but did not press the point after hearing my views.

"D's" and "E's" joined the "Oversea" flotilla, but very slowly and with exasperating delays, so it seemed to me, with an eye on the rapid expansion of the German submarine flotillas, and with my thoughts impatiently fixed on the provision of a force sufficient to maintain the blockade of the Heligoland Bight.

When I joined, a specially designed depot ship, the *Maidstone*, fitted to mother 12 "D's," and two tenders, the *Alecto* and *Adamant*, to mother three "D's" each, were on the stocks, and these came into service in 1912. They were of great value to the "Oversea" flotillas.

On 1st May, 1912, a reorganisation of the Home Fleet and all vessels in Home Waters was brought into force. It was laid down that the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth destroyer flotillas would form the command of a flag officer, styled "Admiral of Patrols," who would be under the direct orders of the Admiralty.

The submarine sections in Home Waters would remain under the general control of the Inspecting Captain of Submarines, who would be responsible to the Commanders-in-Chief of the Home Ports for those sections assigned to port defence, and would be responsible to the Admiral of Patrols for the remainder. Rear-Admiral J. de Robeck was the first Admiral of Patrols. He had an office at the Admiralty, where his staff worked, and he occasionally flew his flag afloat in one of the destroyer depot ships. My office at the Admiralty, which I or my assistant used to visit about once a week, was moved to a room adjoining the Admiral's. The situation might have been difficult with some Admirals, as the dividing line between my sea-going duties and many other responsibilities was not too well defined. However, it all went admirably, and we worked together for the next two years for the confusion of the enemy. That association will always be a very happy memory. De Robeck was a charming man and a good companion; he, his staff officer—Captain Walter Cowan—and I had all commanded destroyer flotillas, and we had another link in common, love of fox-hunting. De Robeck had an "eye for country," was an excellent horseman and always had a good horse or two, and there was no better-known man to hounds in Warwickshire in those days, than John de Robeck. Walter Cowan hunted in the same county and went desperately hard, as he still does. I think the First Lord and his Naval Secretary—Rear-Admiral David Beatty, who is still second to none across country—must have thought that men with destroyer experience and hunting tastes, were well fitted to hunt the pack of small craft, to whose care the protection of the coast was confided. If that was in their minds I do not think they were far wrong.

Apart from routine training we carried out constant exercises in the patrol areas. The Admiral acted as umpire, Cowan and I commanded opposing sides; the depot ships and tenders acted as battleships, cruisers or transports as the case might be.

These exercises were of the greatest value, tested every link in the chain, and were carried out under conditions not far removed from war, at any rate as far as submarine risks were concerned. By confining each operation to one area of the coast, a large force could be provided from the other areas to act as enemy. Apart from the value of these exercises to the personnel engaged, they were of infinite value to Cowan and me, in that they gave us opportunities of handling large forces and assuming considerable responsibilities, under the supreme responsibility of our Admiral, who we knew would support us whatever we did.

So much for the Coast Patrol.

The training of "Oversea" submarines was my constant concern. They of course took part in the Coast Patrol exercises, generally as a marauding enemy, but I was most anxious to get them into close touch with the fleet. I knew that the fleet, generally speaking, used to look upon submarines as local defence vessels whose officers and men, dressed like North Sea fishermen, were almost a service apart; they naturally hated the thought of colliding with a submarine, and were only too glad to keep out of their way. This attitude was changing in the principal fleet, however, thanks to our young officers, who, after a few years in submarines, had to do a year's service in a sea-going ship. They proved wonderful ambassadors. I took great pains to get them appointed to the best ships, where their technical knowledge and unbounded enthusiasm made them in a short time first-class big ship officers, particularly when placed in charge of turrets. I constantly received letters from captains, when an officer was due to return to the Submarine Service, thanking me for sending them so-and-so, regretting his departure, and asking me to send another like him. Our young ambassadors recruited ardent spirits like their own, and so we built up a magnificent *corps d'elite* of officers and men.

By a happy chance in 1912-14 the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet was Sir George Callaghan with whom I had taken part in the relief of Pekin. The two Vice-Admirals commanding the First and Second Battle Squadrons were Sir Stanley Colville and Sir George Warrender; both had commanded the battleship in China to which my destroyer *Fame* was attached. Sir George Warrender was in command of our base in the Pei-Ho river after the capture of the Taku Forts, and I was in constant touch with

him for many weeks. He and Sir George Callaghan were witnesses of an incident, which later involved me in one of the most exciting and critical half-hours of my life. Friendships formed under war conditions usually endure, and the warm friendship of these two Admirals and Admiral Colville, and the help they gave me in the training of the submarines was of infinite value. I frequently embarked as a guest in one of the flagships, and the course of the squadron was arranged to pass through areas occupied by submarines. The restrictions which had been imposed to minimise the risk of accident were gradually removed, as they had been in our own routine exercises, attacks were pressed in to a very close range, and often the ship was struck by a torpedo which she could not have avoided, fired by a submarine which had not given a sign of her presence.

The battle fleet became much interested and impressed. Having proved that submarines' torpedoes ran straight, and that, given the opportunity, they could be relied upon to deliver a large percentage of successful attacks, it seemed to me of the greatest importance for the "poacher to turn gamekeeper" and help the fleet to defeat enemy submarines. *We* knew our limitations and difficulties, but I found it as hard to make the converted enthusiast realise a submarine's limitations, as to make an unconverted sceptic appreciate their powers, or either to draw the happy medium.

Once a submarine has dived, her low submerged speed and limited vision are a tremendous handicap, and her limited range of action submerged, make her very dependent on opportunity; hence it is important to force, with light screening vessels, every submarine within reach of a fleet, to dive before the fleet appears, and keep them down until the fleet has passed the danger area. If a submarine is seen to dive, her danger zone can be plotted on the chart by a circle, with her full submerged speed as radius, and the course of the fleet, given sea room, can then be altered to avoid the danger zone of the submarine. The alteration may of course, take it into the danger zone of another submarine which has not been located; the importance therefore of an extended screen well ahead of the fleet is evident. Even if it does not succeed in detecting a submarine before she dives, it will impose a considerable handicap on her ability to reach a position from which she can attack.

The first submarine exercise against a fleet, protected by a destroyer screen, was carried out in September, 1912, when Sir Stanley Colville undertook to bring the First Battle Squadron and a destroyer flotilla, through an area occupied by the Dover Submarine Flotilla, to the west of Portland Bill, well clear of the Channel shipping. I embarked in the submarine of the senior officer of a group of three "C" class submarines. We managed to dive unseen by the screen and passed well under it. In the long interval during which we waited for the battle fleet, submerged well beneath the keels of any ships, the Captain gave me an excellent lunch which included hot roast partridge. In those days we had no sound receiving or signalling apparatus; nevertheless one could distinctly hear the beat of a vessel's propeller, sometimes at a considerable distance, except from right ahead, when her hull seemed to screen the sound. The chief risk a submarine ran, therefore, was rising inadvertently ahead of a vessel too close to avoid collision.

When we rose to periscope depth, the battle fleet was in sight in a favourable position and our attack was successfully pressed home to close range unseen. A quarter of an hour later, when we were lying on the surface gloating over the flattened noses of our torpedoes, floating in the wake of the disappearing battle fleet, a destroyer closed, with a message from the Admiral inviting me to stay with him, to witness the attack of the "Oversea" flotilla off the Scilly Islands next morning. An hour later I found myself on board the *Collingwood* with no kit, and after witnessing an excellent attack I was carried off to Berehaven, in the south-west of Ireland, whence I returned some days later in borrowed clothes, via Cork and Holyhead.

That was the beginning of a series of progressive trials towards devising the best screen for a fleet, and the best tactics for it to carry out, in the face of the submarine menace, which was very real if disregarded.

As can be imagined, one's anxieties during these exercises were heavy, but the help and sympathy of the First Lord, the admirals I have mentioned, the personnel of the surface vessels of the Patrol Flotillas, and the ships of the Home Fleet with which we exercised, will always be a pleasant memory. The annual naval manœuvres, which lasted five or six days, were a

very different matter. Of these I have some nightmare memories, particularly when submarines were operating in shoal water, with insufficient depth below the keel of a heavy ship to dive under her. A large number of officers were engaged in these manœuvres who possessed no submarine experience and had very vague ideas of submarines and their methods of attack and evading attack, judging by the claims made against submarines, and the manner in which the claims of the latter were often ignored and overruled. Unfortunately we were not permitted to fire torpedoes, otherwise some misconceptions might have been removed.

It was very galling for the submarines, filled with enthusiasm and determined to face any risk to prove their worth, to be told when they rose to claim a successful attack, that they were out of action. For instance, in the hazy weather which often prevailed in the North Sea, a submarine might be caught on the surface and destroyed before she could dive; on the other hand she might be sighted for a few moments only before she dived. Light cruisers and destroyers would rush at her at full speed, and after firing a few shots at her or her periscope, would decide that she was out of action. Thanks to the training they had undergone in the last year or so, the submarines would generally submerge very rapidly, dive deep, and escape, under their assailants if necessary, and although diving under battleships was not encouraged, even that had to be resorted to occasionally to avoid being rammed. When the submarine eventually rose to periscope depth she would find her enemy, as often as not, still in the neighbourhood; she would then take full advantage of the opportunity given her, and deliver an unseen and successful attack, only to be told to hoist the "out of action" flag and proceed into harbour.

Such incidents continually occurred.

In the 1913 manœuvres an admiral was embarked in a cruiser as chief umpire with a rear-admiral as chief of staff; neither had any submarine experience, the latter was an incurable sceptic, consequently the decision of the senior officer of the vessels engaged was generally confirmed, and the submarine was disqualified from taking further part in the manœuvres, thus losing perhaps three or four days' valuable experience.

In these manœuvres I witnessed a rush, such as I have described, on the submarines defending the Humber. The whole operation bore no sort of relation to actual war. Destroyers which claimed to have put all the submarines out of action were followed by a battleship and transports, crowded with troops who were disembarked at Immingham. This gave the submarines wonderful opportunities, of which they could not have failed to take full advantage in war. Yet the chief umpire, on the strength of the attackers' claim, put eight submarines out of action! Some obviously faulty decisions were eventually reconsidered later at the umpires' office at the Admiralty, after rather fiery protests on my part, but that did not make up to the submarines for their lost opportunities.

I must confess I was very incensed at the treatment my submarines had received at the hands of some of their assailants and the umpires, though some of the former were generous and fair. I commented hotly on this in my official report, and submitted that "the time has arrived to face the question, if we are to prepare ourselves to deal with the submarines of an enemy. I am convinced that there will be a very rude awakening if tactics which were common during the recent manœuvres are repeated in actual warfare."

However, the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet wrote that "he was much impressed with the achievements of the submarines during the manœuvres, and greatly appreciated the manner in which the 'D' and 'E' boats were handled." He went on to say that, in spite of a double screen of destroyers ahead of the fleet, which was zig-zagging at high speed, and the fact that the surface of the sea was as smooth as glass, *D*8 delivered a successful attack. On another occasion, he said, *E*5 had attacked *Collingwood* successfully when she was steaming 19½ knots. He asked for information as to what effect the anti-submarine measures he had carried out had had on the submarines. That was very satisfactory.

I frequently stayed with Sir George Callaghan during the two years he was Commander-in-Chief, and during the last year he detailed Commander Roger Backhouse of his Staff to work with me in the preparation of "screening" and "look out" diagrams which, in the opinion of submarine officers, would hamper their attacks most effectively.

The screening dispositions were tried out by the "Oversea" Flotilla on the *Maidstone* and her tenders, screened by destroyers of the Coast Patrol Flotillas, and eventually on battleships of the Home Fleet screened by their flotillas. In the course of these trials, the submarine personnel learned to dive from the surface very rapidly, and to considerable depths very speedily, and to face bravely and confidently the unpleasant music of propellers overhead. On the other hand, the personnel of the fleet learned, or should have learned, that if they did not take precautions they ran great risks; but that if they proceeded at high speed, zig-zagging with well-placed destroyer screens, submarine attack could only be delivered with great difficulty, attended by tremendous risk to the submarine. The danger of a long-range torpedo fired at the fleet from a distance of three or four miles was always present, but well-extended "look-outs" minimised the risk considerably; besides there was much more water than ship in the target presented by a fleet in cruising disposition.

In the autumn of 1913 I asked the Commander-in-Chief to allow me to operate four submarines of the "Oversea" flotilla in conjunction with one of the fleets, in an exercise between opposing battle fleets. He consented and placed the *Swift*, a fast destroyer leader, at my disposal. The *Swift* led the four submarines, stationed in line abreast a mile apart, in rear of our battle fleet's cruiser screen. The latter kept me well informed of the enemy's movements, and I was able to direct the submarines to dive in a position favourable for one or two to attack the enemy during deployment, unseen and unsuspected. Two of the submarines delivered entirely successful attacks; they were only allowed to fire one torpedo each out of the six they carried. Curiously enough, both hit the same battleship almost simultaneously from opposite sides.

The speed of our fleet, of course, had to be limited during the long approach, to that of the submarines, about 14 knots. It was a somewhat primitive effort, but in the last two years of the war our "K" class "diving destroyers" were operated on similar lines.

I had some very bad moments during that exercise, watching heavy ships, cruisers and destroyers manœuvring in all directions over the submarines, and for some hours I was in mortal fear

that one of the submarines had come to grief; however, she rose at last and all was well.

For a couple of years before the war an Admiralty Committee had been studying offensive measures against submarines. In May, 1914, the Committee forwarded a report giving its views about submarine warfare generally, based on information supplied by us. It recommended that an explosive sweep should be towed by the vessels screening the battle fleet, but it made it clear that, in the opinion of the Committee:

(*a*) No effective means of direct attack on a submerged submarine has yet been produced;

(*b*) The best means of attacking a hostile submarine lying on the surface is for a submarine to stalk and torpedo her;

(*c*) The development of the submarine has necessitated the revival of defensive mining.

With reference to (*a*) it is an amazing fact that such an obvious anti-submarine weapon as the depth charge, which was used with such deadly effect in the later stages of the war, had not been thought of by the enemy, ourselves or our Allies.

In commenting officially on the Committee's report, I said that the opinions stated at (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) were concurred in. I remarked that there were so many considerations which were not taken into account by "theorists" who "believed in submarines."

In a memorandum, for instance, which was given by Lord Fisher to the First Lord in December, 1913, submarines were endowed with most wonderful powers of offence in blockade, against vessels on the high seas, and against those attempting to raid our coasts, and at the same time immunity from attack was practically claimed for them.

Such optimism was not shared by those who had worked in and with submarines during the last three years. They were not inclined to exaggerate their powers, and were quite alive to their limitations, and to the great risks they would run of being caught on the surface at night, in a half light, or in hazy weather, and rammed or destroyed by gunfire before they could

dive.* Casualties in this connection were bound to be heavy in time of war, particularly among those carrying out the blockade of an enemy's port. Submarines on this service would also be very liable to the risks mentioned at (*b*).†

Submarine officers claimed that, given opportunities and a favourable position, they were able to deliver a very high percentage of successful attacks, with little more risk than was run in our daily peace exercises, but they fully realised that opportunities were likely to be few and, until we had a great many more submarines in commission, the submarine menace to an enemy would be more moral than real, particularly on the high seas or at a distance from a base. The moral effect of submarines would certainly be great, for one could never feel secure from attack, but numbers were essential if offensive operations were to be maintained.

Lord Fisher's memorandum, however, correctly visualised one aspect of submarine warfare which we all discarded as impossible and unthinkable, the indiscriminate sinking by the Germans of British and foreign merchantmen, without any regard to the safety of their crews.

I cannot pass without mention of my curious relations with that great man, since these had an extraordinary influence on my career both before and during the war, his interventions in my affairs being to my ultimate advantage on each occasion.

Sir John Fisher left the Admiralty and was made a peer in January, 1910, and I did not come across him again until July, 1914, when the First Lord, with whom he was staying in the Admiralty yacht *Enchantress* at Portsmouth, sent him over to Fort Blockhouse, and told me to show him our latest submarine and the foreign periscopes we had recently acquired. I did not anticipate a very pleasant visit, as I knew from the criticisms he had made to the First Lord, which were passed on to me, that he disapproved of what I had been doing. He arrived in a very aggressive mood, showed no interest in the submarine I took him to, but looking at me very sourly asked me why we had not built more submarines. I said I wished we had, and that acting on a

* The first submarine the Germans lost was *U*15, on 9th August, 1914, caught on the surface at dawn and rammed by the *Birmingham*.

† The first submarine we lost was *E*3, on 18th October, 1914, stalked and torpedoed by an enemy's submarine, when on blockade duty in the Heligoland Bight.

saying which I was told he frequently quoted—" Reiteration is the " ? ? ? (I forget how it goes on—it was one of Fisher's slogans), I remarked on almost every paper that I minuted at the Admiralty, and I dealt with every kind of question connected with submarines, strategy, tactics, training, personnel and *matériel* that " *the Germans had more 'Oversea' submarines built, building and projected than we had.*" He said, " Well, why have we not built more ? " I replied that if he really wanted my opinion, I could only say the responsibility was his ; his policy of doing away with all defensive minefields, and undertaking to replace them with submarines, had resulted in our producing a number of coast defence vessels, of poor sea-going qualities, which could not operate on the German coast, or at any distance from our own ; vessels, moreover, which in my opinion could never take the place of defensive minefields in war.

He was naturally very angry, and said he did not propose to enter into an argument with me about his policy, or the relative value of minefields and submarines ; besides, that was no answer to his question, " Why had we not built more submarines ? " I said I considered he was responsible for that also ; he had given Vickers and their periscope makers an absolute monopoly, all Vickers resources for some years had been devoted to building small submarines, which in my opinion would be of little value to us in war. Vickers and Chatham Dockyard, the only government establishment equipped to build submarines, had been given orders for " Oversea " submarines to their full building capacity, but they had entirely failed to keep pace with our requirements, with the result that we had fallen behind Germany, who had avoided our mistake and built nothing but " Oversea " submarines for some years. I said I had made every possible effort to get the monopoly broken, in order to increase the field of production, but could get no definite action taken until Churchill came. Then we had to wait two years before we could build elsewhere to any but foreign design. His policy had, in fact, had disastrous effects on our capacity to build. Lord Fisher said, with scathing emphasis, " Very interesting ! " turned his back on me, and went away without looking at anything or speaking another word.

I felt ashamed of myself afterwards for being so brutally frank to a very distinguished flag officer, to whom the Navy owed so much, and the Submarine Service its birth, but he had been so scathing and unfriendly that I could not resist giving him the answers to his criticisms. That was my hour. His came four months later.

On 15th July, 1914, three weeks before the declaration of war, Sir George Callaghan, the Commander-in-Chief, issued a memorandum to the Home Fleet entitled " Remarks on submarine defence generally and on the employment of destroyers for screening and look out duties." It embodied the fruits of our joint labours ; except that it kept an open mind as to the towing of explosive sweeps by screening destroyers, which we thought impracticable—as it proved—and the absence of any suggestion in the nature of a depth charge. I would not alter, and could add little to, the memorandum, in the light of our war experience.

CHAPTER III

THE GATHERING CLOUDS

Test Mobilisation; Review at Spithead; War Clouds; War Stations; Declaration of War.

THE normal length of naval appointments was two years, and in 1912 I began to think about going to a capital ship in the fleet. It is the duty of the Naval Secretary, at that time Rear-Admiral David Beatty, to submit names for all commands to the First Lord, and when I learnt that he was to succeed to the command of the Battle Cruiser Squadron early in 1913, I asked to be considered for the command of a battle cruiser. I had seen Beatty in the China War in 1900, under conditions which made me "his man" for the rest of my life; I knew that the battle cruisers under his command would be the spearhead of the Navy in time of war, and I was most anxious to command a ship under his flag. He said he would be glad to have me, and at first it was arranged that I should go to the *Queen Mary*, which was completing and due to commission in the summer of 1913. However, this fell through as I was appointed Commodore in charge of the Submarine Service in October, 1912, and told that I could not be spared for another year or so. It was then decided that I should have the *Tiger*, which should have been ready for service early in 1914. Owing to labour troubles and other causes, she was delayed for some months and my appointment was postponed until September, 1914, when she was due to carry out her trials.

These delays altered the whole course of my career, for when the war broke out there could be no question of my leaving the Submarine Service, until it had settled down under war conditions, and in the meantime another captain was appointed to the *Tiger*.

In October, 1913, it was decided, mainly in the interests of economy, not to have the usual naval manœuvres in 1914, substituting in their place a test mobilisation of the Third Fleet;

the cost of the latter being well covered by the economies which would be effected in fuel consumption.

This entailed the calling up of the reserves, some 20,000 officers and men, and the arrangements for their reception, kitting up, and drafting of such numbers, occupied the naval depots for some time beforehand. The ships of the Third Fleet, which were swinging round their buoys on the Mother Bank and elsewhere, with very small maintenance crews on board, were in the ordinary course by no means ready for service, and the Dockyards were engaged for some months in thoroughly overhauling and refitting them, with the result that when orders were issued for the test mobilisation on 10th July, and the fleets assembled at Spithead between the 13th and 17th July, the whole great pre-War Navy was practically on a war footing, manned and in all respects ready for service.

This was an amazing stroke of good fortune—or perhaps it was conscious or sub-conscious prevision on the part of the First Lord, who was entirely responsible for initiating this unprecedented innovation.

The King was to have joined the fleet on the 17th, but at the last moment his departure from London was postponed on account of the Irish situation, which was very serious. However, he arrived on the 18th, accompanied by Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, in time for a dinner party on board the *Victoria and Albert*, to which I was invited. I remember remarking that the King and Mr. Asquith were in very good spirits and that an air of optimism prevailed, which surprised me, as the Irish question seemed to have arrived at an absolute deadlock, but this was explained next day by the publication of His Majesty's appeal to all parties to confer at Buckingham Palace. On the 19th I dined on board the *Enchantress* with the First Lord and after dinner went on with Sir George Callaghan to the *Iron Duke* where I remained as his guest until the 25th July.

On the 20th the whole fleet sailed in single line ahead, passing close to the *Victoria and Albert* anchored off the Nab. His Majesty took the salute from each ship as she passed, after which he signalled his approval concluding with the words, "I am proud of my Navy." I wrote a pencil note opposite this record less than a month later "I hope he will be able to say the same at the end of the war."

I spent the next few days on the bridge of the *Iron Duke* and was much impressed by Sir George's placid coolness and imperturbability, under conditions which would have tried a good many men, particularly during a tactical exercise on the 23rd July, when almost every ship in the Navy was engaged in thick weather.

After this exercise the ships of the Third Fleet dispersed to Home ports, and on the 25th July a general demobilisation took place, the reservists being disbanded and the nucleus crews sent on leave by watches. The First and Second Fleets assembled at Portland and Weymouth Bay, where all the flag officers holding commands in home waters and those at the Admiralty, were ordered to attend on board the *Iron Duke* on the 24th July, for a conference which was to be presided over by the First Lord "at which a variety of subjects dealing with naval war will be discussed," to quote the official summons. The agenda included almost every possible question connected with the conduct of naval war, some of which were to be answered in the course of a few weeks, others as the war developed, and some remained unsolved to the end. That agenda will be of intense interest to students of naval history in years to come, if it ever emerges from the secret archives of the Admiralty. In addition to the four Sea Lords there were to be 32 admirals and five commodores at the conference. On the 24th it was postponed by the First Lord until the next day owing to the Irish trouble, the Buckingham Palace meeting from which so much had been hoped having broken down. On Saturday, 25th July, the conference at Weymouth was indefinitely postponed, we were given no reason, but from that moment events marched apace.

I left the *Iron Duke* that day to spend a week-end at home at Fareham, with no thought of the European situation, but after reading the Sunday papers, I had a most definite foreboding that war was upon us.

My thoughts turned to my naval attaché days when I made friends with many foreigners, with some of whom I had kept in touch. I was in Rome and Vienna when the Algeciras Conference was sitting and one heard the German point of view pretty freely expressed. I recalled a remark made to me at the time of the Agadir incident by an Austrian admiral with German connections, nevertheless a warm friend of England—"You

simply cannot treat us Teutons like this, we must and will have a place in the sun." I knew from my Austrian friends how bitterly they resented our attitude when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. It seemed to me that the Teutons felt that they were ready, that we were fully occupied with our Irish troubles, and that the moment was opportune to put their claims to the test.

The crews of the submarine flotillas were due to go on leave by watches on the following day. I gave orders that leave was not to commence until further notice, and went up to London by an early train on Monday to see the Chief of the War Staff, who gave me a message from the First Sea Lord, directing me to get the submarines ready for service directly the first watch returned from leave, the leave of the second watch to be postponed. Similar orders were issued to all destroyer flotillas. Prince Louis was much relieved when I told him that I had already stopped all leave, the submarines were fully manned and could proceed to their war stations at once. I then urged that the "Oversea" flotillas should be moved into the North Sea, and the Dover Patrol flotilla to its station, but could get no decision up to the time I left London that evening.

When I reached home, I found my wife and our Goodwood party were starting for a dance in a country house a few miles away. To my relief, orders had arrived for the submarines to proceed to their stations, and when all arrangements had been made, I went to the dance about 11 p.m. feeling convinced that we were going to war, or at least if we did not, we would be *perfide Albion* indeed. Several officers were recalled from the dance to rejoin their units; one after another, submarine officers came up to my wife, to say good-bye and be wished God-speed. One has since heard the dance described as a miniature of the Duchess of Richmond's ball before Waterloo. There was a curious tense atmosphere about that Goodwood party of soldiers, sailors and their womenfolk, which is difficult to put into words, but of course no one had the remotest idea of the magnitude of the upheaval into which the world was heading. Tyrwhitt, who was there, received a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief ordering him to go to Portland as soon as possible. The next day he returned through Fareham, on his way to Portsmouth, having telegraphed to ask me to meet

him, in order that he might hand me a secret packet from Sir George Callaghan, containing the Eighth Flotilla's war orders. That evening Sir George telegraphed me to meet him at the Admiralty the following morning, Wednesday, 29th July. I did not see my home again until I returned from the Eastern Mediterranean in June, 1916, except for a few hours in October, 1914, and a few days in November, 1915.

I spent some time with Sir George Callaghan, under whose orders the Eighth Flotilla ("Oversea" submarines) was to operate in the event of war. Later in the day I learnt, much to my annoyance, that owing to some misunderstanding the Eighth Flotilla had been ordered to the Humber, instead of its proper war station at Harwich. The former was, in my opinion, thoroughly unsuitable for its base, and I asked permission to move it at once. I was told that I could, subject to the Commander-in-Chief's approval; I did not succeed in getting into touch with him until about 10 p.m., when he gave me a free hand to do what I wished. I just had time to catch the last train to Grimsby that night and arrived there at 5 a.m., then went on by workmen's train to Immingham, where I found the *Maidstone*, *Adamant* and ten "D" and "E" class submarines. I hoisted my broad pennant in the *Maidstone* and took the whole flotilla to Harwich, where we arrived safely on the 31st July, much to my relief. The *Maidstone* carried spare torpedoes and parts of machinery for all the "Oversea" submarines and was invaluable as a base for the Eighth Flotilla. Her loss would have been a very serious matter, and I did not wish to risk her at sea after the outbreak of war; besides, however remote, one could not disregard the possibility of a stroke before the declaration of war, such as the Japanese attack on the Russian fleet off Port Arthur.

After seeing the *Maidstone* berthed and placed in telephonic communication with the Admiralty, I went there to learn the latest developments, and to beg for two fast destroyers to be placed under my command. I returned that evening to the *Maidstone* and she became my home and headquarters for the next six months.

I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief that evening to give him the dispositions I proposed for the "Oversea" submarines on the outbreak of war: Two submarines to reconnoitre in the

Heligoland Bight, four to take up positions to the southward of the destroyer force which was to sweep the southern part of the North Sea, in order to report any movement of enemy ships from the Heligoland Bight to the southward, and the remaining four in reserve at Harwich. I informed him that directly Rear-Admiral Campbell arrived at Chatham, I would confer with him as to future movements. The latter had been appointed to command the Seventh Cruiser Squadron, consisting of four old armoured cruisers of the "Bacchante" class, which would be the only armoured vessels in the southern area of the North Sea. Learning on Sunday evening, 2nd August, that Admiral Campbell had arrived at Chatham, I went up to London to see the Chief of the War Staff, Vice-Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee, and early the following morning went down to Chatham. I met Admiral Campbell and his four captains on board the *Cressy*, and was very glad to find my friend Algy Boyle was captain of the flagship *Bacchante* and Chief Staff Officer to the Admiral. The ships' companies were mainly pensioners, fleet reservists and men of the Royal Naval Reserve; the officers included a number of R.N.R. and very youthful-looking cadets from the Royal Naval College.

I must confess I did not feel particularly happy about such an obsolete squadron with untrained crews, unsupported by modern ships, in close proximity to the Heligoland Bight, and suggested that I should attach a submarine to each cruiser, the submarine to be towed during daylight when weather permitted, to prolong the effective life of the engines, which at that date were not too reliable, and in any case required refitting after a definite amount of steaming. My object was to enable the cruisers to drop the submarines, to form a screen behind which they could retire, if they encountered a superior force. The Admiral fully approved of this proposal. On my way back to Harwich, I went to the Admiralty and saw the First Sea Lord and the Chief of the War Staff, and told them of the arrangements we had made, and learnt that the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*, two very fast destroyers which had been acting as tenders to the *Vernon*, had been placed under my orders and were on their way to join me. I then left for Harwich, taking some instructions for Tyrwhitt about his destroyer sweep.

Sir Edward Grey was to make a statement in the House of Commons that afternoon, and from the stop press in the latest

evening papers which reached us at Harwich that night—to quote from my diary:

> "It looked as if we were going to leave France in the lurch, and I felt horribly distressed. Woke up in the morning feeling as if something dreadful had happened, and remembered the depression of the night before. However, when I read Sir Edward Grey's speech in the morning paper, all was well."

On the 4th August, I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief to report the arrangements made to support the vessels of the Seventh Cruiser Squadron and told him that whenever possible I would attach a submarine to the *Amethyst*, Commodore Tyrwhitt's flagship. The latter was very inferior to the enemy's light cruisers in speed and armament, a fact which caused me considerable concern, though it did not seem to perturb Tyrwhitt. I mentioned that I had been given very definite orders not to expose myself to any risks until all arrangements had been satisfactorily completed, and said that after satisfying myself as to this, I would return to Harwich with one of the destroyers, keeping her in readiness to lead the reserve of submarines to any point at which they might be required.

The *Lurcher* as a *Vernon* tender was commanded by a junior lieutenant, Harold Campbell, and when I learnt he was to be relieved by a more senior officer, I asked that Commander Wilfred Tomkinson might be given the command, Lieutenant Campbell remaining as first lieutenant. Commander Tomkinson had been first lieutenant of my destroyer *Fame* in the China War and had been in some pretty tight places with me; for the past three years he had been in command of submarine flotillas under my orders, and had been about to go to the *Tiger* with me as commander.

The *Lurcher* flew my broad pennant whenever I went to sea, until I left the Submarine Service.

On the evening of the 4th August I received the signal that an ultimatum had been given to Germany which expired at midnight. I assembled all the officers and men of the submarines and informed them we would be at war in a couple of hours, told them briefly the cause of the war, and said I felt that all they had done in the way of fitting themselves for service by taking war risks during the past three years, would now be rewarded. They gave a tremendous cheer.

Before going to sea I wrote to the Chief of the War Staff to ask that, in the event of my death, Captain Addison might remain at the Admiralty in charge of submarine *matériel*, and Captain Waistell of the *Maidstone* be given the direction of all "Oversea" submarines. I said I had discussed every possible contingency with him and was convinced that their direction could not be in better hands. The First Lord himself replied, "The arrangements you recommend will be carried out. All good wishes."

PART II

WAR IN THE NARROW SEAS

CHAPTER IV

OUTBREAK OF WAR

Submarine reconnaissance in Heligoland Bight; Sinking of German minelayer off Harwich; Loss of *Amphion*; Passage of Expeditionary Force; Submarines in Heligoland Bight; Action of 28th August.

On the outbreak of war I happened to be the Senior Naval Officer at Harwich, but there were three practically independent commands there. These were:

H.M.S. *Ganges* and the Shotley Training Establishment for boys, were under the command of Captain Cuthbert Cayley, and he administered the port of Harwich. It would be quite impossible to exaggerate the help he and his command gave the fighting forces which used Harwich as a base.

The First and Third Destroyer Flotillas; 40 vessels with their attached light cruisers *Fearless* and *Amphion*, were under the command of Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt, flying his broad pennant in the light cruiser *Amethyst*.

The Eighth Flotilla of "Oversea" submarines at the moment consisted of ten "D" and "E" class with their depot ships the *Maidstone* and *Adamant*, under the command of Captain A. Waistell; these and the attached destroyers *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* were operated under my directions.

During the previous year Tyrwhitt's command had exercised constantly with the submarines of the Eighth Flotilla. When we were working together in May, 1914, destroyer officers, including the Commodore, embarked in submarines, and Tyrwhitt had actually fired a torpedo from *E4* which struck the ship she was engaging. The good comradeship of our respective commands was thus assured—apart from the fact that Tyrwhitt and I were warm friends and shared an intense desire to engage the enemy.

By the time the ultimatum expired all ships were cleared for action, and in all respects ready for war, and at 3 a.m. on

5th August the whole of Tyrwhitt's force sailed to carry out a sweep towards the Heligoland Bight. *E*6 (Lieut.-Commander Talbot) and *E*8 (Lieut.-Commander Goodhart) followed in their wake, in tow of the *Amethyst* and *Ariel*, which slipped them off Terschelling that evening, whence they proceeded into the Bight independently to seek the enemy. Four other submarines followed to take up a patrol line between the Galloper and Hinder Shoals, and later I brought up the rear in the *Lurcher*. It was all very inspiring, and the *Ganges* and the pier and foreshore of Shotley, despite the early hour, were crowded with boys who cheered themselves hoarse as each ship passed.

Admiral Campbell, who was under way in the *Bacchante*, with the *Aboukir* and *Euryalus* in company, asked me to meet him off the Kentish Knock, and I went on board to make the final arrangements for his submarine escort. The weather was wet and beastly, the *Bacchante* was incredibly dirty, having left the dockyard immediately after taking in stores, ammunition and coal, and I found the atmosphere rather depressing. Algy Boyle was quite untouched by his surroundings, and when I next went on board the *Bacchante* she had "found herself." While I was on board, a wireless message was received which was reported as, "Third Flotilla engaging scouting cruisers." As support might be required, I returned to the *Lurcher* and steamed full speed to the northward, in order to try and lay the submarines on to the enemy. It was, however, a false alarm due to a coding error. The vessel engaged was the *Königin Louise*, which was sunk by the *Amphion* and some of her flotilla, after she had laid a number of mines. It turned out afterwards that she intended to pass as a Hook of Holland-Harwich packet and lay mines off Harwich, but, on sighting the destroyers, had turned to the N.E. and then north, laying her mines as fast as possible in the open sea, nowhere near our territorial waters.

When the *Lurcher* returned to Harwich, the *Lance*, which had fired the first British shot in the war, was landing 22 German wounded; several had bullet wounds which, they declared, were inflicted by their own officers.

I heard on the 5th August that Sir George Callaghan had been superseded by Sir John Jellicoe on the eve of the declaration

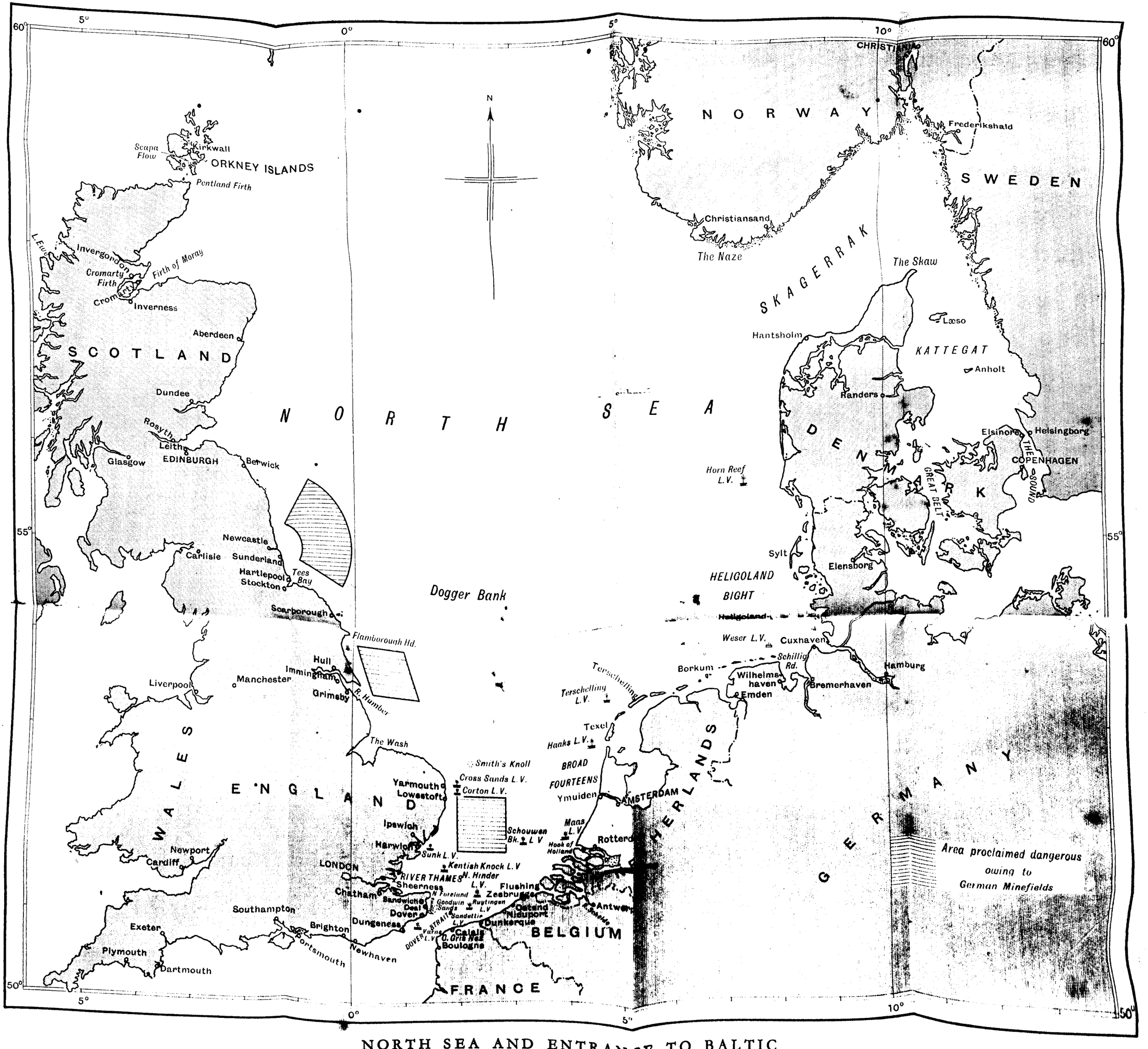
of war. I felt deeply for Sir George in the anguish he must have felt at giving up his command at such a moment. I had been so closely associated with him during the last two years, and knew that he, perhaps above all other flag officers, appreciated the powers and limitations of submarines, and the fact that they were bound to play an important part in the great struggle before us.

The Home Fleet, commanded, captained, staffed and officered as it was during 1913 and up to the outbreak of war can have had little to learn about the tactics of submarine attack, and defence against submarines, but the Navy as a whole was still very ignorant about submarine powers and limitations, and the new Command had to learn its lesson in the hard school of war.

*D*1 had operated successfully for seven days at a distance of over 500 miles from her base in 1910; four years later German submarines were not given credit for similar enterprise, and the *Monarch*, a Dreadnought battleship of the Grand Fleet, narrowly escaped being torpedoed while she was towing a target for her consort within 500 miles of Heligoland on the 8th August, 1914. ("The Grand Fleet, 1914-16," by Admiral Viscount Jellicoe, page 93.)

On the morning of the 6th August the German Ambassador and his staff arrived by train and embarked for the Hook of Holland in the G.E.R. packet *St. Petersburg*. I asked the Marine Superintendent to instruct the Captain to manœuvre his ship as if he were passing through intricate channels in a minefield. I was told later that he played his part very realistically and greatly intrigued the German Naval Attaché.

During the night of 5th–6th the *Amphion* reported that she was returning at about 9 a.m. with her flotilla and about 20 prisoners of war. But, about an hour after she was due, a signal was received from Captain Fox of the *Amphion* that he was in the *Llewellyn* and had important news to communicate; on this we could put only one interpretation, which was confirmed when the War Signal Station reported that the flotilla was in sight without the *Amphion*. Shortly afterwards it was reported that the destroyers had turned and were apparently engaging



NORTH SEA AND ENTRANCE TO BALTIC

an enemy. It appeared that the *St. Petersburg*, carrying the German Ambassador, looked exactly like the *Königin Louise*, and, as she was flying a large German flag, the flotilla rushed at her open mouthed, which was not surprising, as they had just seen their Captain, to whom they were devoted, lose his ship on a mine laid by the *Königin Louise*. Luckily they were stopped in time by Fox, but they seriously alarmed the Embassy party, and the German flag came down like a rocket stick. Cayley and I went on board the *Llewellyn* and were shocked to see poor Fox stagger out of the chart-house looking horribly burnt and disfigured.

The loss of the *Amphion* by a mine on the high sea, my visit to the Seventh Cruiser Squadron, and conversations with Tyrwhitt as to the extended disposition of his flotilla, owing to the immense area he had been ordered to sweep, all gave me "furiously to think," and I recorded my impressions in my diary of 6th August thus:

> "Four things strike one very forcibly:
>
> (1) Since the *Amphion* was mined on the high seas in the track of trade, it appears that the Germans are going to wage a very ruthless war, and the situation in the North Sea requires reviewing;
>
> (2) Our destroyer patrols are much too extended and cannot possibly occupy the area committed to them without great risk of being caught and attacked in detail;
>
> (3) The 'Bacchante' squadron badly wants a 'shake down' before it is fit to fight—and it ought to be removed from such an exposed position;
>
> (4) The only operation of any real military value the High Sea Fleet can carry out, which cannot be promptly dealt with by our Grand Fleet, is a raid in force into the Channel to annihilate the Channel Squadron and attack the Expeditionary Force. They may not do it, but it is our duty to ensure that if they try they will regret it."

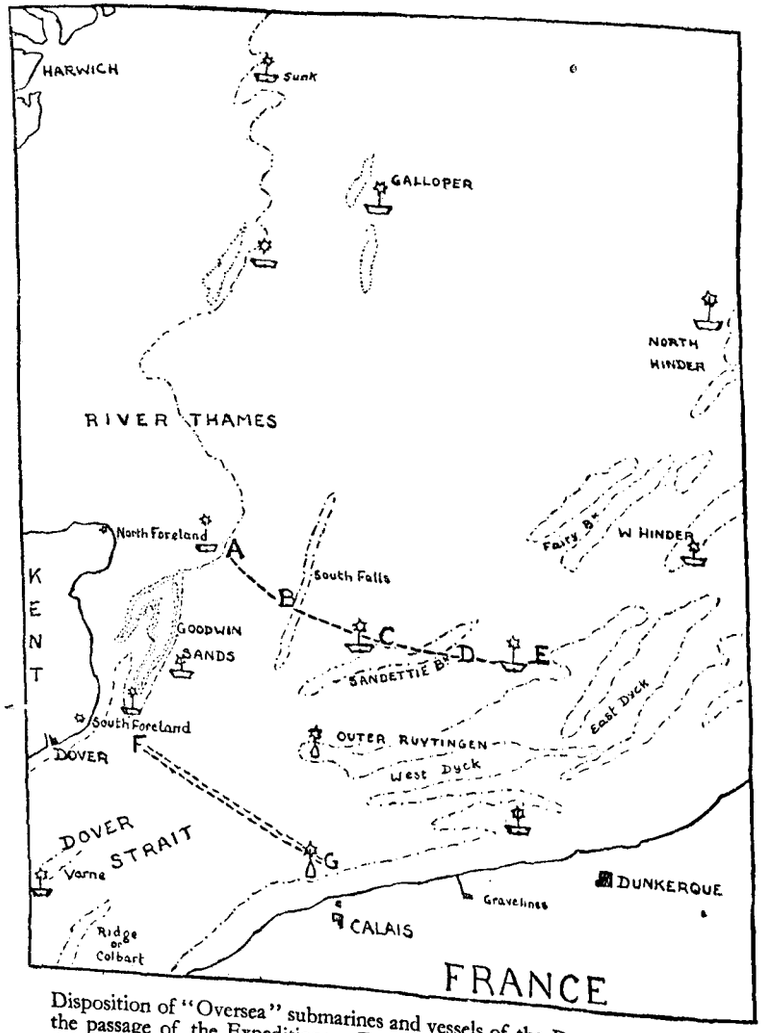
My office at the Admiralty was to prove of immense value during the next few months—as it was during the pre-War battles for the development of the submarine—but now that we were involved in a bloody ruthless war against the King's enemies, I did not feel bound to confine myself strictly to Service

channels when I found these blocked. So, on the evening of the 6th I went to London and was at the Admiralty from 10 p.m. till 1 a.m. I must say I was very well received by the Board, who, with the exception of the Third Sea Lord, were all present, and I put my views, which I knew were shared by Tyrwhitt, very forcibly, with the result, in regard to (2), the destroyer patrol was considerably restricted, though in my opinion it was still too extended, but this was perhaps necessary, in view of the vital importance of getting timely warning of the approach of a fleet, which might attack our Expeditionary Force. (3) The "Bacchante" Squadron was ordered to the Downs, later to the west of Dover. (4) I was given permission to concentrate all the "Oversea" submarines between the Galloper and West Hinder during the passage of the Expeditionary Force. The Admiralty did not consider that the High Sea Fleet would attack, as I suggested that they might, but agreed that it ought to be our first consideration. At the time it seemed to me incredible that the German Fleet could lie idle, at a moment when their army was suffering a check in Belgium, and British reinforcements were being poured into France. We know now that the German High Command was under the impression, as late as 21st August, that no considerable landing of British troops had taken place; apart from the fact that it did not regard the intervention of our Expeditionary Force as a very serious menace, and counted on annihilating it in the early stages of the war!

When I learnt that the transportation was commencing, I informed the Admiralty on the evening of the 8th that I was sailing in the *Lurcher*, and with the *Firedrake* and all available submarines, would remain between the Galloper and Hinder, until the transport of the Expeditionary Force was complete. By the 10th the flotilla was reinforced by three submarines, which had been refitting, and on the 11th *E*6 and *E*8 rejoined from the Heligoland Bight, which brought the patrol up to 13.

Finding the Galloper-Hinder line too extended, it being practically impossible to keep touch except in the clearest weather, I moved the flotilla to the westward, and disposed it in parallel lines in echelon, between the North Goodwin, Sandettie and Ruytingen Shoals, in such a manner that at least seven

would be practically certain of getting home their attacks, if an enemy tried to force a passage into the Channel.



Disposition of "Oversea" submarines and vessels of the Dover Patrol during the passage of the Expeditionary Force in August, 1914. A, B, C, D, E, thirteen "D" and "E" class submarines with *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* scouting to north-eastward. F——G, Dover Patrol, Light cruisers, destroyers and submarines.

On the 10th I was informed that the patrol might be required for a fortnight, but on the 14th I was ordered to the Admiralty,

so I landed at Dover, sending the *Lurcher* back to the patrol line.

At the Admiralty I was told that cruisers from the north, supported by the Grand Fleet, and Tyrwhitt's force from the south, supported by the Seventh Cruiser Squadron, would sweep towards the Bight on the 16th; so I suggested that four submarines should proceed at once to watch the mouths of the Elbe, Jade, Weser and Ems. This was approved, and I was directed to withdraw the Sandettie patrol on the 15th. I was told that as the Commander-in-Chief had found it difficult to keep in communication with the forces in the southern area of the North Sea, he had asked the Admiralty to take over their direction. In consequence, Rear-Admiral Christian had been appointed to take command of all forces in the "Narrow Seas," consisting of five armoured cruisers, with the light cruiser *Sapphire* attached, Tyrwhitt's command and mine. I learnt that he had already hoisted his flag in the *Euryalus*.

I reported to the Admiralty that *E*6 and *E*8 had been unable to achieve anything; they found the Heligoland Bight occupied by several hundred fishing vessels, Dutch, Danish and German. Some of the latter were fitted with wireless and appeared to be acting as look-outs and not fishing. One dogged *E*6 so persistently that she came to the surface and ordered her in International code to hoist her colours, which proved to be German. Then she ordered her to stop; the trawler obeyed but later followed *E*6 at a distance towards Heligoland. I proposed that the German trawlers should be swept up, as the submarines in the Heligoland Bight would not be able to do much until they had been dealt with.

The return of the old armoured cruisers into the Narrow Seas, *to support us*, was very disconcerting to Tyrwhitt and me. To us they were never anything but an anxiety, and I had hoped that my efforts on the 6th would result in their permanent removal.

On 15th August I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief to tell him of our proceedings since he had cast us off, and enclosed a copy of my correspondence with the Chief of Staff. I concluded: "I am very strongly of the opinion that the destroyers operating in the Heligoland Bight should have more formidable support than three or four 'Bacchantes' which, I understand, have not fired their guns for some years, and are manned mainly

by reserve men and Naval Reserve officers. I have submitted this opinion to the First Sea Lord, Chief of War Staff and Rear-Admiral Christian, and I know it is shared by the latter and Commodore Tyrwhitt." I continued to keep the Commander-in-Chief informed of all the submarines' proceedings as long as I remained in Home Waters.

On the 18th, *D2*, *D3*, *E5* and *E7* returned from the Heligoland Bight, having had a very exciting time. They were incessantly hunted by destroyers zig-zagging at high speed over them, and pursuing tactics which made it almost impossible for the submarines to deliver an attack, though several attempts were made. However, they brought back very valuable information as to the disposition and procedure of the enemy's destroyer patrols, and reported that they were not troubled by fishing vessels.

E5 and *E7*, returning together on the surface, sighted a cruiser near Smith's Knoll and, thinking she was British, narrowly escaped destruction by gunfire. Immediately after they dived, the cruiser withdrew at high speed out of their reach. She was evidently the *Rostock* which engaged the First Flotilla the same day, under circumstances to which I will refer later.

On receiving the submarines' reports, I informed the Admiralty that I would take the *Lurcher*, *Firedrake*, four destroyers which Tyrwhitt had put under my orders, and three submarines to carry the reconnaissance of the Heligoland Bight farther than had as yet been attempted. I told Admiral Christian of my intentions, and owing to a badly worded signal I found his force off Smith's Knoll, when I arrived there the next morning, instead of 20 to 30 miles to the southward, as I had hoped. He followed us towards Terschelling, and on that occasion, at any rate, the cruisers had destroyers in company, and would have had three very efficient submarines, behind which they could have retired had they encountered a strong enemy force; but the thought of that squadron of obsolete cruisers being fallen on by enemy battle cruisers or modern armoured cruisers was a nightmare to me. I felt so strongly that their presence was of no military value, and that their annihilation by gunfire would be too cheap a victory for the enemy; and a greater blow to our prestige even than their loss by submarine action.

On my return to Harwich I wrote, on 21st August, to the Director of Operations, to whom I always expressed myself very freely, and with whom I remained very good friends, in spite of many fiery passages. As my letter gives the views I held at the time, on the situation generally in the Southern Area of the North Sea during the early days of the war, I will quote from it:

> "I write to you because I have heard you talk about war in a way that appealed to me, and you expressed views which I hold very strongly.
>
> I am 41, old enough to talk on equal terms with anyone, for if one has not definite views and is not ready and fit for war at that age, one never will be.
>
> When I commanded a destroyer flotilla, I tried to train it to know that it could do anything in any weather—Sir Gerry Noel would tell you I succeeded. These last three years I have been trying to train the submarines for war, and war only. If they had not been exercised *under* destroyers whenever I could get destroyers, they would not have stood the bucketing they got off Heligoland. That they are ready for war I think is proved by the fact that when those four came back on Tuesday they got no sympathy—the others made it quite clear that they thought they had made a mess of it, and that they all ought to have done better—and they are spoiling to go back and try again.
>
> I am not rash and foolhardy. For instance, the theorists, knowing nothing about the actual conditions under which we work, light-heartedly wanted the submarines to keep a close blockade of the enemy's ports, and I strenuously objected, until I knew more about it. I do know now, and I have no hesitation in sending my selected people there periodically again and again.
>
> Having bucked about myself and my command, I will get to the point. I quite realise that the main thing to be considered by the Admiralty during the last two weeks has been the safe conduct of the Army, and as long as the Channel Squadron and the Expeditionary Force were open to attack, my one object was to place my whole command between them and the German High Sea Fleet. I did

not think anything else the latter could do really mattered. Nearly a week ago I was told that all risk of an attack on the Expeditionary Force had disappeared.

When are we going to make war and make the Germans realise that whenever they come out—destroyers, cruisers, battleships or all three—they will be fallen on and attacked?

I feel sick and sore. Owing to our scattered destroyer disposition, a light cruiser equal in offensive power to the *Fearless*, has put 16 destroyers and the *Fearless* to flight; however one glosses it over, those are the facts. It is true that at first she was thought to be the U.S.S. *Tennessee*, and then a German armoured cruiser, and was reported as such to the Captain (D) who was out of touch. But surely even a cruiser of the 'Roon' type ought to have been dogged, and would have been but for the fact that the flotilla was acting under restrictions, and on a patrol the front of which extended 30 miles, with their leader miles away out of touch. They were originally between the *Rostock* and her home, and she should have been rushed at open-mouthed by a concentrated flotilla directly she was identified.

Don't think I am blaming Blunt or his captains, whom I have seen a lot of; they are gallant fellows, ready for war. But it is not by such incidents we will get the right atmosphere—for ourselves, absolute confidence and a certain knowledge that 'When the enemy come out we will fall on them and smash them,' and, on the other side, 'When we go out those damned Englanders will fall on us and smash us.'

These are the views I have heard you express—for Heaven's sake preach them! Think of the tale the *Rostock* must have told on Tuesday night—doesn't it fill you with shame? Think of the tale two or three well-trained German cruisers may well go back and tell, if they fall in with those 'Bacchantes'! How can they be expected to shoot straight or have any confidence in themselves, when they know they are untrained and can't shoot, and may meet a highly-trained enemy? Why give the Germans the smallest chance of a cheap victory and an improved morale?

They will be ten times more difficult to smash when they do come out, if they are ever allowed to think they can meet us even on equal terms.

For Heaven's sake take those 'Bacchantes' away! How can the atmosphere there be the right one? I have been into it twice, feeling buoyant and confident, and come out of it feeling depressed and unhappy. Goodness knows this is no reflection on the gallant fellows in them! I don't say those cruisers will be attacked, but the Germans must know they are about, and if they send out a suitable force, God help them.

When I came back yesterday, I was cheered by getting the Commander-in-Chief's signal 0022 of 18th August. The sweep hardly seems to go far enough, because I know now from the submarines that it will probably find nothing; but at least it is a move in the right direction, and no doubt will be pressed further later on.

I really am very cautious. I don't want to risk a single cruiser, unnecessarily, and I quite realise that we have got to be in a position to meet the enemy when he comes out in force—but please let us commence by putting the fear of the British Navy into the Germans. It was thus our forbears won—not by trying to preserve *matériel* as their enemy did."

Then followed a rather lengthy reference to an intercepted signal, which made it clear that the submarines returning from the Bight might well get involved in the movements of the cruisers of the Grand Fleet and Cruiser Force "C."

"I have warned the cruisers, and I merely mention this as an example of the confusion which may arise due to the want of central control. Incidents such as that which occurred when *E*5 and *E*7 were fired on by a vessel which they took to be friendly should be impossible, but 'regrettable incidents' can hardly be avoided, unless there is one central control.

I ought to be in touch with the Commander-in-Chief, Grand Fleet, and in a position to arrange for submarines to co-operate when they can usefully do so, the flotilla

being based at Harwich under Captain Waistell, awaiting orders to proceed as they may be directed from Headquarters—not in this stagnant backwater.

It was a different matter when there was a possibility of the High Sea Fleet coming into the Channel, and the whole of my force was sitting open-mouthed off Sandettie, praying that it would do so; but the area has shifted and I ought to go with it, and act directly under the Commander-in-Chief.

What wouldn't I give for a Command consisting of a few light cruisers, destroyers and submarines, acting under the direct orders of the Commander-in-Chief, supported as necessary at a distance by cruisers.

The German destroyers are asking for it! For instance, one of our divisions of four destroyers could mop up the patrol off the Western Ems, located by D_2, without any risk.

We must prepare for 'The Day' by creating the correct atmosphere on both sides. If that is achieved, the loss of a few light craft would surely be a small price to pay."

I sent a copy of this letter to a great friend, the Captain of the Fleet of the Grand Fleet, who was also serving as such under Sir George Callaghan, when I was so often the latter's guest.

On 23rd August, E_4, E_9 and D_5 returned with much more information of great value. They were incessantly hunted by destroyers and made many attempts to torpedo their pursuers, which the latter's tactics and a flat calm sea defeated.

Leir, after recording the efforts of the enemy to destroy E_4, and his to torpedo them, laconically concluded: "After 24 hours under, breathing nearly twice as quick, otherwise no difficulty at all."

Horton in E_9 spent eight hours at one stretch trying to torpedo the destroyers which were hunting him.

Herbert in D_5 sighted a four-funnelled cruiser screened by three destroyers on either bow. In spite of a flat calm, he pressed his attack to within 600 yards and fired two torpedoes, apparently missing. The enemy was very alert, and shells fell round D_5's periscope within a few moments.

Herbert was absolutely miserable when he reported his failure to me, and told me I had better disrate him. He said bitterly that the only excuse he could offer was that the enemy was not flying the large red flag, which our target ships hoist when they are open to attack. We know now from German official records, the *Rostock* reported that, in spite of a flat calm and a destroyer screen, a British submarine attacked her unseen and fired two torpedoes which passed under her. It was some time before we discovered that the warheads of our torpedoes were 40 lbs. heavier than the practice heads with which we exercised. The result being that they would not pick up their set depth until they had run a considerable distance. Until this defect had been cured, our torpedoes ran under their target ships.

These three submarines and their four predecessors provided information from which we were able to form a clear picture of the German dispositions for patrolling the Bight, both night and day, and approximately the time the day and night patrols relieved one another.

With this information I felt we could organise an enterprise to cut off the night patrols on their way home, the day patrols on their way out, and generally smash up the look-out organisation of the Heligoland Bight. Incidentally, the enemy's heavy vessels would be certain to come out to drive off our raiding force, and thus provide more satisfactory targets for our submarines than destroyers zig-zagging about at high speed.

In forwarding these submarine reports to the Chief of the War Staff on 23rd August, I was able to follow up my private letter of the 21st to the Director of Operations, with a definite proposal for action, based on our reconnaissances of the past week, thus:

"A very large number of destroyers are employed in the daytime north and south of Heligoland, apparently with the object of preventing minelaying and of harassing submarines.

They proceed at high speed, and apparently on some prearranged system well calculated to foil submarine attack. In this they have been greatly assisted by the glassy calm which has prevailed, and which makes an unseen attack practically impossible, even with the briefest exposure of the periscope.

Our most skilful submarine captains are strongly of the opinion that it is merely a matter of time and luck. If the destroyer sweep happens to come near in the middle of a straight run, an attack with some prospect of success is possible, but it is hopeless to follow a destroyer while so employed.

The tactics of the destroyers make it necessary for submarines acting so close to the enemy's ports, to keep submerged practically the whole day, and they run great risk of reducing their battery power to a dangerous degree. This was the case with $E4$ and $E7$, both of which were forced to lie on the bottom for several hours before they could rise to recharge.

The best way of getting rest appears to be to lie on the bottom for the night, or in deep water to cruise at a depth of 60 feet at slow speed, if battery permits.

At about 5.0 or 6.0 p.m. the destroyers detailed for night work appear to be led to certain points by light cruisers. They then 'fan out' and proceed to sea at a good speed —returning at daylight.

I would submit that a well-organised drive, commencing before dawn from inshore close to the enemy's coast, should inflict considerable loss on these destroyer patrols.

Before the drive takes place, the submarines might take up a position close to the enemy's port, lying on the bottom until a pre-arranged time, when they might rise and be in a position to attack the enemy's cruisers proceeding out to attack the drive, or vessels returning which may have escaped through or round the drive. This, of course, will require some organisation, but a carefully thought out and well-executed plan might achieve great success.

The local patrol torpedo-boats off the Ems proceed to sea before dark and return to harbour at daylight. These might be dealt with without much risk."

I discussed it all with Tyrwhitt, who authorised me to say that he fully concurred in my proposals, so I took the paper to the Admiralty the same afternoon, in order to try to pilot it through the proper channels, but I found the Staff too fully occupied with the daily task to give the matter much attention, so I asked the

Naval Secretary to tell the First Lord that I was in the Admiralty, in case he wished to see me. This gave me an opportunity of bursting into flame about it, which fired the First Lord, and Tyrwhitt was ordered to come to the Admiralty the following morning. The First Lord presided over a meeting attended by the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the Staff, Tyrwhitt and myself, and the plan I had submitted in my letter of the previous day was considered. After some discussion it was decided to commence the sweep to the westward at 8 a.m. after the night patrols had returned, and when the day patrols were well out to seaward hunting our submarines, which would do their best to keep them well occupied. The First Sea Lord (Prince Louis of Battenberg) fully approved of this plan, and it was arranged to carry it out as soon as possible. I ventured to suggest that if the Grand Fleet Light Cruiser Squadron could support Tyrwhitt; and the Battle Cruiser Squadron under Sir David Beatty, could be in the offing, it would be all to the good. Tyrwhitt and I felt that the two battle cruisers, the *Invincible*, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir Archibald Moore, and the *New Zealand*, which had just arrived in the Humber, and Cruiser Force "C" would not be able to afford us much support if the enemy's battle cruisers came out in force. However, the Chief of Staff said that the Grand Fleet vessels would not be available, and as we were both ardently keen to correct the atmosphere in our area as soon as possible, we thought no more about the Grand Fleet ships, until we fell in with them in the Heligoland Bight on the 28th August—incredible as it may seem.

It appeared that when the Commander-in-Chief was informed of our intentions, he at once said that he would send Beatty with the *Lion*, *Queen Mary*, *Princess Royal* and Rear-Admiral Goodenough's squadron of six "Town" class cruisers. Before the Admiralty had received this information, Tyrwhitt and I were well on the way to the Heligoland Bight, quite out of touch on the destroyer wireless wave-length, by which the Admiralty Communication Staff attempted to pass the message to us. No one troubled to ascertain whether we had received it, with results that might well have proved disastrous, and caused me intense anxiety for some hours.

It means so much to a ship to know that if she falls in with another, it is beyond the shadow of a doubt a friend or an enemy;

indeed it is the essence of good staff work to ensure this if possible. Knowing that the only light cruisers we should have in the Heligoland Bight would be the new *Arethusa* (to which Tyrwhitt had just transferred his broad pennant), with one mast and three funnels, and the *Fearless* with one mast and four funnels, I made a great point of impressing on the submarine captains that the enemy had no vessels resembling our two cruisers, whose silhouettes they should carefully note. If they sighted light cruisers with two masts and two, three or four funnels, they would be enemy.

The *Lurcher*, *Firedrake* and nine submarines sailed from Harwich during the night of 26th August, in order to be in their positions before dawn on the 28th. The submarines were disposed in two lines, the inner to attack enemy vessels coming out to drive off our raiding forces, and those returning, and the second to attract the attention of the enemy's destroyers well to seaward, as they had succeeded in doing during their previous expeditions into the Bight. Before daybreak on the 28th August, as the zero hour of the operation approached, Tyrwhitt's force and mine were taking up our positions according to plan; Cruiser Force "C" was off Terschelling, and we thought the *Invincible* and the *New Zealand* were the only ships to the north-westward, ready for us to fall back upon when we had completed our task.

During the night of the 27th-28th August, *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* cruised to the southward of Admiral Moore's battle cruisers, and the destroyer flotillas. On the morning of the 28th, after searching the area to the southward of the battle cruisers for submarines, we proceeded towards Heligoland in the wake of the submarines of the second line, with the object of inducing the enemy to chase us to the westward. On approaching Heligoland, the visibility which had been very good to seaward, was reduced to two-and-a-half to three miles, and considerably less in patches.

At 3.30 a.m. Tyrwhitt fell in with Goodenough's Squadron, and, in the half light before dawn, an engagement was narrowly averted, Tyrwhitt having no reason to think that he would encounter any but enemy ships.

At 4 a.m. Tyrwhitt's force proceeded to the southward, followed eight miles astern by Goodenough's cruisers.

From intercepted signals it was evident at about 7 a.m. that

our destroyers were engaged to the N.W. of Heligoland, and I proceeded in that direction at full speed. At 7.50 a.m., two four-funnelled light cruisers loomed up about 5,000-6,000 yards away on the port quarter; they appeared to be steering towards the Jade river. It was impossible to make out details in the mist, but their general outline closely resembled the silhouette of the *Rostock* class.

As I knew for certain, or thought I did, that no British cruiser with four funnels and two masts could possibly be in that area, I took them to be enemy, and kept them in sight—of necessity within their range—reporting them from time to time to the *Arethusa* and destroyers, as I thought if they fell in with a division of destroyers unsupported, it would go badly with the latter. When the two light cruisers were first sighted in the mist, they were so close that it was a question whether I turned at full speed to torpedo them, or endeavoured to escape out of range. The silhouette of the British and German destroyers differed so greatly, that our cruisers were fortunately never in any doubt as to the nationality of the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*. At about 8.40 a.m. I lost sight of them in the mist and thought they must have altered course to the N.E., so stood in that direction.

Heavy firing was then heard to the N.E. and E., and the latter being closer I went full speed towards it. Shortly after, four cruisers appeared ahead of me on a S.E. course; two looked like the first two sighted, the others I could not identify owing to the mist. As the former were well within range, I stood to the N.W., followed by the cruisers—my object being to lead them towards the *Invincible* and *New Zealand*.

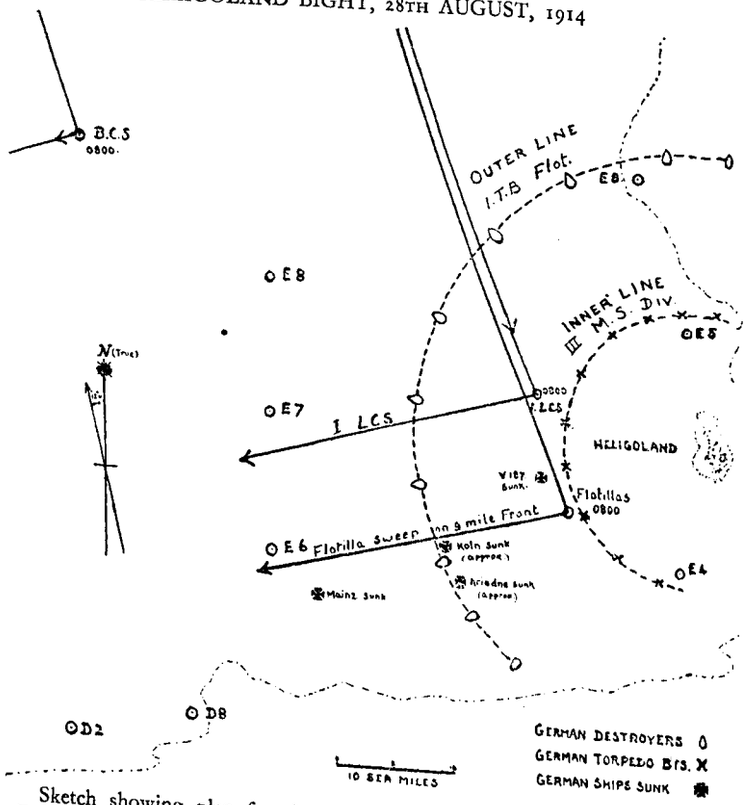
It had been intended that the whole British force should alter course together at 8 a.m. and sweep to the westward, but shortly before 7 a.m. an enemy's destroyer was sighted, and later others, and these were chased towards Heligoland by the *Arethusa* and her flotilla.

At 8 a.m. two German cruisers—the *Stettin* and *Frauenlob*—came out to support their fleeing destroyers. After a brief exchange of shots with the *Stettin*, on opposite courses, the *Arethusa* became hotly engaged with the *Frauenlob*, and suffered rather severely; and apart from the enemy's fire, some of her guns developed defects and jammed.

Meantime the *Fearless* and her flotilla had been engaged with the *Stettin* until 8.12, when the latter made off in a south-easterly direction, whereupon the *Fearless* and her destroyers proceeded to the westward according to plan.

We know now from the German official account, that their patrols were spread on the arc of two circles, extending from

HELIGOLAND BIGHT, 28TH AUGUST, 1914



Sketch showing plan for the attack on German Patrols by 1st and 3rd Destroyer Flotillas, supported by eight submarines, the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron and the Battle Cruiser Squadron.

The composition and disposition of enemy's Torpedo Craft Patrol is taken from the German Official Account.

the north to the south-west of Heligoland, the inner patrol consisting of ten torpedo boats, at a distance of 12 miles; and the outer consisting of ten destroyers, at a distance of 25 miles from the island.

It will be seen from the accompanying plan, that Tyrwhitt's course—designed to keep his vessels outside the effective range of the powerful fortress guns of Heligoland—actually passed through the outer, and very close to the inner, patrol; but at 8.10 the enemy, learning of the presence of our vessels, recalled all torpedo craft under the guns of Heligoland. Several vessels did not wait for this order, and fled before our superior force, but two of the inner patrol were severely damaged by *Arethusa's* flotilla, and were eventually towed into Heligoland; others suffered losses. Of the outer patrol, *V*187 was sunk by a division of *Fearless* destroyers, and another German destroyer was severely damaged.

At 8.25, when things were not going too well in the newly commissioned *Arethusa*, her one remaining six-inch gun scored a hit on the *Frauenlob's* fore bridge, she broke off the action and retired towards Heligoland, which from Tyrwhitt's point of view was unpleasantly close; so he reformed his flotilla and commenced his westerly sweep at 8.30.

Goodenough's cruisers, and the *Arethusa's* and *Fearless's* flotillas were now all standing to the westward, but owing to the various engagements and low visibility, they had lost touch with one another.

A little later the *Arethusa* and *Fearless* joined forces, and collecting all their destroyers, which had been chasing the enemy or picking up survivors of *V*187, both flotillas were withdrawing, with no enemy patrol vessels to the westward of them.

Meanwhile, as the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* went to seaward followed by the supposed enemy cruisers, the visibility improved, and it could be seen that all four cruisers had four funnels and two masts, like our Light Cruiser Squadron, so at 9.50 a.m. I challenged by searchlight and the *Southampton* answered. I did not do this before, as I did not wish to give away the challenge, and it did not occur to me that they could possibly be friends. The *Southampton* then informed me that the First Battle Cruiser Squadron was also in the area. I was very much concerned, as the submarines had no idea of their presence, and I greatly feared that our ships might be attacked by them, particularly the light cruisers, which resembled the enemy sighted by the submarines on previous occasions. I signalled to this effect to the *Southampton*, who passed my signal to the *Lion*.

At 9.45, Tyrwhitt received my signal, saying we were being chased by four enemy cruisers, and thinking I was to the eastward of him, he turned his whole force 16 points to support me. Finding that the *Arethusa* could only steam ten knots, Tyrwhitt stopped at 10.15 to make good defects, and after communicating with the *Fearless*, he decided to wait until the situation was cleared up. At 10.45, concluding that the *Lurcher* must have been reporting our own cruisers, and temporary repairs having been effected, he resumed his westerly course at 20 knots.

This delay of an hour enabled the enemy's cruisers which had been ordered out to reinforce the *Stettin* and *Frauenlob*, to appear on the scene; otherwise our flotillas would probably have withdrawn without further incident. In the course of the next hour, the *Arethusa*, *Fearless* and destroyers were engaged with the *Strasburg*, *Köln* and *Mainz*, and at 11.30 Tyrwhitt signalled for support. Beatty and Goodenough proceeded at full speed to join him.

I was endeavouring to regain touch with Tyrwhitt, who had not answered my signals, when at noon a great grey shape loomed up in the mist of lighter tint than our battleship grey—with the silhouette of a light cruiser in dark grey or black painted on her side—followed by other phantom-looking ships, steaming at high speed towards the Jade. I had never heard of any such disguise being adopted by our ships, and for some moments I felt sure that they must be enemy battle cruisers, but as they were sufficiently close to blow us out of the water and they refrained, our anxiety for our own safety was brief, but mine on account of the submarines was intense, and I went back at full speed to try and warn them.

I realised, of course, that it was practically hopeless to get into communication with them, for in the visibility prevailing, a submarine had to dive directly she sighted any ship, if she wished to avoid being destroyed by gunfire on the surface. I felt that the issue could only lie in the skill of their captains to avoid being rammed, and to their discretion to refrain from torpedoing doubtful vessels; but my feelings can well be imagined, in view of the information I had given them, as to the *only* British vessels, which would be operating in their area.

At 12.37 p.m., when steaming at about 32 knots towards heavy firing which had just broken out ahead of me, I sighted our

Light Cruiser Squadron, engaged with a light cruiser which turned out to be the *Mainz*. As she appeared to have struck, and had a British cruiser standing by her, I stood on towards heavy firing to the N.E., but in crossing the track of the *Mainz*, nearly a mile astern of her, we sighted in her wake a number of Germans supported by lifebelts or hammocks, so I ordered the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* to stop and pick them up. As we closed the *Mainz* from astern she seemed to be on an even keel, and to have full buoyancy; for a few moments I had thoughts of taking possession of her by boarding and, if possible, towing her home! As a small boy, long before I joined the *Britannia*, I knew James' Naval History almost by heart, at any rate the part relating to "Light Squadrons and Single Ships." The actions of those days ended either in capture by boarding, or when a ship had sustained a number of casualties, and considered she was beaten, she struck her colours to avoid further loss of life. I remember talking this over with Tyrwhitt, and we agreed that in this war there would never be any question of surrendering a British ship. Under modern conditions it would be easy to open the seacocks, or sink the ship with explosive charges to prevent capture if she was overwhelmed.

I ought to have given the enemy credit for the same spirit; the officers certainly possessed it. I ordered the *Firedrake* to continue to pick up the swimmers, and the Commander of the *Lurcher* to lay her alongside the *Mainz*. When we were about 100 yards off, and obviously about to come alongside, some officers ran to her starboard after gun, and swung it round directly on to the *Lurcher's* bridge. Tomkinson remarked quite quietly, "They are going to fire at us." On the spur of the moment I picked up a megaphone and shouted "Don't fire, damn you, I am coming alongside to save life. Get your fenders out at once." They obeyed very promptly, and the *Lurcher* was speedily secured alongside, her stem being just abreast the *Mainz's* after funnel.

By that time it was obvious that the ship was doomed. She had settled considerably by the bows, the after part was crowded with men, many terribly wounded, the battery was a ghastly shambles, amidships she was a smouldering furnace, two of her funnels had collapsed and the wreckage appeared to be red hot, the heat scorched one's face as far off as the bridge of the *Lurcher*,

everything was dyed saffron with the fumes of our lyddite shells. Her mainmast had gone, and with it her colours, which I am sure she did not intend to strike. There was a man aloft on the foremast who was, I think, trying to reeve halyards to hoist another ensign.

When the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* arrived on the scene, the *Liverpool* was lying some little way off. Three of her boats had been alongside the *Mainz* and taken one load of wounded from her; they were returning for another, but the *Mainz* was so heavily on fire, the captain of the *Liverpool* thought she might blow up at any moment, and ordered his boats to lie off well clear, and on no account to go alongside again. Not noticing my broad pennant, he gave similar orders to the *Lurcher* as she approached. A number of wounded had been lashed to hammocks and lowered into the sea; these and several unwounded, who had jumped overboard, were endeavouring to reach the boats.

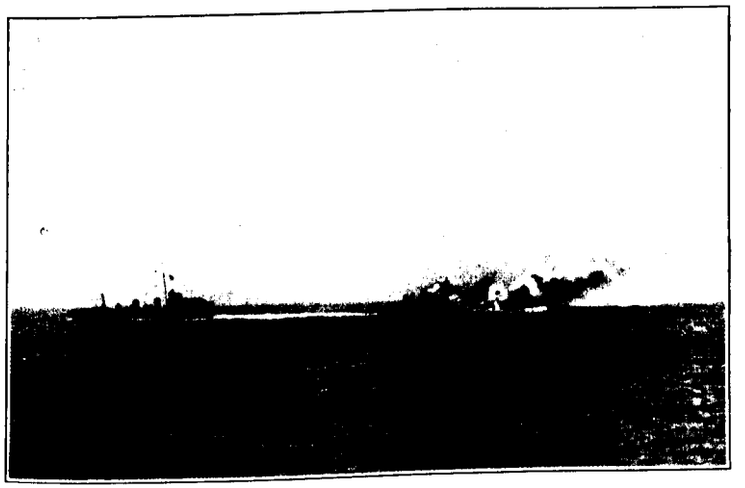
When the *Lurcher* went alongside the *Mainz* there were still over 200 Germans on board, about 60 of these, who were very badly wounded, were carried on board the *Lurcher*, and when they had all been transported, about 150 unwounded clambered on board. The *Mainz* by this time was slowly listing to port, her starboard propeller could be clearly seen projecting under the *Lurcher*, and I was anxious to clear out as soon as possible, as I feared she might capsize rapidly in the end. The rescue work was practically completed, and there seemed to be only three people left alive on board, when the *Mainz* suddenly capsized to port and sank, her starboard propeller narrowly missing the *Lurcher* as we went full speed astern. The man aloft, and an officer on the forecastle (who I think was Tirpitz, the son of the Admiral), who were cut off from the *Lurcher* by the fire in the waist; and a young officer on the poop, went down with her. The latter had been very active in directing the transport of the wounded, and only a few seconds before the *Mainz* capsized I told him he had done splendidly, there was nothing more he could do, we must clear out, he must come at once and I held out my hand to help him jump on board. He drew himself up stiffly, saluted and said "Thank you, no." I think all three were picked up by the *Liverpool's* boats; I hope so, particularly the young officer on the poop, whose bearing was admirable.

In the meantime, the battle cruisers had sunk the *Köln* and



BATTLE CRUISERS STEAMING FULL SPEED INTO ACTION, HELIGOLAND BIGHT

28TH AUGUST, 1914



MAINZ CAPSIZING

Lurcher going full speed astern to get clear after taking 220 Germans off her

28TH AUGUST, 1914

Ariadne, and we knew now that but for the low visibility, the *Stettin*, *Strasburg*, *Stralsund*, *Kolberg* and *Danzig* might well have shared a similar fate. On the other hand, the three latter were too late to take part in the action with our flotillas before support came; further, the German battle cruisers, which had been tide-bound in the Jade River, were unable to cross the bar until noon, and they did not actually do so until 2 p.m. Had they come out at the earliest possible moment, there is hardly any limit to the "might have beens" on that misty morning.

While our rescue work was in progress a wireless signal was received from Admiral Beatty, ordering a general retirement, and directly the *Liverpool* had hoisted her boats, she withdrew to the W.N.W. at high speed to rejoin her squadron, taking with her 87 German prisoners.

I felt it was time to clear out too, and as quickly as possible, for we were between Heligoland and Borkum, less than 20 miles from the latter, and the *Lurcher*, with a crew of 70 (at least 20 of whom were required below to steam her at full speed), had 224 Germans on board!

When the unwounded came on board they were told to sit down on the forecastle, but as the *Mainz* disappeared they all jumped to their feet and gave three "Hochs" for the Kaiser; I am sure this was a pre-ordained ritual. When they had finished, they were sharply ordered to sit down again, and they obeyed very promptly.

Directly the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* had hoisted their boats, which had been picking up Germans in the water over a large area, I gave the order to withdraw at full speed, but the Engineer-Officer of the *Lurcher* reported that the condenser inlets were choked by scum, which came to the surface after the *Mainz* sank, and our speed could not exceed 25 knots, instead of the 33-34 which I always relied on to keep me out of trouble during my excursions into enemy waters.

We were not able to maintain even 25 knots for long, as we fell in with the destroyers *Laurel* and *Liberty* limping out of the Bight sorely wounded, and they reported that they could not steam more than 16 knots.

The situation for the next few hours was not without its anxieties, and the thought of falling in with an enemy was not an attractive one, the limit of visibility being still well within

gun-range. The *Lurcher's* forecastle was crowded with unwounded Germans, and this put one of her two four-inch guns out of action, but the prisoners could be better controlled there than anywhere else in the ship, as the narrow gangway each side of the bridge and charthouse could be held by armed sentries. It is true that the prisoners were quiet and obedient, but one wondered whether they would remain so if we had to fight their friends. The after part of the upper deck was encumbered with wounded, many in a terrible condition. Indeed the *Lurcher* was in no condition to fight an action, neither were her consorts; the *Laurel* and *Liberty* had been badly mauled, the *Firedrake* was in a better plight, but she had 38 prisoners, whose presence on board would have been an embarrassment in action.

With considerable relief we sighted the five "Bacchantes" and *Amethyst* at about 4 p.m. The appearance of my *bêtes noires* was for once very welcome, and at 4.15 the *Firedrake* transferred her 38 prisoners to the *Bacchante* and the *Lurcher* her 165 unwounded and slightly wounded to the *Cressy*. A surgeon from the latter told me that it would be inadvisable to attempt to transport the 59 badly wounded in boats, and as there was now too much swell to go alongside the *Cressy*, I took the surgeon with me, and made for Harwich at full speed, in company with the *Firedrake*, leaving the *Laurel* and *Liberty* with the Cruiser Squadron. A number of the men picked up in the water were suffering from bullet wounds, mainly in their shoulders, which they declared were inflicted by their officers' revolvers after they had jumped overboard. Several people in the *Lurcher* had seen an officer firing at men as we came up astern of the *Mainz*. It is only fair, however, to say that the *Mainz* put up a very gallant fight against overwhelming odds, and must have been an absolute inferno, until her mainmast fell, and with it her colours, which gave the impression that she had surrendered, so the firing ceased.

In those days destroyers had no medical officer and only carried a small medicine chest, which was of course quite inadequate to cope with the situation in the *Lurcher* before we obtained help from the *Cressy*. To quote from my diary: "Our officers and men were splendid in the way they looked after the German wounded. Campbell and Ranken never

stopped; the latter took off several bits of limbs with a carving knife, a very gruesome business." Sheets and shirts were torn up for bandages, blankets taken from every bed and hammock, and the devotion and attention of our people must have saved many lives. The fortitude of the wounded was admirable; they were obviously amazed at the attention they received from our officers, and their gratitude was very genuine. Fourteen died before we reached Harwich, and their bodies were committed to the deep with proper ceremony. The traditional chivalry of the Naval warfare of the past was closely observed, and it was exasperating to read later, extracts from the neutral press giving a German Minister's account of our brutality in the action of the Heligoland Bight.

The German destroyer *V*187 had fought a great fight and was lying in a sinking condition, with her colours still flying, though most of her crew had abandoned her and were overboard supported by lifebelts. The *Goshawk* (Commander the Hon. H. Meade), the senior officer of the Division, lowered his boats to pick up the crew and directed the *Defender* to stop and do likewise. Whilst so engaged the *Stettin* appeared and opened a heavy fire on the two destroyers and their boats. The destroyers were forced to retire to avoid destruction; the *Goshawk* removed her men from her boats, leaving them for the Germans. The *Defender*, which had drifted some distance from her boats, came under a very heavy fire and had to abandon them with an officer and nine men, who were recovered by *E*4 some time later. Meanwhile the British officer and men stripped themselves of everything except their trousers, and tore up their clothes to tourniquet and bandage the wounded Germans. Some of these wounded also had bullet wounds in their shoulders, which no doubt required explanation when they arrived in Germany. The German Minister in Copenhagen declared that they were inflicted by us!

One can have nothing but admiration for the determination of the German officers to defend their ships to the end, and go down with their colours flying. It does not, however, speak well for the morale of the German Navy, if it was necessary for the officers to use their revolvers to check the desertion of men from their posts in action. It is not surprising that discipline, maintained in this manner, failed under the conditions

that prevailed at the end of the war, and resulted in the most humiliating surrender in the whole sea history of the world.

The *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* entered Harwich at 3 a.m. on the 29th August in a thick fog. The wounded were taken to the yacht *Liberty*, which her owner, Lord Tredegar, had fitted out as a hospital ship. She was staffed and equipped by St. Mary's Hospital with every conceivable up-to-date appliance, so the prisoners were fortunate. I believe some wonderful operations were performed and marvellous recoveries were made.

The captain of the *Cressy*, off which we lay while the unwounded prisoners were transferred, could tell me nothing about the action, the casualties we had sustained, or whether we had lost any vessels. For some hours I was horribly anxious about Tyrwhitt and the *Arethusa* as I could get no answer to my signals to him, though mine apparently reached him through a consort.

It happened that I had met the only two destroyers which had been seriously damaged, and when I learnt that the captain of one was killed and the other severely wounded, and that both had suffered a number of casualties, I feared that the flotillas must have had a very bad time. They also knew nothing about the fate of other vessels, and it was not until I went on board the *Maidstone* at 3.30 a.m., feeling very unhappy, that I heard what had happened.

"I was met by Waistell, who was full of congratulations," my diary records. "I was feeling too sick for words until he assured me no ships were lost or seriously damaged, losses were not heavy, and it had been hailed as a great success in the Press of the night before, as in addition to the *Mainz* two other German cruisers had been sunk by the battle cruisers, and a destroyer early in the action, and a number of other German vessels had been severely damaged. Still I felt sick; I had seen and done practically nothing, and I felt so strongly that if we had only known that Goodenough's light cruisers were there, and could have arranged for their co-operation, we ought to have destroyed a number of enemy vessels, without bringing in our battle cruisers."

Our losses amounted to no more than 32 killed and 60 wounded; no ship was seriously damaged, and much to my relief, all the submarines returned on the 29th. In the low

visibility, which at no time exceeded 6,000 yards and was sometimes less, a vessel was within effective range directly she appeared out of the mist; this necessitated a rapid dive, and once submerged it was very difficult in the haze to identify her through the periscope, except at very close range, which added greatly to the anxieties of operating in an area occupied by friend and foe. I will give three examples of this:

*E*6 (Lieut.-Commander C. T. Talbot) was stationed in the second line to occupy the attention of enemy destroyers, and sighted four between 4 a.m. and 7.20 a.m.; she remained on the surface as long as possible, but only succeeded in inducing one to stay and hunt her for any length of time. On two occasions *E*6 got within close range of our "Town" class cruisers. The first time, Talbot was about to fire a torpedo, when to his consternation he distinguished the red cross of St. George on her ensign (the German Naval ensign, being white with a black cross, closely resembles ours at a distance). Until then it did not occur to him that she might be British, and instead of attacking her he had to dive deep to avoid being rammed. On the second occasion, knowing that our "Town" class cruisers were present, in spite of my assurances that any light cruisers except the *Arethusa* and *Fearless* could be treated as enemy, he manœuvred at great risk to get close enough to the vessel he was attacking, to make certain of identifying the ensign, and this brought him to within 300 yards, before he could be sure that she was one of our cruisers. His care, patience and good judgment were altogether admirable.

The following is an extract of the report of *E*4 (Lieut.-Commander E. W. Leir):

> "9.0 a.m. (about). Observed a destroyer sink, surrounded by English destroyers.
>
> 9.10. Three-funnelled cruiser appeared, bearing E., and opened fire on our destroyers, who then went away to the S.W. Attacked cruiser, but five minutes later she went away to the north. Proceeded south to get between our destroyers and any vessel that might chase them.
>
> 9.28. Came to surface; observed boats with men in them.

9.58. Took on board Lieut. Richardson and nine men of *Defender*, whom I found collecting German survivors in *Defender's* boats; also Ober-Leutnant zur See Frederick Braune, one petty officer and one stoker. I did not take the remainder on board (some 30 to 40 men),* as I considered it would impair the efficiency of *E*4. I ascertained that the boats were provided with provisions and water, and directed the Ober-Leutnant which way to go home.

10.10. Proceeded south-westerly, hearing heavy firing in that direction."

Later he tried to attack the *Frauenlob* and *Stettin*, but was just unable to get within torpedo range.

Lieut.-Commander Leir's modest report does not do justice to his gallant optimism, resource and confidence in his ability to overcome all difficulties. His conduct in remaining on the surface in the vicinity of the enemy, in a visibility which gave him only a few moments' law; his rescue of the boat's crew of the *Defender*, who would otherwise have been taken prisoners, and his generous treatment of the Germans, make a brave tale of adventure.

When Leir reported to me personally on his return, he told me that he had picked up the *Defender's* boat's crew, but did not mention having taken any prisoners. I remarked, without any intention of reflecting on his failure to do so, that it was a pity we had had to allow all those German prisoners to escape with our boats. He was very apologetic and said, "I have brought back 'samples,' sir!" He then went on to tell me how interested the German officer was in the handling of the submarine; no one, the latter declared, except those actually employed in their submarines, was allowed to enter them, except by permission of Admiral von Tirpitz. When Leir was attacking the *Stettin* the German officer stood alongside him, and when the attack failed and Leir remarked, "I nearly got one of your cruisers then," the German said, "Yes, I heard you make ready the torpedo."

*E*7 (Lieut.-Commander F. Fielmann), hearing heavy firing, stood towards it, and saw flashes of gunfire and the splashes of

* "Germany's High Sea Fleet in the World War," by Admiral Scheer, page 48. Forty-four survivors were recovered.

very big projectiles. Shortly afterwards he was able to distinguish four of our battle cruisers, under which he had to dive hurriedly to a great depth, as they turned towards him, and he heard their propellers overhead.

On the whole it was a very disappointing day for me and my Command and we were out of luck, but at least the submarines had proved, under incredibly difficult conditions, that they could be trusted to work in co-operation with surface craft and take care of themselves. This was most generously acknowledged in letters I received from the Commander-in-Chief and many others.

In the mist and uncertainty one thing stood out crystal clear on that day of gallant enterprise and high endeavour. Beatty and Tyrwhitt, two sea, or "salt horse," officers, as they are called in the Navy, brought up in the hard school of the early destroyer service to act quickly, take risks, and accept responsibility, seized the opportunity they were given of proving their worth to those in power and to those they had the good fortune to lead.

Thanks to intercepted wireless signals, which should have been unnecessary with good staff work, the enemy, according to the statements of prisoners, were well aware of our approach and took measures to counter our attack by withdrawing their destroyer patrols and concentrating seven cruisers to cut off our flotillas.

At 9 a.m. our effort had practically come to an end; only one enemy destroyer had been sunk, and Tyrwhitt, according to plan, was withdrawing with no enemy destroyers to the westward of him. The *Arethusa*, untrained and only 48 hours in commission, and the *Fearless* had fought indecisive actions with the *Stettin* and *Frauenlob*, without any help from the six powerful "Town" class cruisers which had been in touch with Tyrwhitt at 3.30 a.m., but, thanks to the mist and lack of prearranged plan, had lost contact. In these engagements the *Arethusa* had driven the *Frauenlob*, heavily damaged, under the shelter of Heligoland, but had herself suffered a number of casualties, including the Flag Lieutenant, who was killed alongside Tyrwhitt; most of her guns were out of action and her speed was reduced to ten knots.

This was the situation when the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* sighted the two phantom cruisers. My report that I was keeping in

touch with two "enemy" cruisers was intercepted by Goodenough, who came to my assistance with the remainder of his squadron! On which I tried to lead my new "enemy" towards the *Invincible* and *New Zealand* to be destroyed by them, informing the *Invincible* of my intentions!

At 9.45, after some delay owing to the destruction of the *Arethusa's* wireless by gunfire, it was reported to Tyrwhitt that I was in trouble, and without any hesitation, in spite of the serious condition of the *Arethusa*, he turned back towards Heligoland to help me. But for this act of gallant good comradeship, the last phase of the action of the Heligoland Bight would never have taken place. The delay in the retirement had given the enemy time to bring other cruisers into action, and before long the *Arethusa* and *Fearless* and their flotillas were engaged intermittently with the *Köln* (flagship of the Destroyer Admiral), *Stettin*, *Stralsund*, *Ariadne*, *Strasburg* and *Mainz*, and Tyrwhitt was compelled to call to the Grand Fleet ships for help.

Goodenough's cruisers arrived at an opportune moment and took the *Mainz* off his hands—and then came Beatty.

It is no secret that the risks he would run from mines, submarines and the proximity of the whole German Fleet, were very clearly pointed out to Beatty, when he directed his squadron to steer to the eastward at full speed; but our signals had made it clear to him that we were in need of assistance, and he decided that hypothetical risks and dangers must be accepted.

"It was evident," he reported, "that to be of any value the support must be overwhelming and carried out at the highest speed possible. . . . I considered we were powerful enough to deal with any sortie, except by a battle squadron, which was unlikely to come out in time, provided our stroke was sufficiently rapid."

It was thus our forebears made war, and that day Beatty and Tyrwhitt established for ever their reputations as fighting sea officers, raised our prestige and greatly improved the atmosphere in the Narrow Seas.

We know from Admiral von Tirpitz* that this stroke on the very threshold of the base of the High Sea Fleet, was a bitter blow to the pride of the German Navy, and greatly upset the Kaiser, who "did not want losses of this sort," with the result that orders were issued by him "to restrict still further the initiative of the Commander-in-Chief of the North Sea Fleet; the loss of ships was to be avoided."

* "My Memoirs," Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, Vol. II, pages 357 and 358.

In fact, the action in the Heligoland Bight had a far-reaching effect on German Naval policy—quite apart from the loss of the three cruisers and a destroyer, 781 officers and men killed and 381 prisoners. Moreover, it happened at a very opportune moment, when the German Army was advancing on Paris with confident assurance; and the Allied Armies were in the darkest hour of their retreat. We were told that the news of our naval success, which was circulated to the Allied Armies, greatly heartened our weary, hard-pressed troops.

CHAPTER V

SUBMARINE WARFARE

Sinking of *Pathfinder*; Submarine exploits; Visit to Grand Fleet; Loss of *Aboukir*, *Cressy*, *Hogue* and *Hawke*; British troops land at Zeebrugge; Submarines enter Baltic.

TYRWHITT was given the *Lowestoft*—one of Goodenough's squadron—as flagship while the *Arethusa* was being repaired. While waiting for her he stayed a couple of nights with me on board the *Maidstone*. We decided that as soon as we could get some definite information about the German dispositions, which we felt might have been altered after our attack, we would propose another assault.

On 31st August I sent seven submarines into the Bight, and they reported on the 4th September that the Heligoland and Ems destroyer patrols were being maintained as before. "So," my diary records, "Tyrwhitt and I went up to the Admiralty to recommend another drive through the Bight, based on our experiences of the 28th August and the latest submarine reports. The First Sea Lord approved and he, the Chief of Staff, Tyrwhitt and I met in the First Lord's room. We proposed a scheme which they approved and we were told to draft it. I drafted the general idea, Tyrwhitt the destroyer part of it. I begged for a light cruiser and was actually given one for a few minutes; then they took it away again. I said I would be happy enough in the *Lurcher* and proposed after taking the submarines to their berth, to meet Goodenough's cruiser squadron—which was to support Tyrwhitt's flotillas—and with the *Firedrake* act as anti-submarine look-out for it. This was actually approved. . . . A few days later the Chief of Staff objected to my going in the *Lurcher* and said he would not have me barging about in the Bight on my own again, it was too risky, and told me I was not to go. . . . I protested . . . so he

went in to Prince Louis and brought out a definite order. 'The Commodore is not to go in a destroyer,' signed L. B. 6/9/14. I was very disgusted. . . . The Chief of Staff then said they would give me a free hand to go everywhere and advise as to submarine tactics and procedure, but I was not to go afloat."

The next day I was directed to go up to the Firth of Forth to report on the situation there. The *Pathfinder* had been sunk by a submarine on the 5th September, and the Admiral at Rosyth had reported that his force was worn out by incessant patrolling. I had already proposed to employ six "C" class submarines from the coastal patrol offensively, and I suggested that these should be used, in the first instance, to stalk the enemy submarines, which had been working in the vicinity for some time, stressing the point that no surface patrol craft should be in the area in which these submarines were working, as it was essential that the enemy submarines should be caught on the surface and sight nothing which would cause them to dive. This was concurred in by the Admiral and approved by the Admiralty.

Exercises carried out between seaplanes and submarines before the war, had proved that although there was little prospect of an aircraft sighting a submerged submarine in the waters surrounding our coasts—unless the latter happened to be proceeding at a good speed on a calm day, making a feathery wash with her periscope—there was a good chance of sighting a submarine on the surface from the air before she could dive. I recommended, therefore, that seaplanes should be employed off the Firth of Forth and other fleet bases, to locate enemy submarines, in order that they might be hunted by surface craft and kept submerged within a limited range of action, while the Fleet went in and out of harbour; or if the field was clear of surface craft, be stalked by submarines.

While I was at Rosyth I heard all about the sinking of the *Pathfinder* from her captain—Martin Leake—who had been severely injured and was lying in Lady Beatty's yacht, which had been fitted out as a hospital ship. Thinking of the "Bacchante" Squadron and other vessels—which, as I had frequently pointed out, were inviting submarine attack—I took the opportunity in the official report of my visit to the Firth of Forth to drive home my warnings thus: "The *Pathfinder*, which had been patrolling

the same area for some weeks, was of course an easy prey for submarines, as are many other vessels similarly employed." I was told that this "got home," though not sufficiently. A destroyer anti-submarine screen was provided for the "Bacchantes," but they continued to patrol within reach of the Heligoland Bight.

It would seem from my diary that I was rather obsessed by my anxiety for the safety of that squadron, and I wrote to the Director of Mobilisation to suggest that there were a number of young men serving in the depot ships at Harwich, who might well go to sea and be replaced by the pensioners and reservists now serving in the old cruisers.

The second operation in the Heligoland Bight was carried out on the 10th September. The Commander-in-Chief had again entered keenly into the enterprise, and this time came south himself with the Grand Fleet to within a hundred miles of Heligoland, in case the High Sea Fleet came out. The operation was to commence with a sweep by Tyrwhitt's force, supported by Goodenough's cruisers, Beatty's battle cruisers and Cruiser Force "C."

The Admiralty Orders stated: "The object is to tempt the larger ships of the enemy, and possibly their main fleet, to come out and protect the vessels attacked. There are presumptions that this was in progress in the attack on August 28th, but the enemy were not in time."

The forces engaged were told that "any submarine seen could be taken as hostile," and the submarines were ordered to arrive at their positions off Heligoland and the Ems before 2.30 a.m., and remain on the bottom until 7 a.m., when they were to rise, in readiness to attack enemy vessels proceeding to chase our flotillas.

From the reports of the submarines it appeared, that the destroyer patrol proceeded to sea from Heligoland and the Ems on the 10th as usual—too late, as was anticipated, to be engaged by our destroyer sweep. The destroyers of the night patrol, which it was hoped to catch, were not sighted and were apparently not sent out on the night of 9th-10th, although they had undoubtedly been seen on several occasions after the operation of 28th August.

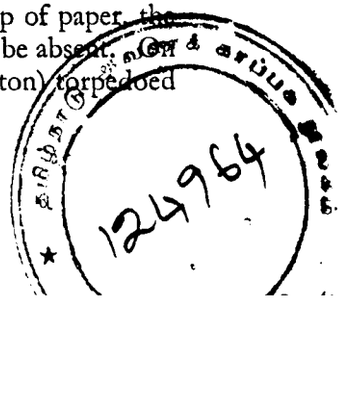
The sweep drew blank and achieved nothing. I told the Chief of Staff that in the China War I was regarded as "good joss"; they could not expect to have good fortune in our enterprises if they refused to allow me to take part.

Our submarines reported that on the 10th a German submarine patrol was working about 10 to 15 miles from N.W. to S.W. of Heligoland. It appeared that the enemy were supporting their destroyer patrols with submarines instead of cruisers. Several duels took place between our submarines and theirs; the following two incidents are typical of many.

*E*4 (Lieut.-Commander Leir) sighted a submarine rising to the surface about 1½ miles off. Leir dived at once and stalked her, but was rather close when he fired his torpedo, and it evidently passed under, "judging by the gesticulations on her bridge." Seeing one of her crew signalling, he looked in that direction, and then noticed another submarine following close astern of the one he had missed. She opened fire with a gun on *E*4's periscope, while the latter was manœuvring into position, and managed to avoid the torpedo which Leir fired directly he could get his sights on. Both German submarines made off at high speed on the surface. One was identified as *U*23 (53 feet longer than *E*4); the other was of the same class.

*D*8 (Lieut.-Commander T. S. Brodie) and a German submarine sighted one another simultaneously; both dived at once. After an hour, having seen nothing through his periscope, Brodie rose, to find his enemy doing likewise; both dived again promptly. Later the German rose a long way off and went away on the surface. As Brodie remarked, "Neither knew what to do with the other." Many submarine encounters ended thus in stalemate.

Five submarines went into the Bight on the 11th September, of which four had orders to carry their reconnaissance to the E. and S. of Heligoland and into the approaches of the fleet anchorages. As they would be operating in shoal water, in which their vessels might be salved by the enemy if they were sunk, I directed the Commanding Officers to leave all their confidential books behind, keeping only, on a slip of paper, the challenge and reply covering the days they might be absent. On the 13th September, *E*9 (Lieut.-Commander Horton) torpedoed


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and sank the German cruiser *Hela*, six miles S. of Heligoland, in a considerable sea and swell, which made accurate depth keeping difficult; a number of destroyers were evidently called to the scene after *E9* had delivered her attack, and these hunted her for some hours. On the 14th, Horton examined the outer anchorage of Heligoland, a service attended by some risk. (During some exercises before the war, this officer, when in command of *D2*, dived outside May Island off the Firth of Forth, under the destroyer patrols, up the channel through which a good deal of traffic was passing and crossing, under the Forth Bridge, and torpedoed the Submarine Depot ship off Rosyth, unseen and unsuspected. An enterprise unsurpassed by a British submarine before the war.)

Hitherto our submarines had had very fine weather and calm seas, which made it very difficult to attack unseen. From the 14th to the 19th September, ten submarines experienced weather which made submarine work almost impossible, from the other extreme. In forwarding their reports on the 20th September, I said: "The brief reports of the Commanding Officers do not adequately express the strain and hardship to which they and their crews were subjected. Their position on a lee shore, within a few miles of the enemy's coast, in the notoriously short steep seas, which accompany heavy westerly gales in the Heligoland Bight, was undoubtedly precarious. It was difficult to open the conning tower hatch, and vision was limited to about 200 yards. There was no rest to be obtained on the bottom; even at a depth of 20 fathoms, with several tons of negative buoyancy, the vessels rolled and bumped heavily. Cruising at a depth of 60 to 100 feet, the submarines were rolling and pumping—i.e. moving vertically about 20 feet. It was creditable that the Commanding Officers should have maintained their positions, in the hope that the weather would moderate sufficiently to make submarine work possible."

On 14th September Tyrwhitt and I were told that we were to go up to the West Coast of Scotland with the First Lord and Chief of Staff, to a conference to be held on the 17th September on board the *Iron Duke*, Fleet Flagship. On the 15th, however, we were directed to come up to London at once, as the Conference had been advanced a day. I gathered that the First Lord had been

able to get away a day earlier than he expected, owing to the Irish debate in the House of Commons coming to an end prematurely, the Unionists having withdrawn their opposition. I recorded at the time—no doubt from the point of view of an Ulsterman—"I must say the Government has behaved odiously. I wish Bonar Law had not dragged in the German simile, though it was thoroughly deserved."

The First Lord's party consisted of the Chief of Staff, the Director of Naval Intelligence (Rear-Admiral H. Oliver), the Naval Secretary (Rear-Admiral the Hon. H. Hood), Tyrwhitt and myself. We travelled in great comfort by special train. At breakfast the next morning I had my last passage of arms with the First Lord about Ulster. He gave me the opportunity by mentioning the reason for advancing our expedition a day, whereupon I could not resist saying "Why could not you do what the Unionists asked and had every right to expect, you knew that they would be loyal, and you had to buy the loyalty of the Nationalists." He made a sweeping gesture with his arms and replied, "Oh, let us wipe out the whole unpleasant incident—when the war is over, and Ulstermen have fought for Catholics in Belgium, and have shed their blood with that of the Nationalists, all these troubles will be over." I felt that he was ashamed of what the Government had done, though of course he would not admit it, and took the line that it was necessary to win over the Nationalists, unpleasant as it was. I wrote the foregoing that night, and added—"So let us forget and get on with the war."

If the Government had had the courage to impose conscription in Ireland as well as in Great Britain, perhaps Winston Churchill's hope would have been realised. I have heard an eminent Irish Nationalist say so.

After breakfast our train drew up at a little station on the line between Dingwall and Kyle, and we drove in motors some 40 to 50 miles across the moors to Loch Ewe, where the whole Grand Fleet was lying. Churchill, Tyrwhitt and I sat in the roomy back seat of a very old-fashioned high-backed open motor. The Director of Naval Intelligence sat alongside the driver. Passing a big stone house with a high tower, Tyrwhitt and I noticed a searchlight on the latter. The First Lord was very intrigued when we told him, and so was the Commander-in-Chief

when it was mentioned at the Conference. I will not tell the story, as Churchill has described the whole incident, exactly as I remember it, in " Thoughts and Adventures—My Spy Story," the only thing omitted being my presence! I feel rather hurt that he should have forgotten that I sat alongside him for at least five hours in the back of that ancient motor car, during which Tyrwhitt and I, in stout alliance, had " submitted " our views on many service matters! He told us a good deal about the war in other seas, for instance, the escape of the *Goeben*, details of which neither Tyrwhitt nor I had heard. I remember we wondered whether, in the event of an officer being found guilty of failure to engage the enemy, a Court Martial would have the courage to inflict the sentence ordained in the Articles of War.

When we got out of the car in the evening, the First Lord told us that he had thoroughly enjoyed his day and his conversation with us. His life, he said, had for some years perforce been lived with men a good deal older than himself, and he had found it pleasant and refreshing to spend a day with two contemporaries! For our part, we agreed that he was a stouthearted fellow and a good companion.

To hark back—the conference on board the *Iron Duke* was a memorable one. The Commander-in-Chief had assembled the Vice-Admirals commanding the three Battle Squadrons (Sir Cecil Burney, Sir George Warrender and Sir Lewis Bayley), his Chief of Staff (Vice-Admiral Madden) and the Captain of the Fleet (Commodore Everett); they were all very nice and complimentary to Tyrwhitt and me about the Heligoland Bight action, and the work of the submarines generally.

One could not help sensing a curious atmosphere of tension—submarines, mines, aircraft, spies, and even a searchlight on a country house within 50 miles of an anchorage—the use of which, by the fleet, must be a closely guarded secret—all contributed to the anxieties of those responsible for the maintenance of our great fleet in a state of readiness to meet the High Sea Fleet should it emerge. It would be impossible to imagine greater responsibilities on the shoulders of one man, than those which Sir John Jellicoe bore courageously in the early days of the war.

The menace of the submarine loomed so immense because, until a torpedo-proof base could be provided, he could never be

certain that a submarine would not feel its way into the open anchorages which the fleet, of necessity, had to use for fuelling, refitting and resting.

A few torpedoes might well wipe out the superiority he possessed which was so vitally important, when in opposition to an enemy which could remain in the security of its defended bases, until it chose to come out in full strength.

After the first few days, when to my mind, alarming risks were unnecessarily run, the Grand Fleet was, and I think felt, comparatively safe on the High Seas—zig-zagging at a good speed, screened by destroyers and cruisers. The range of action of a submerged submarine was so infinitely small, in comparison to the great waste of waters in which the Grand Fleet could exercise its functions of containing the enemy fleet, and covering the blockading squadrons and oversea operations. This duty the British Fleet had carried out down the ages, in fair weather and foul, and in the days of sail, under conditions of hardship inconceivable in modern times.

But now the strain on machinery and personnel steaming at high speed, and the expenditure of fuel, made it impossible to " keep the sea," as of old for weeks or even months at a time, and in the absence of bases on the East coast, the Commander-in-Chief found it necessary to withdraw to the West of Scotland and North of Ireland to fuel, refit and rest.

As I have mentioned, I had been anxious to be attached to the Grand Fleet in order to keep in touch with the Commander-in-Chief, and operate the submarines under his direction, but I realised now why my request had been refused, indeed it would have been impracticable at that stage. The future employment of submarines was raised at the conference, and I strongly urged an expedition into the Baltic, as likely to provide a wider and more profitable field for submarine activity than the Heligoland Bight. Sir John supported me, and it was decided that enquiries should be made, as to the feasibility of basing a few of our " Oversea " submarines on the Russian naval ports. In the meantime I proposed to send two submarines into the Kattegat to reconnoitre and cruise in the approaches to the Belts, and this was approved.

Tyrwhitt and I, of course, seized this opportunity of expressing our views as to the presence of the old armoured cruisers in the

Narrow Seas, and these were concurred in by the Commander-in-Chief.

Returning in the motor car, the First Lord asked us a number of questions, and it is on record that he took steps on the 18th September (the day we returned from the Grand Fleet) to put an end to their patrol. "Prince Louis agreed and gave directions to the Chief of Staff to make the necessary distribution of forces."*

On the 19th I dispatched *E1* and *E5* to carry out the Kattegat reconnaissance with the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* to tow them until dark on the 21st, if weather permitted.

On the night of 21st September I slept on board the *Maidstone*, and at 2 a.m. my secretary woke me up to give me a letter from the Admiralty which he thought might be important. It was from the Director of Mobilisation, saying that he would carry out my suggestion to exchange young men from the depot ships, with the pensioners and reservists in Cruiser Force "C," and asking "how many are available." So that was satisfactory. At about 7 a.m. I was awakened by a signalman, with an intercepted signal from the *Cressy*: "*Hogue* and *Aboukir* sinking." I told him to keep in touch with the *Cressy*, but that was her last signal.

I knew that Tyrwhitt in the *Lowestoft* with the Third Flotilla of destroyers was on his way to join the Squadron, and there was nothing I could do at the moment, except order the *Fearless* and First Flotilla to raise steam for full speed at once. My *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* were well to the northward escorting the submarines about to reconnoitre the Kattegat, so I had nothing to go to sea in. I was feeling very bloody minded and went on board the *Fearless*, whose stouthearted captain (W. Blunt) had fought a gallant fight on 28th August. We had no idea what had happened, whether the cruisers had been sunk by a superior enemy force, mines or submarines. I could only wait, simply boiling with rage, that my last effort on their behalf had been acted on just too late.

We remained in ignorance until I received a signal from Tyrwhitt "Loss due to submarine, send destroyers to cut submarine off Terschelling. 11.05." I telephoned at once to the Admiralty and told the Director of Operations of Tyrwhitt's signal, and said I was going out as a passenger with Blunt in

* "The World Crisis, 1911-1915," pages 323 and 324.

the *Fearless* to hunt the submarines, having no ship of my own in harbour. For some minutes there was a good deal of opposition, which subsided when I assured the Chief of Staff that Blunt was quite agreeable, and that there was no one better qualified than the Commodore of Submarines to hunt submarines!

I might have added, and no one knew better than I did, that there was no such thing as hunting submarines in the open sea (before the invention of depth charges, sound listening devices, etc.), but I had something else at the back of my mind, which I unfolded to Blunt when we were well on the way to Terschelling. In the meantime I was able to tell Tyrwhitt at 11.36 that I was proceeding with the *Fearless* and 17 destroyers, and before long I got into touch with Waistell who was in the *Firedrake*, and told him to meet me with the *Lurcher* off Terschelling, where I would be at 6 p.m. with the First Flotilla.

We had such excellent information from our submarines as to the dispositions and procedure of the Ems destroyer patrol; I had repeatedly suggested mopping it up, and I felt that the destruction of a few German destroyers would be a fitting answer and some salve, to the wounded feelings of the country, when the loss of the cruisers was published.

I told Blunt that directly we met the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*, I would hoist my broad pennant on board the former, and take him under my command. He said that he was quite ready to place himself under my orders at once, if I would take all responsibility, which of course I was delighted to do. I knew Tyrwhitt, who was fully occupied out of reach, would not mind my borrowing a part of his command for such a purpose.

I told the Commander-in-Chief at noon, that the Kattegat submarines were proceeding to the Skaw independently, as I had ordered the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* to Terschelling, and feeling that it would not be fair to him to get involved in an action with the enemy, in the area he controlled, without letting him know my intentions, I made the following signal:

"From Commodore (S) to Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet. Propose to attack light patrol off Ems river at dawn with First Destroyer Flotilla. Submit I may be informed whether any vessels will be in the vicinity. Wireless signals will not be made after 2 p.m. (1210)." The latter in memory of our wireless signals of 28th August which gave us away. The

Commander-in-Chief replied "Are you going East of Terschelling? (1327)." From this it was obvious that I was causing him some concern, so I altered my plan and answered: "Your (1327) would like to sweep past mouth of Ems river during dark hours, if no support available, will leave before daylight (1430)." This crossed one from him: "Urgent. No ships in vicinity (1430)." Eventually he signalled: "Two ships of Second Cruiser Squadron under R.-A. in *Achilles* will be 30 miles north of Terschelling Bank Light vessel at 5 a.m. tomorrow, in case support is needed. In view of weakness of support leave before daylight (1705)." To which I had to reply: "Your (1705). Regret am directed by Admiralty to return to Harwich."

My diary records: "I knew the Admiralty would raise difficulties, but thought they would be pleased enough if I was successful, which I knew I would be. C.-in-C. played up and sent two armoured cruisers down to support, but at 7 p.m., when we were rushing east, *Fearless* and 19 destroyers in subdivisions in line abreast, I was most peremptorily ordered back to Harwich, and told to report myself at the Admiralty." I hadn't the courage to disobey such a definite order, and I could not pretend I had not received it, as *Fearless's* reception of it had been acknowledged before it reached me. I learnt later that Ipswich had listened to my signals to the Commander-in-Chief and his replies, and had reported them to the Admiralty. The War Staff, of course, were simply furious—but so was I; for I travelled up with a train-load of survivors, from whom I learnt that the Navy had lost nearly 1,400 lives, including Johnstone, the gallant captain of *Cressy*, who had commanded a submarine flotilla under me for three years. He, I knew, was never under any illusion as to his ultimate fate, if his ship was kept in the Narrow Seas.

As can be imagined, I received a warm reception at the Admiralty, but was eventually forgiven. I never heard whether the First Lord was told anything about my effort to deliver a counter-attack, or if he was, what line he took, but I cannot believe that his aggressive military spirit really disapproved. Immediate counter-attack is surely one of the first principles of war.

The Army had the South African War to guide it, with the result that the Expeditionary Force, for its size, was probably

the finest trained army the world had ever seen. The Navy had been at peace for 100 years, and had so much to learn about war under modern conditions. A school had sprung into existence, and flourished exceedingly, which concerned itself mainly in the production and development of *matériel* in peace-time, and its preservation in war. I doubt if even now the lessons of the Great War have been properly learnt, judging by the complacency with which some of our failures are still regarded by the service generally.

I had striking proof of the way the enemy viewed our failure to take action on this occasion.

Not long after the German submarine's determined and well-executed attack, the *New York World* published the personal narrative of Otto Weddigen, Commander of *U9*. Apparently he only fired four torpedoes, the first at the *Aboukir*; evidently it exploded a magazine and she sank in a few minutes. He said, "Her crew were brave, and even with death staring them in the face, they kept to their posts, ready to handle their useless guns, for I submerged at once. But I stayed on the surface long enough to see the other cruisers, the *Cressy* and *Hogue*, turn and steam at full speed to their dying sister. . . ." The second torpedo was fired at the *Hogue*, she took 20 minutes to sink. "By this time the third cruiser knew, of course, that the enemy was upon her, and she sought as best she could to defend herself. She loosed her torpedo defence batteries, both starboard and port, and stood her ground, as if more anxious to help the many sailors in the water, than to save herself." Weddigen then fired two torpedoes at the *Cressy*. After the second struck her, he went on: "Then she careened far over, but all the while her men stayed at their guns, looking for their nimble foes. They were brave, true to their country's sea tradition." He concluded as follows: "I hoped to entice the enemy, allowing them now and then a glimpse of me, into a zone in which they might be exposed to capture or destruction by the German warships. But although their destroyers saw me plainly at dusk on the 22nd, and made a final effort to stop me, they abandoned the pursuit, as it was taking them too far from safety, and needlessly exposing them to attack from our fleet and submarines."

I need hardly say that we did not see *U*9 or we would have hunted her through the night, and I would have had a good excuse for turning a deaf ear to the Admiralty signal. But it is very doubtful whether, in those days, we could have inconvenienced her, beyond delaying her return, by forcing her to remain submerged or lie on the bottom. After this successful enterprise Weddigen was promoted to the command of *U*29. On 15th October he sank the *Hawke*, which was as easy a prey as his first ship, the *Aboukir*. Had he been an hour earlier, he would have found the *Hawke* and *Endymion* stopped and communicating by boat, and he might well have torpedoed them both. The sinking of the *Pathfinder*, *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, *Cressy* and *Hawke* in the early days of the war was about as simple an operation for a submarine captain as the stalking of tame elephants, chained to trees, would be to an experienced big-game hunter, who wished to kill them unseen and unsuspected.

On 12th March, 1915, this lucky and enterprising officer sank three merchantmen off the Scilly Islands. Six days later, when *U*29 was on her way home north about, she fell in with the Grand Fleet which was zig-zagging at a good speed well screened by destroyers. Weddigen's first torpedo missed the *Neptune* of First Battle Squadron; he then attempted to attack the Fourth Battle Squadron. *U*29's periscope was sighted by the *Dreadnought* and *Temeraire*, and, the story goes, both increased to full speed to run her down, nearly meeting on top of her. *Dreadnought* rammed her, the submarine reared up almost perpendicularly, and sank stern first, the number "29" being clearly distinguished. That was the end of an intrepid officer, who was responsible for sinking four of our cruisers, with the loss of nearly 2,000 lives.

After the loss of the cruisers, I was directed to suggest anti-submarine tactics, and report generally on the situation. In a memorandum dated 23rd September, I pointed out once again that the main difficulty of a submarine was to find target ships, and that her opportunities would be few and far between, if regular well-defined patrols were avoided. With regard to anti-submarine tactics I called attention to the late Commander-in-Chief's memoranda on the subject, issued before the war, and I said that the war had brought out nothing fresh beyond emphasising the points mentioned, and bringing home to us that the Germans had similar views, and had trained their destroyers admirably in anti-submarine tactics.

I called the attention of the War Staff to the fact that after the 28th August, many large German submarines patrolled in the vicinity of their ports, seven or eight of their latest types being sighted on patrol by our submarines working in the Heligoland Bight. Prior to our raid, none was seen in that area. After nearly a month of inactivity on our part, it was evident from reports received that their submarines were going farther afield again. I submitted that this emphasised the value of more frequent excursions into the Bight.

An incident occurred on 25th September, as the result of which we were able to locate a German minefield, and the knowledge of its position was of great value to us in subsequent operations.

*E*6, while diving, fouled the mooring of a mine. On rising to the surface, she weighed the mine and sinker; the mine was lying on the hydroplane, its mooring securely fixed between the hydroplane and its guard; fortunately, however, the horns of the mine were pointed outboard. The weight of the sinker made it a difficult and dangerous matter to lift the mine clear without exploding it. After half an hour's patient work this was effected, and the released mine descended to its original depth. One can well imagine the feelings of the crew of *E*6 during that anxious half-hour. Previously *E*6 had heard "something, presumably the mooring of a mine, which clattered along the ship's side and went clear."

On 30th September *E*9 spent five hours in the middle of the destroyer anti-submarine patrol off West Ems. He described its procedure in detail, and I again submitted that this patrol should be attacked by destroyers, which could do so with little or no risk, either by night or by day, preferably by day in low visibility.

I outlined a plan of attack, and submitted that Tyrwhitt and I might be given permission to carry it out on the first available day. I also forwarded details of the destroyer patrols off the Sylt, and recommended an attack on similar lines in that neighbourhood. I concluded this report (1st October, 1914): "I submit that our inactivity in the Heligoland Bight, can but be encouraging to an enemy, which must necessarily be elated at its recent success."

*E*1 and *E*3 returned from the Kattegat with useful information about the routes and movements of ships, which were to be of value to *E*1 later.

On 1st October *E*7 located a minefield between Norderney and the Jade river, and was fortunate to escape. The mines appeared to be laid at a shallow depth for submarines and destroyers. Fortunately a mine was awash, and *E*7 saw it as she was about to dive to attack two vessels, which had evidently been laying the minefield.

On 5th October I was informed by the Admiralty, that the Seventh Division of the Army would be landed at Zeebrugge, and was directed to confer with Tyrwhitt how the base and its approach could best be defended by submarines and destroyers. The Admiralty feared that, when it was known that our transports had arrived at Zeebrugge, the enemy might attack it.

Unfortunately, before there was any question of landing at Zeebrugge, a minefield had been laid to cover the approaches to Dunkirk, and its presence added greatly to the anxieties of everyone.

Tyrwhitt came to see me, and showed me where he proposed to put his patrols; I concurred, and knowing how much it would mean to our destroyers to be definitely certain that any submarine they sighted would be an enemy, I undertook to arrange this. I telegraphed to the Admiralty to this effect, and said I proposed to go to Zeebrugge with the *Lurcher* and two submarines; it was rather shallow for submarines, but their presence would make bombardment impossible in daylight. The destroyer patrols would give good notice of the enemy's approach.

I could get no answer to this proposal, and I learnt later that it was not approved. The officer who replied to my telephone request for a decision, my diary relates, "threw much cold water on my proposal. He said the locality was unsuitable for submarines. I replied that they had asked for my opinion, and I had given it. He asked if I realised the proximity of the minefields. I said, Yes, most painfully. Nevertheless I considered my proposal as the best possible. The submarines would lie at Zeebrugge with *Lurcher*, the latter in constant touch with the destroyer patrols, 19 and 60 miles to the northward. Naturally it was not pleasant to work in such shallow water, since submarines could not dive under their enemy if the latter tried to ram them, but I intended to take two of the most skilful captains, and if an enemy cruiser tried to bombard, she would most certainly be torpedoed, or driven off. This message was conveyed to the Chief of Staff who answered, 'Yes, do as you propose.' I felt very strongly that it was the duty of the Navy to use every endeavour to help the Army to land safely, and get away from the sea clear of interference from the enemy's ships, so I sailed at once for Zeebrugge in the *Lurcher*."

Zeebrugge at that time was hardly mentioned in the sailing directions, and there was no large-scale chart of the place; I was amazed at the size of the mole, its great length and breadth, railway communications, electric cranes, etc. I had no idea that such an ideal place for landing troops existed on the Belgian coast. Large vessels can lie alongside the whole length of the mole, which is a mile long with 28 feet of water at low-water springs; it is 100 yards wide, and there is room to disembark any number of men, wagons and guns abreast of each transport. The massive stone mole is connected with the Continental railway system by a great steel viaduct, through which the tide races and scours the harbour. Abreast of the railway line on the viaduct, there is a good road and a raised footpath, which continues along the stone parapet for the whole length of the mole proper to the lighthouse on the extension.

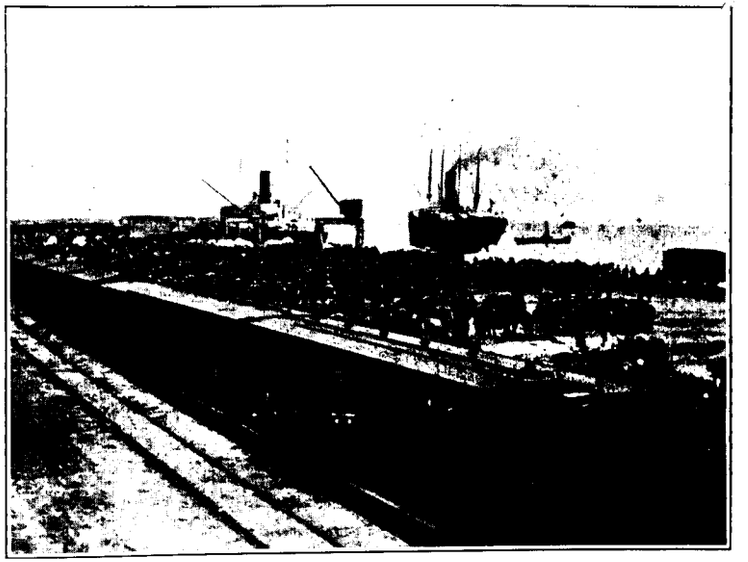
During the two days I spent at Zeebrugge I explored the mole and the canal entrance where our submarines were berthed, the locks and the gates. I proposed to destroy the latter when Antwerp fell, and we realised that the place must be abandoned to the enemy; but everyone was optimistic in those days, and the army hoped to be using Zeebrugge again before long, so this was not approved. I little thought how invaluable all the information I gathered would be to me three years later.

When I arrived at Zeebrugge four large transports were unloading. The non-arrival of others, which had left earlier, was causing much anxiety. We learnt later that several torpedoes had been fired at the Dover Patrol during the previous 24 hours, and the transports were held up at Dover. Originally they were ordered to go outside our minefields. I urged that they should be sent inshore of the mines in shoal water, as submarines hate shallow water. This was considered rather

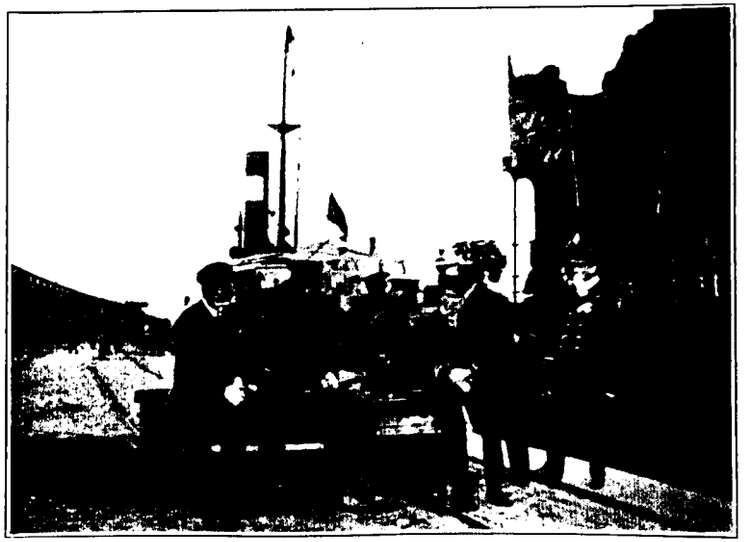
inconsistent, as I had pressed to be allowed to defend Zeebrugge with submarines during the disembarkation, but I had unbounded faith in the skill of Nasmith in *E*11 and Leir in *E*4 to overcome all difficulties.

The Seventh Division was composed mainly of battalions which had been serving abroad, and were up to full strength with seasoned men.

Soon after we arrived I watched the Northumberland Hussars (Yeomanry) ride off; they were acting as divisional cavalry, and looked very smart and were beautifully mounted. The following day, 7th October, we watched troops land and move off all day—the infantry mostly by train; transport, horse, field and heavy artillery by road. I noted at the time that by the evening of the second day about 15,000 men had landed and the mole was clear, all the transports having sailed. The third day, the 8th October, regiments of the Second Cavalry Division arrived, first a brigade of Household Cavalry. A composite regiment, made up of the Royal Horse Guards and 1st and 2nd Life Guards, had landed with the Expeditionary Force in August, and this brigade consisted of the remainder of the three regiments, brought up to full strength with Hussars, Lancers and Dragoon reservists, many of whom looked very small to be wearing R.H.G. or 1 or 2 L.G. on their shoulder chains, but they were a splendid body of men, and a better weight than the troopers of the Household Cavalry, for most of the magnificient hunters on which they were mounted. I should think that I saw the pick of the hunters of England on Zeebrugge Mole that day, and a number of beautiful polo ponies which were being used to carry officers' baggage. The officers were a wonderful company; the Queen's two brothers, the Duke of Teck and Prince Algy, were serving as regimental officers in the 1st and 2nd Life Guards respectively. I had shared an office in the Embassy in Vienna for three years with the former when he was Military and I Naval Attaché in Austria, and I met a number of other friends. There were five lots of two brothers and one of three in the brigade; in one case the elder was a subaltern and the younger a captain. There were several officers who had never served in the Army before. I knew one of these who was 42, a second lieutenant in the "Blues," and met another second lieutenant of over 40; the former was killed a few days



HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY BRIGADE DISEMBARKING ZEEBRUGGE MOLE
6TH OCTOBER, 1914



GROUP OF OFFICERS OF ROYAL HORSE GUARDS AND *LURCHER*, ZEEBRUGGE MOLE

later. Then followed the Royals, looking very workmanlike and efficient, mounted on the horses they had brought with them from South Africa.

The last day of that landing I stood on the raised footpath of the mole viaduct—almost exactly where the submarine *C*3 was to blow up herself and 100 yards of it, three and a half years later—and watched the Household Cavalry and Royals ride out into the blue of a lovely still autumn evening, to the distant boom of the guns at Antwerp.

Before the end of the war I was to see soldiers of every description, under varying circumstances, but that glimpse of every arm of our splendid Regular Army will always be an outstanding memory—a gallant company of knights and men-at-arms marching into Flanders to give battle to the King's enemies, as their forebears had done at intervals during the last 300 years. Their bearing was splendid, and I watched them with pride and some envy, when I thought of the dull vigil which probably lay before the Navy in a great Continental war.

I went back to Harwich the next day and learnt that on the 6th October, *E*9, when patrolling off the Ems, had torpedoed and sunk the enemy's destroyer *S*126. This was one of the vessels which had been hunting our submarines for several weeks, and Horton's success was the result of infinite patience and skill. I wrote at the time : " To get one of those wriggling destroyers is like shooting snipe with a rifle. Horton has spent several hours at a time stalking them, but this was the first torpedo he has fired. The enemy's submarines have fired 11 torpedoes at our destroyers in the past week without success, and ours don't trouble to be anything like as elusive as theirs."

After the sinking of the three armoured cruisers the remaining two were removed, and the Narrow Seas were only occupied by Tyrwhitt's force and mine. This seemed to cause the Admiralty some concern, as from the submarine reports it was evident the enemy were anxious to keep the Ems open.

On 8th October *E*4 sighted a white hospital ship flying a large red cross flag ; she chased her on the surface, whereupon the hospital ship hauled down her red cross flag and increased speed. *E*4 could not overtake her, but later saw her entering the Western Ems. She was evidently being used as a look-out ship.

After Horton's exploit the German destroyers were very careful and generally remained in shoal water behind the banks, where our submarines could not get at them; their submarines were evidently sent out to stalk ours and several more stalemate encounters occurred. On the 9th October a German submarine broke surface only 50 yards from *E*10, too close to fire at.

On 10th October I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief giving him the condition generally of the "Oversea" flotilla, and submitted proposals for future operations, sending at the same time a copy to the Chief of Staff. There was some opposition at the Admiralty to the Baltic enterprise, as it was feared that Denmark might be compromised by the passage of submarines through the Sound, so I tried to overcome the opposition thus:

PROPOSED OPERATIONS.

"I understand we cannot send vessels through the Sound without compromising Denmark, but I submit that it is very much to Germany's interest to maintain Denmark's neutrality, and the latter could hardly be held responsible for the passing of a submarine without a Danish pilot.

In the 'Naval Notes' of 4th October it is reported that the two German cruisers patrolling the southern entrance of the Sound have recently been joined by eight torpedo boats. I consider that a submarine attack on these vessels presents no great difficulty, and, if it could be carried out without compromising Denmark, should be attempted. The moral effect would be great.

In 'Naval Notes,' 7th October, it is stated that the Germans, alarmed by the appearance of British submarines in the Kattegat, stopped the exit of all merchant shipping from Lübeck for 24 hours. I would submit, that the enemy be given good cause for alarm, and loss might be inflicted on his trade and on neutral shipping carrying contraband, with little or no risk to ourselves. Even if vessels are not captured, our presence in the Kattegat, examining ships, would cause anxiety and inconvenience, and would certainly raise the shipping insurance.

At the commencement of the war a great deal of trade passed Horn Reef and inside Heligoland; from our submarine reports, this trade has almost entirely ceased. On the other hand, *E*1 and *E*5 report a great many vessels, flying the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish ensigns in the Kattegat; many of them were doubtless carrying contraband; some of them may have been German under a neutral flag.

I would suggest the occupation of the Kattegat for a few days at a time by destroyers and submarines. The entrance to the Sound and Belts would be watched by the submarines by day. The duty might be carried out by destroyers at night. Both would be well placed to attack the enemy's cruisers should they emerge. Or if it is considered advisable to withdraw the destroyers by night to avoid risk of their being cut off, the submarines could watch by night, provided moonlight nights are selected. The destroyers might run some risk of being caught to leeward of their supports in a strong northerly blow, sufficient to reduce their speed below that of enemy cruisers, should the latter get past our submarines; but if they exercise good judgment there should be no risk of this. I would suggest the stationing of two submarines off Horn Reef during the operations, with orders to attack any vessels proceeding from the Heligoland Bight to the northward; their primary object, however, being to report by wireless telegraphy if any considerable force proceeds to the northward.

A combined destroyer and submarine operation, supported at a distance by cruisers, on the lines I have indicated, would surely cause some annoyance and might well inflict considerable loss on the enemy. If you approve, I would like to take part in it, using *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* to link the submarines off the Belts with the destroyers acting in the Kattegat. I would suggest that the latter should keep clear of the land during daylight, when approaching the Kattegat, and arrive at their stations so as to commence operations at dawn. The submarines can look after themselves for at least a fortnight. [It will be seen that our views on the endurance of the personnel had already considerably lengthened.]

In the event of the enemy coming out of the Heligoland Bight in force, I propose to proceed with all available

submarines to wait off his ports for his return. As mines have been laid by the enemy, and the minefields are without doubt marked by buoys, I submit that an aerial reconnaissance be made without delay, and repeated from time to time, as it is very important that our submarines should know the position of the buoyed channels which the enemy will make for. Submarines will probably be the first to know of the enemy's exit, and they can only report by proceeding to within wireless reach of some vessel or station. To ensure important information being reported as soon as possible, I would suggest that in future a few destroyers or a cruiser should be within wireless touch of the submarines at stated times night and day."

I wrote to the Chief of Staff on the 12th to say that if the Baltic enterprise was approved, I proposed to tow the submarines as far as possible to conserve their fuel. They would proceed independently down the Kattegat and endeavour to arrive off the Sound, unseen by the enemy or neutral vessels, then go through the Sound, preferably by night, evading the German patrol off the southern end. When their fuel ran low they would use Libau as a base for some weeks.

I was telegraphed for when this was received, and on the 13th October, after some discussion, was told that I could send three submarines into the Baltic to remain for several weeks, based on Libau or some other Russian port. I telegraphed to the Commander-in-Chief at once that *E*1 (Lieut.-Commander N. Laurence), *E*9 (Lieut.-Commander M. Horton) and *E*11 (Lieut.-Commander M. Nasmith) would sail for the Baltic the following day, 14th October. He replied wishing the submarines all success.

I learnt later that an hour after I dispatched my letter to the Commander-in-Chief he telegraphed to the Admiralty asking that the question of sending the submarines into the Baltic might receive consideration. I noted in my diary: "A regular case of mental telepathy. I had a most successful day at the Admiralty, and carried my point. Laurence, Horton and Nasmith will have an opportunity of winning imperishable fame."

During my visit to the Admiralty I learnt that it was proposed to carry out mining operations in the Bight, with the old cruiser

minelayers. The thought of those waters being fouled for the submarines by indiscriminate minelaying, alarmed me; and on 14th October I wrote to the Chief of Staff and made some suggestions, based on a submarine reconnaissance in which *D*3 (Lieut.-Commander C. Boyle) and *D*1 (Lieut.-Commander A. D. Cochrane) particularly distinguished themselves. Boyle went into shoal water inside the Amrun Bank, and off the Sylt, penetrating farther than had hitherto been attempted. Destroyers and trawlers were located patrolling in shoal water, and behaving, like those off the Ems, with much greater caution than formerly. This pointed to the channel inside Heligoland to the northward being kept clear and free of mines. Cochrane was most enterprising off the Ems; he found the channels constantly occupied by trawlers and destroyers, but the latter had evidently given up the day submarine hunting patrol after *S*126 was sunk. Lieut.-Commander C. S. Benning in *E*5 obtained useful information from the Vyl Shoal and Graa Deep lightships, having induced the captains to come alongside in their own boats by offering them tins of soup!

I suggested we might mine the enemy's waters, when this could be done with some prospect of the operation being carried out unseen and unsuspected. For instance, to the northward of Heligoland, across the route the enemy's ships might use when they came out; to the northward of the large buoy marking the northern end of the minefield located by *E*6; to the southward of the minefield located by *E*7; between these two minefields, and close inshore between Ems and Norderney.

Before these operations are carried out, aerial reconnaissance should be made to locate the buoys marking the enemy's minefields. As a good deal of this mining work would have to be done by shallow-draught craft, I suggested that *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* should be fitted to carry mines. I recommended that before mining the Ems an attack should be delivered by destroyers; a division would be quite sufficient to deal with anything that might be found off there at night. An attack would probably keep the night patrol in harbour for a bit, and enable us to mine the waters unseen. It would appear to be questionable whether we could mine the Western Ems channel—which was frequently used by the enemy—without

infringing Dutch neutrality, and I suggested that the Dutch Government be asked whether their merchantmen use that channel. In conclusion: "I submit that the points I have raised may be very seriously considered; the loss of a small ship or two in action off the enemy's coast, if such loss occurs, which is doubtful, is surely preferable to the certainty of occasional loss from the enemy's submarines in our waters, and in the Narrow Seas, with little or no prospect of retaliation."

I found the original of this memorandum in my safe in August, 1923, when I was Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, with the following personal letter from me to the Chief of Staff.

> "I hope that my submission will be favourably considered. Since indiscriminate minelaying can only be a source of danger to us—and it would be folly to risk our minelayers unless we are going to obtain some adequate result—I beg that you will recommend that I may be allowed to lead them to the selected positions in *Lurcher*. Commodore (T) and Captain (D) obviously cannot lead them in their cruisers. The inshore minelaying will have to be done by shallow-draught vessels; therefore I beg that *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* may be fitted as minelayers in order that Waistell or I may lead. Of course the *Lurcher* would not carry mines when leading cruiser minelayers. Aerial reconnaissance first, please—and occasional destroyer attacks on the Ems at night."

I am afraid I was very insistent and rather a nuisance in those days, and I think most of my offensive efforts remained pigeon-holed in the War Staff offices, though I understand, with the exception of the above memorandum, they are all in the archives now.

On the 17th October, the *Undaunted*, which had just been commissioned by Captain Fox (late of the *Amphion*), in company with four destroyers, fell in with and sank four German torpedo boats. They belonged to the Ems flotilla, which had given up submarine hunting, after their sister *S*126 had been sunk by *E*9. One officer and 29 men were picked up out of about 240 Germans engaged. It was learnt from the prisoners that they were scouting rather far afield to see

what ships we had in those waters. One of the four vessels had developed a leaky condenser, which reduced her speed to 19 knots, and the other three stood by her. The German officer who was in the last to sink, stated that his vessel was hit at least 40 times, but was not in a sinking condition when the captain gave the order to blow her up, although entirely out of action as regards guns and torpedoes. They had orders to blow up their ships to prevent their capture. The forepart blew up but the after-part remained afloat, and as the helm was jammed to starboard she steamed in a circle, and continued to return to the survivors who had jumped overboard; thus many were killed, as they could not swim out of her way in their life-saving waistcoats.

*E*8 reported that she sighted a German hospital ship off Terschelling at dawn on the 18th, steaming to the westward, and she closed submerged, apparently unseen, to within close torpedo range. A German seaplane evidently sighted *E*8 on the surface during the day, and on the following day a German submarine was seen diving about *E*8's patrol area.

The enemy announced that they had sunk *E*3 on the 18th October. In reporting her non-return I remarked that the German seaplanes and submarines had been very active off the Ems and were probably working together in the manner I recommended off the Firth of Forth. As the enemy had been able to identify *E*3's number, she must have been sighted on the surface, and this pointed to her being stalked and torpedoed by a submarine. This was a risk to which our submarines were fully alive.*

The hospital ship which had been sighted under suspicious circumstances on the 8th by *D*4, and early on the 18th by *D*8, was arrested by Tyrwhitt in the *Arethusa* that afternoon. She claimed to be a hospital ship, searching for the survivors of the German destroyers sunk on the previous day, but from her movements, which had been watched by our submarines, and the orders found in her, she was undoubtedly being used as a scout.† The enemy seemed to have a different code and mentality to ours.

* We know now that this was *E*3's fate.

† She was condemned in our Prize Court, 21st May, 1915, "Official History of the War: Naval Operations," Vol. I, page 221.

After the action of the Heligoland Bight the Admiralty wished to submit the names of a few officers and men to His Majesty for the award of honours, and to publish them in the *London Gazette*, with the despatches of the officers commanding the units engaged. Three submarine captains had had opportunities of specially distinguishing themselves, but I found it difficult to select subordinates for special recommendation, for reasons which I reported thus:

> "Commanding Officers of all the submarines which took part in the operations in the Heligoland Bight on the 28th August, and those engaged in the various reconnaissances prior to the operations, have unanimously expressed to me their admiration of the cool and gallant behaviour of the officers and men under their command.
>
> When a submarine is submerged, her captain alone is able to see what is taking place; the success of the enterprise and the safety of the vessel depend on his skill and nerve and the prompt, precise execution of his orders.
>
> Our submarines have been pioneers in waters which might well have been mined. They have been subjected to skilful and well thought out anti-submarine tactics, by a highly trained and determined enemy, attacked by gunfire and torpedo, driven to lie on the bottom at great depths to preserve battery power, hunted for hours at a time by hostile torpedo craft; and during the engagement of 28th August they were forced to dive under our light cruisers and battle cruisers, in order to avoid interfering with the latter's movements.
>
> Sudden alterations of course and depth, the swish of propellers overhead and the concussion of bursting shell, give an indication to the crew of the risks to which they are being exposed. It speaks well for the *morale* of these young officers and men and their faith in their captains, that they have invariably carried out their duties quietly, keenly and confidently, under conditions which might well have tried the most hardened veterans.
>
> These duties in no way differ from those in peace exercises, and it is only when an accident occurs that it is possible for a junior officer or man in a submarine to stand out above his fellows. Commanding officers of submarines are of the opinion that it is impossible to single out individuals when all perform their duties so admirably, and in this I concur.
>
> If a naval medal is eventually given, a clasp for submarine work in the Heligoland Bight would be highly appreciated."

The despatches had of course to be edited, as it was undesirable to publish any information which might be of value to the enemy. My report of the action, I was told, was unprintable, and I was directed to forward another suitable for publication, covering all submarine operations to date.

The first Naval Despatch of the war was dated 21st October (the anniversary of Trafalgar), and brought submarine events up to 17th October.*

We learnt from Russian sources that *E*1 and *E*9 had arrived safely in the Baltic, and on 25th October I was able to report fully on *E*11's failure to get through the Sound. In my opinion the moral courage displayed by Nasmith in giving up his attempt to pass through the Sound, was as admirable as the bravery and enterprise which won him the Victoria Cross in the Marmora later. Unfortunately *E*11 had developed an engine defect, which delayed the three submarines at Gorleston until the morning of the 15th. I considered it essential that the submarines should pass through the Sound during the same night, and arranged that they should proceed as far as possible in company and enter the Sound at two-hour intervals. The senior submarine officer, Laurence, of *E*1, under the impression that *E*11 would be ready to sail at a certain hour, left with *E*9 four hours earlier, and if all had gone well as he anticipated, *E*11 would have followed four hours astern of *E*1 as originally intended. This was leaving too much to chance and, as it turned out, *E*11 had to postpone her attempt until the night after *E*1 and *E*9 made their passage.

In the meantime, Laurence had unsuccessfully attacked a German light cruiser; thus the enemy were aware of the presence of a hostile submarine and, concluding she was British, took

* *The London Gazette* of Tuesday, 20th Oct., 1914. Third Supplement, Friday, 23rd Oct., 1914.

steps to prevent others passing through the Sound. *E*11 dived into the entrance of the Sound on the afternoon of the 18th October, preparatory to passing through on the surface that night. It would seem certain that her approach was reported and her intentions suspected. After dark Nasmith rose to the surface and shortly afterwards *E*11 narrowly escaped being rammed by a destroyer, by using extreme helm and running out of the channel. When he turned into the channel again he followed a vessel which suddenly stopped; just in time it was seen to be another destroyer, so Nasmith dived and proceeded submerged for a while. When he rose again he sighted four vessels which were evidently patrolling; one of these came full speed at *E*11, which promptly dived, the vessel passing directly overhead. Although in neutral waters, these vessels, which used coloured recognition signals, were undoubtedly hostile destroyers; they did not, it is true, open fire, but they made repeated attempts to sink *E*11 by ramming. If successful, her loss would of course have been put down to accidental collision.

Nasmith decided that it was impracticable to attempt to get through that night and went to the bottom at 2 a.m. At daylight he stood out to sea submerged to get clear of the patrols, in order to charge the batteries on the surface. On the way out, when outside territorial waters, Nasmith sighted a submarine which, from her silhouette, he took to be *U*3. He fired two torpedoes which fortunately missed, for she was a Danish submarine! Shortly after he rose to charge his batteries the track of a torpedo was seen to pass ahead of *E*11 and the torpedo leapt out of the water at the end of its run, on which Nasmith of course had to submerge again, and in order to conserve his batteries lay on the bottom for a time. When he rose again to try and charge, *E*11 was sighted by a seaplane which called up destroyers, and these proceeded to hunt her whenever she came to the surface. Realising that it would be impossible to get through the shoal waters of the Sound in the face of the hostile forces which had been gathered to hunt *E*11, Nasmith decided to return to Harwich.

He begged me to let him make another attempt, some days later, when the enemy were likely to be less alert. As it was obvious that the Germans had no intention of paying any regard

to the neutrality of Denmark or Sweden, I recommended that we should be content for the time being, and leave *E*1 and *E*9 in the Baltic for the winter, where their presence would of course be a continual annoyance and anxiety to the enemy. Arrangements could be made to send torpedoes and a liberal supply of spare parts to them via Archangel. This was approved.

I asked that representations should be made to the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish Governments, on similar lines to those made to the Dutch, to the effect that if their men-of-war cruised outside territorial waters, they must necessarily run risks of being torpedoed by submarines. The uncertainty added greatly to the responsibilities of our submarine officers, who felt very strongly that while manœuvring submerged to identify a suspicious man-of-war, the opportunity of delivering a successful attack might well slip by; further, by waiting, the risk of being rammed would be greatly increased, should she be hostile.

*E*1 and *E*9 succeeded in passing through unsuspected and undetected. The difficulties of the passage, even under these favourable conditions, can be appreciated by reference to a very simple detailed account, given by Lieut.-Commander Goodhart, of *E*8's entry into the Baltic in August, 1915.*

The penalty of failure is to be found in the story of *E*13's fate when she ran ashore on a Danish island. Despite the presence of a Danish torpedo boat, German destroyers shelled the crew until the survivors jumped overboard, and then they fired at those swimming with machine guns, killing and wounding 15 of her crew of 31. They would have murdered the remainder had not the Danish torpedo boat got into the line of fire to protect them.†

British submarines in the Baltic inflicted severe loss, and caused intense concern to the enemy; of their moral effect there is abundant proof in German records. In addition to torpedoeing a battleship, a battle cruiser and an armoured cruiser which were severely damaged but did not sink, an armoured cruiser, a light cruiser and a destroyer were sunk; these were all well screened by destroyers. Our submarines also captured or sank a number of merchant vessels carrying iron ore to Germany, and in every case infinite pains were taken

* "Official History of the War: Naval Operations," Vol. IV, pages 92-94.

† "Official History of the War: Naval Operations," Vol. III, pages 135-136.

to secure the lives of their crews—often at a considerable risk to themselves.

Libau having been abandoned by the Russians as a naval base, our submarines often set out during the winter months from Lapvik in the wake of ice-breakers before they reached open waters. During these enterprises their devoted crews endured appalling hardships; after cruising on the surface, their hatches, torpedo tube covers and periscopes were often covered with ice, and this necessitated deep dives to warmer water before they could be freed of ice sufficiently to operate. The names of Laurence, Horton, Goodhart (who later lost his life in a gallant effort to save the crew of *K*13), Halahan (who was lost with his crew in *E*18), and Cromie (who was murdered on the steps of the British Embassy at Petrograd, facing a howling mob of Bolshevists) will surely live in the annals of the submarine service. Their achievements added honour and prestige to our arms.

CHAPTER VI

LORD FISHER AT THE ADMIRALTY

Visit to Dover Patrol; Co-operation with Army on Belgian Coast; Visit Submarine Patrol Flotillas; Prince Louis resigns; Lord Fisher appointed First Sea Lord; Loss of *D*5; Correspondence with Lord Fisher.

TOWARDS the end of the month I was directed to visit all the patrol flotillas, to confer with the Admirals, and report generally on the working of the submarines, particularly in regard to their employment against an enemy attempting a raid or invasion. I went to Dover on the 23rd October, and finding that Rear-Admiral Hood (who had taken over the command of the newly constituted Dover Patrol) was on the Belgian coast, I went over in a destroyer to see him. I found him flying his flag in the *Crusader*, a "Tribal" class destroyer, bombarding the right flank of the German Army. His force consisted of two shallow draught monitors bought from Brazil, whilst still building in this country, the *Brilliant* and *Sirius*, old second class cruisers, a couple of old sloops, a "flat iron" gunboat (which was built about the time of the Crimean War!) and some old British and French destroyers; these were busily shelling the German trenches over the sand dunes. The Germans had a sausage-shaped captive balloon up, and the Allies a spherical balloon opposite it. The firing was tremendous (or seemed so in those days); one could see the shrapnel bursting over the enemy's lines. The Germans were replying, but their fire was not so heavy as ours, and was not very accurate in our direction. Hood was, of course, flying his flag in the forefront of the action. He told me he thought it was rather absurd firing thousands of rounds at nothing—as far as he knew from his own observation—but messages from a wireless station on a motor car run by a naval officer, and signals from Nieuport repeating telephone messages from the captive balloon, were so full of praise and satisfaction, he supposed they were doing some good.

It was all very interesting and reminded me of an incident which occurred ten years earlier. When I was a Commander in the Naval Intelligence Department in 1903-04, in charge of the section which dealt with the Naval side of the Russo-Japanese War, I reported on the use both the Russians and Japanese made of obsolete vessels under similar conditions off Port Arthur. Prince Louis of Battenberg, the Director of Naval Intelligence in forwarding the report, questioned the wisdom of scrapping our old ships to the extent we were doing; they might well be of value under similar circumstances. The Sea Lord who minuted the paper remarked, that such conditions could never occur in any war in which we were likely to be engaged.

After visiting Dover I went to Chatham to see the Commander-in-Chief at the Nore to suggest some changes in the running of the local patrol; and then to Newcastle to visit the Admiral of Patrols, who was flying his flag in the *St. George*, and the submarines based on the *Alecto* there. While at Newcastle I inspected a ship that was fitting out as a submarine depot for the Russian Navy when the war broke out. As she could not go to the Black Sea or Baltic, I recommended the Admiralty to buy her, to mother the new submarines which were beginning to come into service fairly rapidly. This was approved, she joined the *Maidstone* at Harwich shortly afterwards, and was a valuable addition to our Oversea Submarine Flotilla until the end of the war. Then I went to Leith to see how the submarines in the Firth of Forth were getting on, and went back to London on the 28th October. The next day I heard of Prince Louis's resignation.

Prince Louis was a sea officer, and a Fleet Commander second to none in our service. He had the gift of bringing out all that was best in his Captains, and gave them opportunities of handling his fleet when cruising and exercising, which were invaluable training for those who aspired to flag rank. I shall always feel grateful for the encouragement and help he gave me, when I commanded a vessel under his flag.

His resignation on 28th October, 1914, is a difficult subject to write about. I will quote the only mention of his name in the "Official History of the War."*

* "Naval Operations," Vol. I, page 246.

> "In view of the rising agitation in the Press against everyone German or of German descent, Prince Louis of Battenberg thought it right to offer his resignation as First Sea Lord."

Not a very generous epitaph to the services of a Flag Officer who had done so much for the Navy, and had shared with the First Lord the responsibility for the mobilisation and dispositions of the Fleet on the eve of the war.

I prefer Winston Churchill's in the "World Crisis, 1911-14." After referring to the cruel persecution he suffered from that most poisonous of all reptiles, the anonymous letter writer—he said:

> "I was, therefore, not surprised when towards the end of October Prince Louis asked to be relieved of his burden; the uncomplaining dignity with which he made this sacrifice, and accepted self-effacement, as a requital for the great and faithful service he had rendered to the British Nation, was worthy of a sailor and a Prince."

One more quotation—from a letter he wrote me a few days later:

> "I am deeply grateful to you for your kind thought of me at this, the most bitter moment of my life. The trust of my brother officers is what I value most."

When Lord Fisher's appointment to succeed Prince Louis was announced, the whole Service knew that there would be an upheaval. He was a wonderful friend to all who had served him well, some of whom had rather fallen by the way, and good appointments must be found for them all. Those who had ever dared to differ from him must of course be eliminated. He made no secret of his dislikes and took pride in his ruthless vindictiveness, in fact boasted that no one who fell foul of him ever escaped. He was very bitter against Sturdee, I do not know why, but it was a long-standing feud; he had every reason to disapprove of me, after I had the temerity to give him my views about submarines,* so Sturdee and I were to be got rid of at once. But he reckoned without the First Lord, who was not disposed to let him have a free hand to wreak his vengeance, or get rid of

* See pages 54-55.

his victims, at any rate, until suitable appointments could be found for them.

Fortunately for Sturdee there was an opening for him almost at once, and he was given command of the two Battle Cruisers, which were hastily prepared for the pursuit of von Spee's Cruiser Squadron. Within five weeks of his departure from the Admiralty, Sturdee had fought the action of the Falkland Islands, and won an honoured place in our Naval History.

Lord Fisher dealt with my case with characteristic vigour. Directly he arrived he gave orders that a certain officer, commanding a cruiser in the North Sea, was to come to the Admiralty, without waiting for his relief. He made no secret that this officer was to succeed me, directly I could be got rid of. In the meantime he appointed him to be one of his naval assistants. A couple of days later Lord Fisher arranged a meeting over which he presided; I was summoned from Harwich to attend, and told to sit at the opposite end of the table with Addison, my technical assistant, beside me. On either side of the table were all the principal Admiralty officials.

He opened the meeting by telling us his intentions as to future submarine construction, and turning to the Superintendent of Contracts, he said that he would make his wife a widow and his house a dunghill, if he brought paper work or red tape into the business; he wanted submarines, not contracts. He meant to have them built in eight months; if he did not get them in eight months he would commit *hara-kari*. Addison, in an aside which I think Lord Fisher must have heard, remarked, "Now we know exactly how long he has to live!" I laughed, and I suppose looked incredulous. It seemed absurd; we had not been able to wring submarines out of Vickers and Chatham Dockyard under two and a half years. He fixed me with a ferocious glare, and said, "If anyone thwarts me, he had better commit *hara-kari* too."

By that time I felt pretty belligerent too, and the same evening (3rd November) handed him a paper commencing thus:

> "First Sea Lord. In view of your remarks this morning as to the vital importance of providing as many submarines as possible in the shortest possible time, regardless of cost and departmental restrictions, I submit as a first action that every endeavour should be made to accelerate the completion of submarines under construction and recently ordered."

Then followed the action I proposed. I enclosed a list of the vessels building, and their dates of completion under the existing procedure; a list of all the submarines which had come into the service during the four years I had been in command, which only amounted to 21, in spite of all our efforts to overcome the monopoly and other restrictions; and a paper on the development of the Submarine Service which I had had printed for my successor, and the new Third Sea Lord, when I was about to leave to join the *Tiger*. My paper was, in fact, a reiteration and amplification of the answer I had given Lord Fisher less than four months before, when he asked me why we had not built more submarines. I knew he gave out that I had made a great mess of the Submarine Service, and I wanted to show him that I was not in the least repentant of anything I had done, that I stood to my guns, and was quite ready to go down with my colours flying. It may not have been tactful, but when one is unhappily involved in war, there is only one way of waging it—to my mind—and I would be ashamed of myself now if I had met Lord Fisher's onslaught otherwise. Of course it only made him all the more determined to get rid of me, but the First Lord would not allow me to be interfered with, as far as the sea-going side of my appointment was concerned, and I went back to Harwich to await events.

Meanwhile for about a week an engagement was fought over my future—so I was told by the First Lord's secretary and two of Fisher's men, who were friends of mine. To one of the latter Lord Fisher declared: "If that young man [Churchill] who writes minutes in red ink thinks he is going to run the submarine service, he is mistaken; I shall go to the Cabinet."* To the other he said: "Why can't that fellow Keyes go to sea and fight like Tyrwhitt!" It was meant for my ears, and meant to hurt. As a matter of fact, as I have mentioned, I had a written order forbidding me to go to sea in a destroyer, and they would not give me a cruiser; it is true I had had to ignore the order two or three times, but it was

* The First Lord always wrote all his minutes in red ink so Lord Fisher wrote his in green.

definite enough. From that moment it was a dead letter to me; I felt free, and took the earliest opportunity of getting a breath of fresh salt air in the Heligoland Bight. The open sea was so refreshing, inspiring and comforting after the depressing atmosphere of the Admiralty, in which it seemed only possible to see the dangers and difficulties of any undertaking, instead of the goal beyond them.

On 3rd November the enemy made their first appearance with surface craft off our coasts, and a gunboat and two old destroyers off Gorleston narrowly escaped destruction. $D3$, $D5$ and $E10$ were at Gorleston, the two former about to go into the Heligoland Bight, and the latter into the Kattegat. They immediately put to sea on hearing gunfire. Unfortunately $D5$ struck one of our mines, and was lost with nearly all her crew. If it were not so well known, I would hesitate to mention the fact that, when war broke out, our mines frequently went off like a *feu de joie* when they were being laid, or parted their moorings and floated about all over the surface of the North Sea after every gale, or tripped their sinkers and drifted still submerged, towing their moorings in the strong tideways until they re-anchored themselves at slack water. The only satisfactory thing, from our point of view, was that the pistols were very ineffective, and often failed to explode when we bumped into them. But $D5$ was very unlucky, for the submerged mine she struck had an efficient pistol. She was commanded by Lieut.-Commander G. Herbert, a submarine officer of the best type, who reported that he was proceeding on the surface at full speed towards gunfire, when $D5$ struck a mine right aft and sank in less than a minute. Herbert and five or six men were on deck and a few more managed to come up from below, but there was a considerable sea and only Herbert and a few men managed to keep afloat until fishing vessels arrived and picked them up.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the extent of the stir which Lord Fisher's re-entry into the naval administration caused in the Admiralty and throughout the Service. His retirement four years earlier had been hailed with a sigh of relief by the Navy generally, but I could not help feeling that, now that we were engaged in a bloody ruthless war, his masterful personality and the unbounded energy he would devote to the

production of *matériel*, linked with the vision, determination and enterprise of Winston Churchill—who was entirely responsible for recalling him—might well be of infinite value in the conduct of the war. I find I wrote on the 7th November, while I was waiting at Harwich to learn my fate:

> "I do feel that Fisher's reappearance is for the good of the Nation, and that we shall make war now. That is the only thing that matters, or that I ought to care about, whatever my fate may be."

On about the seventh day of the contest over my future, the following letter from Lord Fisher was sent down to me by hand:

> "Dear Keyes. Yesterday I arranged for the progress of the newly ordered 20 submarines and the First Lord concurred with me in putting S. S. Hall on the job—the First Lord has got some name for him—I can't remember it—and he will also look after the building of those now in progress, which will relieve Addison of that part of his present duties, and so S. S. Hall will take on Craven. I think this is all. But Graham Greene will circulate the orders.
>
> Yours in haste,
>
> 8/11/14. Fisher.
>
> "*On no* account imagine that I have any designs on you! If I had any such designs you would certainly have been told—but, like many other things, I have not yet mastered on what basis our submarines harm the enemy more than themselves! But there is someone now who suits me as Chief of Staff* so I am quickly learning. 'Now we shan't be long!'"

To which I replied:

> "Dear Lord Fisher. Thank you for your letter. I am delighted to hear that you have no designs on me, for I have no illusions as to the result if you had. I must confess that I thought your advent would mean my eclipse, but like others who may have had personal misgivings, I was glad

* Rear-Admiral H. Oliver succeeded Vice-Admiral Sir D. Sturdee.

because I felt it meant that—' we shan't be long '—in making war, which is the only thing that matters—besides, if I am translated to another sphere, I shall only regard it as Kismet and trust to my luck to give me opportunities of engaging the enemy and proving that you were right in promoting me nine years ago."

I wanted him to realise that I had no wish to stay on sufferance and was not afraid of his being able to keep me under.

A few days later I met Lord Fisher in a passage at the Admiralty and he came up to me beaming, caught hold of the lapels of my coat and with a most friendly grin said " I got your beautiful letter." Then he went on to tell me that whenever I came up to the Admiralty I must come and see him, and if there was anything I wanted to let him know.

I think but for other influences which are best forgotten, I could have worked with Lord Fisher, he had such wonderful drive, and I think it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that he was one of the greatest producers of *matériel* in the history of the country. There was no need for him to commit *hara-kari*; everything he set out to produce, even submarines, sprang into being under the spell of his forceful personality. If he approved of a policy, it was carried out on the instant, nothing and nobody had ever been allowed to stand in his way—until he clashed with Churchill.

CHAPTER VII

A LOST OPPORTUNITY

Change in disposition of Patrol Flotillas; A wild-goose chase; Loss of *D2*; French submarine arrives at Harwich; A lost opportunity; *E11* attacks German battleship; *Archimede* has narrow escape; Christmas Day Air Raid.

THROUGHOUT the war a number of soldiers, sailors and politicians seemed to be obsessed by a fear of invasion; I took it more or less seriously at that time, as it did not occur to me that those in authority had not some definite information to go upon. I went very fully into the matter, therefore, and in forwarding the report I was called upon to make, I based the recommendations it contained on experience gained in pre-War exercises, added to war experience to date. The latter, I said, had brought little to light, except that a well-handled submarine was more immune from attack than even submarine officers anticipated, and a well-handled destroyer keeping a good look-out, was fairly safe from submarine attack.

With regard to invasion or a raid in force, the different sections of the coast had frequently been tested in our patrol flotilla exercises; sometimes over 100 vessels being engaged. Conditions were more favourable to the defenders than they were likely to be in this war, since the defending commander knew that his section would be attacked within a defined limit of time. Yet in every case, without exception, a landing-place on an open beach had been successfully secured. It was not to be supposed that the invader exercised any brilliant strategy or the defender was inert. They both did the obvious thing; the invader arrived before dawn with a number of torpedo craft, which swept towards the enemy's submarine stations, in order to make the enemy's submarines dive at a considerable distance, 20 miles or even more from their objective. These facts proved, as I had always strongly urged, that the submarines of the patrol flotillas could not be relied upon to inflict loss on enemy's transports landing

troops on an open beach, at a distance from their base, unless sufficient warning could be given to enable them to be in the vicinity when the enemy arrived.

Dispositions which were considered the best to meet the most likely action on the part of an enemy, compelled to act within the short period of a peace exercise, and which had only been previously tested for a few days at a time, had been maintained for several weeks in some areas; and I had viewed with much concern the amount of sea work, and consequent wear and tear of machinery, which many of the submarines of the patrol flotillas had been carrying out, without commensurate military advantage.

It was obviously impossible, with the force at our command, to be ready for the enemy everywhere, particularly when one did not know within several months when, and within 300 miles where, he was likely to deliver an attack. I thought it was about time to reconsider our position, and employ our patrol flotillas sparingly, with a view to preserving their efficiency, and concentrating them as far as possible in readiness, in positions where they could best prevent the enemy from inflicting injury of vital importance. Some risk must necessarily be taken elsewhere. In fact I recommended a return to the dispositions which had been in force when war broke out, but were departed from by the order of the Admiralty, or local Authorities, to meet the dangers which were feared, but had not as yet come to pass. It was certain that the enemy would not attempt to land on an open beach, unless the weather was fair and the wind westerly. It was presumed that some warning would be received of the embarkation at the enemy's ports. On the receipt of the information I proposed to send some of the "D" and "E" class submarines to cruise off likely landing-places, while the weather was favourable for disembarkation, others to the Heligoland Bight, to watch off the ports from which an expedition was likely to leave.

Presumably only an advanced force of infantry, cavalry and light artillery would be disembarked in the open; heavy artillery, transport, etc., and the main disembarkation would have to be taken to a harbour with quays. I proposed, therefore, to station all the available submarines of the patrol flotillas, in the principal harbours of the East coast; to extend the gunfire of those that were defended, and protect others, such as Yarmouth and Blyth

which were not defended. I wished to use the submarines, in fact, exactly as I had done off the Humber during the 1913 manœuvres. One or two transports sunk in the entrance of a harbour might well block the channel for the remainder. In this connection, the provisions of a few blockships, held in readiness, to be sunk in the channel or foul of the quays, was worth consideration.

I was convinced that no consideration of shallow water, mines, screens, etc., would deter the commanding officers of our submarines from driving home their attacks, by day or night, if opportunity offered. I had no doubt whatever of the ultimate result of an attempt at invasion, but wished to place on record that we had an insufficient force of submarines to meet invasion in every possible locality. I was aware that the views I had expressed would be unwelcome to Lord Fisher, but thought it best he should realise the limitations of the small submarines and destroyers of the coast patrols, and avoid placing a fictitious value on their capabilities.

My paper was considered by the newly constituted War Staff, and a week later the Admiralty issued "A memorandum as to the working of the Patrol Flotillas (to cancel present arrangements)." It was based on my recommendations, and put an end to the procedure which, in one area, caused me much concern.

Up to that time the enemy had not bombarded an undefended coast town, and it did not occur to me that he would do so, any more than that he would sink unarmed merchantmen and passenger ships by torpedo, without giving the non-combatants a chance of escape. I remembered, however, that in one of our pre-War exercises, I arrived at dawn off the Tees with a raiding force, it having escaped my notice that a battery of six-inch guns, manned by Territorials, existed at Hartlepool. It occured to me that the presence of this battery, which was of course known to the enemy, might serve as an excuse to bombard Hartlepool, particularly if the enemy had learnt from neutral ships using the port, that we had no submarines stationed there. So, when the new memorandum came into force, I suggested that a couple of submarines might be taken from the Dover Patrol (which had been strengthened by a number of French submarines), and stationed at Hartlepool, with orders for one, if not both, to be to seaward of the port before dawn every day. The Chief of Staff

concurred, but only one submarine could be spared to co-operate with the local defence battery at Hartlepool.

When the new disposition was promulgated, the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet asked me why there were six submarines stationed in the Firth of Forth, where there were no ships, and none at Cromarty which was used by valuable ships. I replied that I had always considered submarines would prove invaluable in co-operation with the gun defences of more or less weakly defended harbours such as Cromarty. But the Admiralty considered invasion, or a raid in force, was well within the bounds of possibility, and that the most vital consideration was the defence of certain important harbours, possessing quays, which could be used for disembarkation of heavy artillery, transport, etc., without which decisive results could not be achieved by the enemy. The present disposition was ordered by the Admiralty to meet this possibility, the submarines being divided equally between the Humber, Tyne and Forth areas, which were considered the danger points for invasion or raid. I sent a copy of my reply to the Chief of Staff, who concurred and passed it on to the First Lord and First Sea Lord, who endorsed it with W.S.C. in red and F. in green respectively.

On 14th November an incident occurred, which is hardly worth mentioning except that it was typical of the absurd scares which got about in the early days of the war, and of the extraordinary moral effect submarines had upon those ignorant of their capabilities and limitations. Several signals were received by the Senior Naval Officer at Felixstowe, in the course of the evening, to the effect that a submarine had been seen up the Blackwater, a shallow estuary between Harwich and the Thames. At ten p.m. I received a message from Admiral Sir Richard Poore, Commander-in-Chief at the Nore, saying that there was reason to believe that the three submarines reported to be in the Blackwater were enemy. He directed me to send a party there in motors, and told me to commandeer all suitable steamers, and sink them across the entrance—" this must be done before daylight." The military authorities, he said, had been asked to send guns.

As it would have required a great many ships to block the entrance of the Blackwater at high water, and I did not think for a moment that enemy submarines would venture into a shallow estuary, I need hardly say I did nothing of the sort. But finding

some miles of anti-submarine net under construction at Brightlingsea, I commandeered all the available boats and commenced to lay it across the entrance during the night. At daylight I motored round the coast interviewing all the people who claimed to have seen submarines. Five more were sighted by natives while I was in the neighbourhood; one had been seen to chase, at a speed of quite 20 knots, one of the destroyers which had been sent to hunt for the enemy! The supposed submarines were flights of wild geese or other wild fowl skimming the surface. A wild-goose chase indeed!

On the 23rd November, in very bad weather, Lieut.-Commander Jameson, commanding *D2*, was washed overboard and drowned. He had carried out many daring and valuable reconnaissances, and his untimely death was a great loss to the submarine service. The circumstances were reported to me by his second in command, Lieut. F. E. Oakley, a brilliant Rugby half-back, who played for England in 1913-14. I sent Lieut.-Commander C. Head to command *D2*; he had greatly distinguished himself in a " C " class submarine in pre-War exercises; he was an enterprising aviator in his leisure moments. *D2* sailed again the following day, but was never heard of again. In addition to the three officers of great promise whom I have mentioned, the third officer of *D2*, Lieut.-Commander F. L. Copplestone, deserves a place in submarine records. He had served in submarines some years before, but was invalided out of the Navy in 1906. On rejoining for the war, he begged to be appointed to a submarine in any capacity, and served in a subordinate position in *D2*, though several years older than his shipmates.

Early in October the French Government expressed a wish to send the submarine *Gustave Zede* into the North Sea, and the French Naval Attaché and an officer who was sent over to arrange details, offered to place the vessel under my orders at Harwich. When they learnt, however, what submarines had to face in the way of anti-submarine tactics in the Heligoland Bight, they declared that the crew was not sufficiently trained. I told them that when she was considered ready she would be very welcome at Harwich, and could be maintained by the *Maidstone*. Some time later the French Naval Attaché told me that his Government

would like to repeat the original offer, and if our Admiralty agreed they would place the *Archimede* under my orders. This was approved and she arrived at Harwich on 2nd December. After she had practised rapid diving for some time under Waistell, I decided to take her into the Heligoland Bight on the first favourable opportunity, but none occurred until the 15th December.

We were going through one of the periodical invasion scares, and I was told to keep the "Oversea" submarines in readiness to proceed anywhere they might be required.

Thanks to our Intelligence Service, the Admiralty were aware, on the evening of the 14th, that a force of enemy battle cruisers, cruisers and destroyers were sailing from the Jade River early on the 15th, and returning on the night of the 16th. This was taken to indicate, that the enemy ships might be on our coast at daylight on the 16th; warnings were sent out to the Senior Officers of the Coast Patrols to this effect, and dispositions were made to cut off the enemy's retreat with the 2nd Battle Squadron, Beatty's battle cruisers, an armoured cruiser squadron commanded by Rear-Admiral Pakenham, and Goodenough's light cruisers.

The whole force was to operate under the orders of Vice-Admiral Sir George Warrender, commanding the 2nd Battle Squadron; at that time the most powerful unit of the Grand Fleet. Tyrwhitt's force, consisting of four light cruisers and 23 destroyers, was to wait for orders off Yarmouth.

The battle cruisers sailed from Cromarty, and the other vessels of the Grand Fleet from Scapa Flow; the latter in heavy weather, which prevented their destroyers sailing with them; the Commander-in-Chief therefore informed the Admiralty that he considered the co-operation of Tyrwhitt's destroyers of the greatest importance, as the enemy would be accompanied by strong destroyer forces. The Admiralty, however, considering the defended ports of the Humber and Harwich as the most likely objectives, awaited developments before giving Tyrwhitt any further orders.

I was ordered to hold eight submarines of the "Oversea" flotilla in readiness to spread on a line 30 miles N.N.W. from the ten-fathom line of Terschelling, through which it was thought the enemy might pass next day. I did not like this disposition,

as I knew it would be very difficult to keep in touch with the submarines once they were spread on such an extended front, and I suggested that the line might be occupied by a few fast surface craft, in a position to warn the submarines of the approach of the enemy, and enable them to dive unseen and unsuspected. I wanted to station the submarines in pairs at various strategic points in echelon, so that the maximum number might be brought into action as the enemy advanced. If he passed through a single line at high speed, probably one, at the most two, would be able to attack on the 30-mile front.

Before my proposal reached the Admiralty, the submarines were ordered to sea, and during the afternoon the *Lurcher*, flying my broad pennant, *Firedrake*, *Archimede* and seven "E" class submarines sailed. I suggested to Commandant Déville, who commanded the *Archimede*, that he might take Lieut.-Commander G. Herbert (late of *D5*) as a passenger; he gladly accepted the offer.

Unfortunately the Admiralty had not thought it necessary to give me any information, except that enemy ships might pass through the submarine patrol on the 16th. Through some Staff oversight, I was not told, as the Commander-in-Chief and Tyrwhitt were, that there was a possibility of German battle cruisers, cruisers and destroyers being off our coast about daybreak on the 16th; neither was I given the disposition or composition of the British forces, which would be operating in the waters I was about to enter. A request for information on this latter point remained unanswered. I knew that Tyrwhitt had been ordered to be off Yarmouth at daylight on the 16th, otherwise I was in complete ignorance of the situation, when I sailed on the afternoon of the 15th.

In order to reach their stations by daylight, the submarines had to proceed independently, on diverging courses at full speed. Dirty rainy weather was experienced on the Broad Fourteens; Ymuiden Light, the one aid to navigation, was obscured, and they lost touch with one another during the night. The disposition placed them out of sight of one another, and, with the exception of the *Archimede*, out of sight of land, and although the submarines no doubt approximately covered the line ordered by the Admiralty, one could not expect to find them in accurate station after 140 miles dead reckoning, run under such bad weather

conditions and in the strong tides prevailing. The *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* scouted well to the eastward, but of course could not cover the whole front.

Beatty joined Warrender before nightfall on the 15th, and the Grand Fleet Squadrons proceeded in company to a rendezvous at 7 a.m. (dawn) in Lat. 54-10′ N., Long. 3-0′ E. From 5.15 until 6 a.m., seven destroyers, which had accompanied Beatty, and were stationed ten miles to the eastward of the Fleet, were intermittently engaged with a superior force of enemy destroyers and light cruisers, with which they managed to keep in touch. At daylight, the armoured cruiser *Roon* and three light cruisers were identified, and when the information reached Beatty, he proceeded in pursuit, followed by Warrender's battleships.

We know now that the *Roon* and her consorts were the advance screen of the whole German High Sea Fleet, and that the British and German Fleets, approaching one another at high speed, might have been in contact at about 9 a.m. However, Admiral von Ingenohl, the Commander-in-Chief, learning that his screen and our destroyers were in action, and remembering the strict injunctions he had received—after the action of the Heligoland Bight—to avoid the loss of ships, turned at about 5.45 a.m. and made for home, leaving his raiding force to look after itself.

Meanwhile information was received at the Admiralty, that enemy battle and light cruisers had appeared off the Yorkshire coast, and were bombarding Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby. The bombardment of open, undefended towns had not been anticipated, but the Admiralty had the satisfaction of feeling certain, that if the visibility only remained normal, there was every prospect of the enemy raiding ships being annihilated by the overwhelming force they had concentrated between them and their home ports. When the enemy's presence on our coast was signalled to our squadrons, which were chasing the *Roon* and her consorts to the eastward, they broke off the pursuit and at 9 a.m. turned to the westward, to make for the gap between the enemy's minefields, through which the raiding force were practically certain to retreat.

Tyrwhitt was ordered by the Admiralty at the same time, first to get into touch with the enemy off Scarborough and Hartlepool, and later to join Warrender with all dispatch.

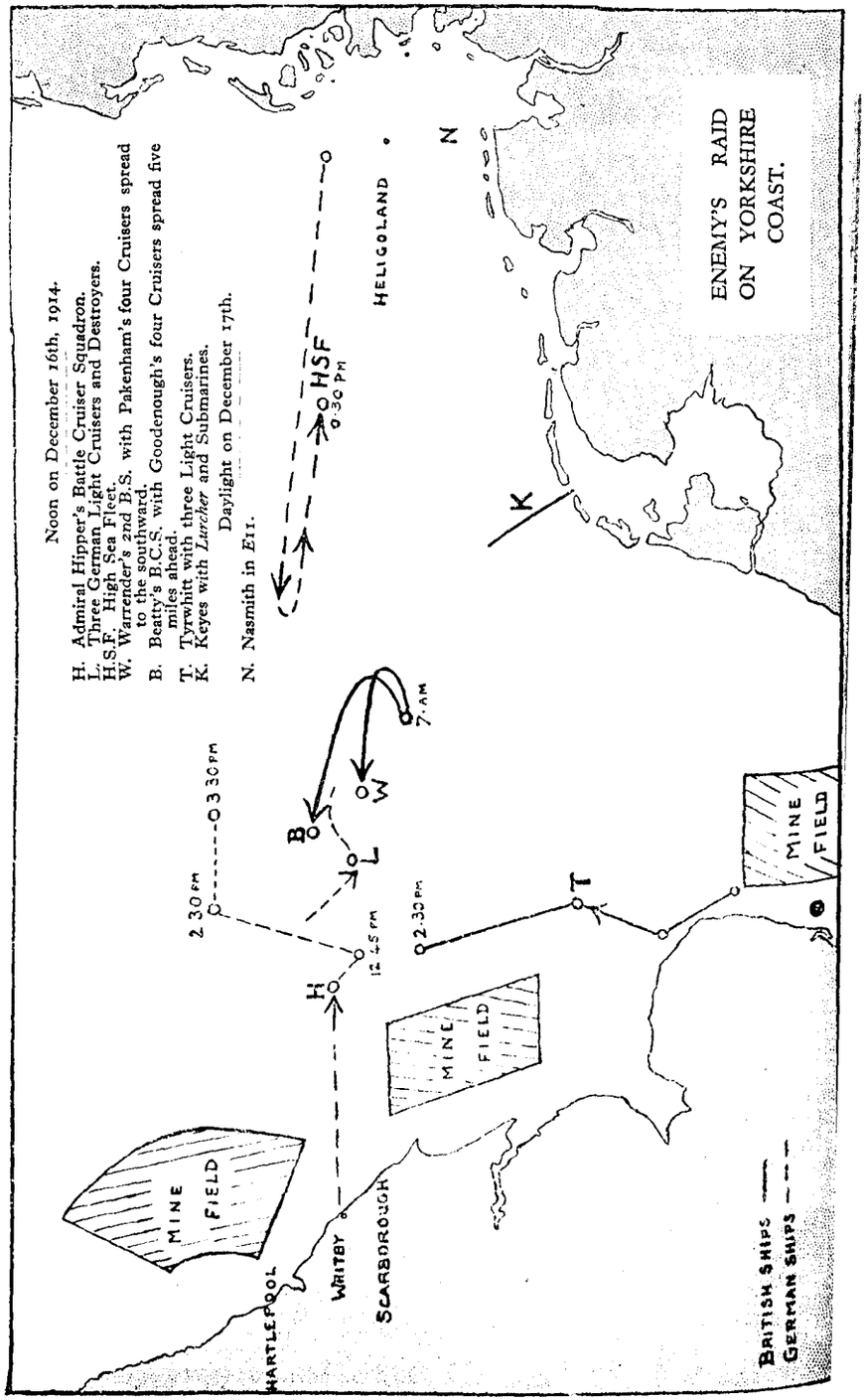
At 10.34 a.m. a portion of a signal from the *Monarch* to the *Ambuscade*, to the effect that enemy vessels were off Scarborough, was faintly heard on the *Lurcher's* wireless. It was obvious to me that the submarines as disposed, could not hope to intercept the enemy on their return to the Bight; and being out of wireless sending range, without any information as to the movements of our ships, or those of the enemy, I sent the *Firedrake* at full speed towards Yarmouth to get into wireless touch with the *Adamant*, submarine tender, which was in telephonic communication with the Admiralty, and directed her to inform the Chief of Staff that I was collecting the submarines and waiting for information and instructions.

Until about 11 a.m. the Grand Fleet Squadrons had had a calm sea and good visibility, then a breeze sprang up accompanied by rain, and before long it was blowing hard from the westward, with driving rain squalls, which reduced the visibility to under 2,000 yards at times, and it never again exceeded 3,000 to 4,000 yards. Farther south, the weather became even worse, and Tyrwhitt sent his destroyers back to Yarmouth for shelter, proceeding at reduced speed with his cruisers alone.

At 11.30 the two most southerly of Goodenough's four cruisers, which were spread five miles ahead of Beatty, sighted and engaged at 3,000 yards three German cruisers and some destroyers. We know now that the former were the *Stralsund*, *Strasburg* and *Grudenau*, which were in company, and acting as a look-out ahead of the German Battle Cruiser Squadron, consisting of the *Derfflinger*, *Moltke*, *Von der Tann*, *Seydlitz* and *Blücher*, under Admiral Hipper.

Unfortunately, owing to a misinterpreted order, our cruisers broke off the action, and resumed their places in the screen, thus contact was lost. Meanwhile the German cruisers stood away to the southward, as did Hipper, whom they had warned that strong forces were probably ahead of him.

Half an hour later, Warrender's flagship, the *King George V*, sighted the same cruisers and destroyers on the starboard bow steering to the eastward at high speed. On sighting our battleships, they altered course at once to the northward; Warrender followed, and ordered Pakenham to chase, but they soon disappeared in a rain squall, and contact was again lost. They had in fact escaped between Warrender and Beatty, and at the



same time were able to warn Hipper of the presence of battleships ahead of his southward course. Hipper then altered course to the northward, and escaped round Beatty's northern flank, unseen in the mist, but actually within gun range, had the visibility been normal.

The Admiralty were able to give Hipper's position—from intercepted German reports—from time to time, but of course too late to be made use of by the Admirals afloat, under the prevailing conditions.

Hipper was indeed fortunate, and but for the low visibility must have been brought to action and cut off from his supports, which at that time were 160 miles to the eastward, making for home.

At about 1.50 p.m. the Admiralty learned that the High Sea Fleet was at sea, and at 12.30 had signalled its position Lat. 59-38′ N., Long. 5-55′ E. Thinking that it was on its way out, they warned Warrender and Beatty not to go too far to the eastward; but by that time there was no prospect of our ships gaining touch with the enemy before dark, and the Admiralty realised that their well-laid plans had been frustrated by the North Sea weather.

I had a most trying day endeavouring to collect the submarines; in the visibility prevailing, they had to dive the moment they sighted a vessel, if they wished to remain unseen, and once submerged, it was very difficult to get them on to the surface again in the absence of sound signalling, which we did not possess in those days; and by dusk I had only succeeded in finding four.

At 3.35 p.m. I received the following signal from the Admiralty through the *Firedrake:*

> "High Sea Fleet is at sea, and at 12.30 p.m. was in Lat. 54-38′ N., Long. 5-55′ E. They may return after dawn tomorrow. Submarines should proceed to Heligoland and intercept them; they probably pass five miles W. of Heligoland, steering S. for Weser Light vessel (1410)."

After passing the Admiralty's message 1410, the *Firedrake* had asked if the Staff had any other instructions for me, and was told that the Chief of Staff would communicate with me later. I had impressed on the Admiralty—after the signalling fiasco of the

28th August—that when I was more than 50 miles from a British wireless station or linking ship (the limit of "D" (destroyer's) wave-length in those days) I would always have continuous watch kept on "S" (ship) wave-length, and could be practically certain of receiving, though not acknowledging messages. When the *Firedrake* rejoined me I noticed that her funnels were white with caked salt, and she reported that it was blowing very fresh farther to the westward. This surprised me as there was hardly any wind off Terschelling, and I was able to send written instructions by boat to the four submarines. They were to arrive at their stations by 3 a.m., were to attack from the surface before daylight if opportunity offered, and were warned that our destroyers would probably be operating in the same area during the night. To the *Archimede's* orders I added a personal note to Déville, wishing him the best of good luck.

It was pitch dark at 5 p.m. The submarines were under orders from the Admiralty to return to Harwich at nightfall on 16th, and I was torn between spending the night looking for the remaining four submarines, in case they might be required the following day, and lying off Heligoland waiting for the German Fleet, in the hope that they would pass there before daylight. I was sorely tempted to do the latter, but there were some conflicting considerations. I knew the *Monarch* (Second Battle Squadron) and the *Ambuscade's* destroyer flotilla, were somewhere near Scarborough that morning; so concluded that the Grand Fleet with its attendant cruisers and destroyers were at sea. I knew that Tyrwhitt with four cruisers and about 23 destroyers was also at sea. The Admiralty knew where I was, and that I was collecting the submarines to carry out any instructions they might give, and they alone knew the disposition of the 200 or so British vessels which were acting on information which they alone could impart.

It seemed to me certain that Tyrwhitt's destroyers, and possibly those of the Grand Fleet flotillas, would be sent to wait for the enemy off Heligoland during the night, and I felt that I could not butt into the area in which our destroyers were operating, except by pre-arrangement; but I failed to get into wireless touch with any British vessel or station. I had been accused by the First Lord of "bush thwacking" on one occasion, when he thought I had penetrated farther than necessary into the Heligoland Bight. I

felt I might well lay myself open to such a charge, if I went off into the blue with my two destroyers seeking adventure, while four submarines were still at large, which might be required the next day, if the enemy did not return during the night as anticipated. So I reluctantly decided to send the *Firedrake* to the westward again to pass the following signal and seek information:

> "Four submarines from Terschelling patrol will be in the Bight at dawn, one of which will be off the Weser. Am endeavouring to collect other four. When I have done so, will keep them in company pending further orders. Dispatched at 7.5 p.m."

Having dispatched the *Firedrake*, I used every endeavour to pick up the missing submarines by wireless and searchlight. At 8 p.m., having had no success and having received no communication from the Admiralty, I stood to the southward to intercept the submarines at the West Hinder in the morning. At 1.20 a.m. when 200 miles away from Heligoland, I received the following signal:

> "Admiralty to *Lurcher*. We think Heligoland and Amrun Light will be lit when ships are going in. Your destroyers might get a chance to attack about 2 a.m. or later on the line given you (2012)."

Words fail me even now, after more than 19 years, to express my feelings when I received this belated message. My signal, dispatched at 7.5 p.m. through the *Firedrake* and *Adamant*, reached the Admiralty before the latter's 2012 (8.12 p.m.) was dispatched, but instead of sending the message through the line of communication I had been at such pains to open, it was sent through the ordinary channels, and no effort was made to pass it to me until I came within range on "D" wave-length five hours later!

During the night the westerly blow, which the *Firedrake* had noticed when communicating with the *Adamant*, spread across the North Sea, and the submarines in the Bight encountered very heavy weather before they returned on the 19th December.

I learnt, on my return to Harwich, that Tyrwhitt had been ordered to join the Second Battle Squadron under Sir George Warrender, but the weather was so bad that he was only able

to take his cruisers, and left the destroyers anchored weather-bound in Yarmouth Roads, so my fears of trespassing in his area were quite unfounded.

Eight years later, when Winston Churchill published the first volume of his "World Crisis: 1911-14," I read the following account of the story I have just related:

> "It was evident that the Germans had eluded our intercepting force, and that even their light cruisers with whom we had been in contact had escaped in the mist. . . .
>
> It was now nearly 8 o'clock.
>
> Was it then all over? I enquired about our submarines. They had already been collected by Commodore Keyes from their first position and were now moving on to the German line of retreat. But whether the enemy's course would come within their limited range was a matter of luck. Sir Arthur Wilson then said, 'There is only one chance now. Keyes with the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* is with the submarines. He could probably make certain of attacking the German Battle Cruiser Squadron as it enters the Bight tonight. He may torpedo one or even two.' It seemed indeed a forlorn hope to send these two frail destroyers with their brave Commodore and faithful crews far from home, close to the enemy's coast, utterly unsupported, into the jaws of this powerful German force with its protecting vessels and flotillas. There was a long silence. We all knew Keyes well. Then someone said, 'It is sending him to his death.' Someone else said, 'He would be the last man to wish us to consider that.' There was another long pause. However, Sir Arthur Wilson had already written the following message:
>
> 8.12 p.m.
>
> 'We think Heligoland and Amrun lights will be lit when ships are going in. Your destroyers might get a chance to attack about 2 a.m. or later on the line given you.'
>
> The First Sea Lord nodded assent. The Chief of Staff took it, got up heavily and quitted the room. Then we turned to the ordinary business of the day. . . .
>
> Two days later when I received Admiral Keyes in my room at the Admiralty I said, 'We sent you a terrible message the other night. I hardly expected to see you again.' 'It was terrible,' he said, 'not getting it till I was nearly home. I waited three hours in the hopes of such an order, and I very nearly did it on my own responsibility,' and he proceeded to reproach himself without need."

This account, or the interpretation which a reviewer of the book placed upon it, pricked the wound of a lost opportunity afresh! Commenting on the evil effect which Admiralty control by wireless had on the initiative of the modern naval officer, he cited as an example that "Keyes in an excellent position to attack the enemy waited for instructions instead of acting on his own initiative"—or words to that effect!

The submarines were no less unfortunate. *E*11 passed close to the westward of Heligoland, stood down the Channel towards the Weser, and took up a position two miles to the northward of the Weser Light vessel before daylight on the 17th. At 7.30 a.m. a number of destroyers approached from the northward, zig-zagging at high speed, and at 8 a.m. the leading ships of the enemy's Battle Fleet appeared, having evidently passed through the channel to the eastward of Heligoland. The enemy ships were about a mile apart, apparently zig-zagging independently, which made them very difficult to attack. Nasmith got into a favourable position to attack the leader, but she altered course and brought *E*11 so fine on her bow, he was unable to use his bow tube, so swung his vessel round and brought his starboard beam tube to bear at a range of about 400 yards. *E*11 was rolling heavily, and unfortunately was heeling to starboard when the torpedo left the tube, with the result that it passed under the ship. The rough sea evidently hid the track of the torpedo, and the attack apparently passed unnoticed.

Nasmith then turned his attention to the third ship, intending to deliver a bow attack; but unfortunately at a critical moment, when the position was very favourable, the enemy altered course directly for *E*11 when she was only about 500 yards off, and would have rammed her at right angles had she not made a very rapid dive, to accomplish which it was necessary to admit a considerable quantity of water. The enemy passed immediately overhead, when *E*11 was at 70 feet. The admission of water altered her trim, and in the heavy sea she got somewhat

out of control, and broke surface when Nasmith rose to periscope depth to seek another target. This time *E*11 was undoubtedly seen, and the ships scattered at high speed and steered courses to take them well clear of *E*11's danger circle. The Battle Fleet was followed in the afternoon by a destroyer flotilla zig-zagging at high speed, and four vessels passed directly over *E*11.

Nasmith spent that night between the Weser and the Elbe, and on the 18th watched all day for vessels passing through the swept channel between the Jade, Weser and Elbe, but there was no movement. While watching this channel, *E*11 got on shore on the Nord Grunde and narrowly escaped being caught by enemy sweepers. Although Nasmith missed a great opportunity, he displayed gallant determination throughout two stormy days off the shallow entrances of the German rivers.

In sending *E*11 into those waters I felt I was subjecting her to considerable risk, as *D*2 did not return from a similar mission, and I had in mind a German report that their cruiser *Yorck* had been lost on a German mine off the Jade. After receiving Nasmith's report of the proceedings of the enemy, it was evident that a large area was kept free of mines, and I told the Admiralty I would have no hesitation in occupying that area with submarines in future, if occasion arose.

*E*10, *E*15 and *Archimede* missed the enemy, owing to their passing to the east of Heligoland and not west as anticipated by the Admiralty. *Archimede* had a terrible experience; she was in sight of Heligoland on the morning of the 17th December, and remained off there all day. That evening she decided to return owing to threatening weather. She had not gone far when a heavy sea struck her funnel and bent it, consequently she was unable to submerge, as it could not be lowered sufficiently to close the water-tight hatch, and she was no longer a submarine. *Archimede* was two days in the Bight in this condition, and would have been an easy prey to the enemy. Fortunately, owing to heavy weather, no enemy vessel was sufficiently far afield to sight her.

M. Déville told me that the conditions of service in the Bight and the steep nature of the seas there, were a revelation to him, and he could now well appreciate what our gallant submariners had been doing. He was full of admiration for Herbert, who was always cheerful, and took his turn in the queue of the crew,

who passed buckets from hand to hand, incessantly baling out the water which surged through the funnel aperture at every plunge. It seemed that one of the crew remarked to him: "Il fait trés mauvais temps, Monsieur." To which Herbert replied, in execrable French, "Oui, mais aprés le mauvais temps vienne le beau temps!" This immensely tickled the hitherto rather depressed crew who shouted it in chorus, whenever a particularly heavy rush of water entered the vessel. At one time *Archimede* was in such a bad way that the question of interning in Holland was seriously considered, much to Herbert's consternation. However, the gallant Déville was determined to bring her home if possible, and she struggled on and arrived at Harwich, to my intense relief, on the evening of 19th December.

After her defects had been made good, as far as possible, by the *Maidstone*, the *Archimede* returned to Cherbourg to be refitted, and I did not meet Déville again until I was Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet many years later. He, his officers and men struck up a great entente with our "submariners," and were given a tremendous send-off when they left us.

One more submarine story in connection with the enemy's raid on our coast towns. As I have mentioned, it never occurred to me that they would perpetrate such an inexcusable breach of the laws of maritime warfare as to bombard open towns, but I feared the presence of guns at Hartlepool might serve as an excuse. The enemy, however, needed no excuse, and bombarded Scarborough and Whitby as well as Hartlepool.

In view of the very special warning issued the night prior to the raid, it was deplorable that the submarine which was stationed at Hartlepool, solely to meet the situation which arose, should have been in harbour, in a position from which she could not dive to attack. I was informed that the Senior Naval Officer at Hartlepool, had ordered the submarine to remain inside the harbour until she was required. When the enemy appeared, *C*9 (Lieut. C. Dering) had to cross the bar on the surface, it being too shallow for her to dive, during which time she was straddled by several salvoes; and when she eventually dived, the enemy withdrew before she could get into a position to attack. Had she been off the port at dawn as recommended, even if she had not brought off a successful attack, her presence would have made it impossible for the enemy to lie off Hartlepool and inflict about 500 casualties

and serious damage. The three six-inch guns defending the harbour fought a spirited action with the *Moltke*, *Seydlitz* and *Blücher*, armed with 12-inch, 8.2-inch and six-inch guns, and the Senior Naval Officer, in the light cruiser *Patrol*, armed with four-inch guns, followed by her sister ship the *Forward*, most gallantly stood out across the bar and engaged the formidable foe—suffering heavily in the course of the action. His gallant conduct, I think, saved him from the worst of Lord Fisher's wrath, but it could not atone for the submarine's failure and all it entailed.

The enemy certainly had all the good fortune on that day of confusion and lost opportunities, and no one suffered more tormenting disappointments than the submarines and their two attendant destroyers.

However, in the light of our knowledge today, it might be considered fortunate, that the restrictions imposed on the German Admiral spared our 2nd Battle Squadron from being overwhelmed by, or retreating from, the whole High Sea Fleet.

The First Lord had been anxious for some time to try to raid the Zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven with seaplanes of the young Naval Air Service, to the development of which he had devoted so much energy in the two years preceding the war. Three cross-channel passenger steamers, the *Engadine*, *Riviera* and *Empress*, were fitted with steel hangars capable of housing three seaplanes each, and these were sent to Harwich, to await the favourable weather conditions necessary for such an enterprise. The sea-plane carriers, which could only maintain a speed of about 22 knots, were to be escorted by Tyrwhitt's force to a position 15 miles N.N.E. of Heligoland, where the seaplanes were to be hoisted out. After attacking Cuxhaven, they were to examine the anchorages in the rivers, and fly westward along the coast to Norderney Gat, and thence to seaward to rejoin their carriers, which meanwhile were to move down to a position 20 miles north of Norderney. Eleven submarines were to cover the operation. "As before, it was hoped," states the Official History, "that the enterprise might provoke a fleet action, and the whole Grand Fleet was concentrated in the middle of the North Sea."*

I think the Admiralty were optimistic if they imagined, which I doubt, that the Grand Fleet, some 220 miles from Heligoland,

* "Naval Operations," Vol. II, page 51, and plate opposite page 48.

could take part in any action that we might provoke, or afford any support to Tyrwhitt, hampered as he was by slow, vulnerable vessels. Anyhow, I considered that the responsibility for providing support for Tyrwhitt rested on the submarine service, and I issued a memorandum to my command, expressing pride that the support of the expedition should have been confided to us, and confidence that, if the opportunity offered, the Commanding Officers would drive home their attacks, proceed to the assistance of seaplanes, or carry out any other service which might arise, regardless of all other considerations.

A smooth sea was essential, since the seaplanes were to take off in open water, and this could hardly be counted upon for long in mid-winter. However, on 23rd December the weather forecast was very promising, and the Admiralty gave orders for the raid to be carried out at dawn on Christmas Day. The *Lurcher*, flying my broad pennant, the *Firedrake*, *S*1, three "D" and six "E" class submarines sailed during the night of 23rd-24th to co-operate. *E*7 was already in a position between Heligoland and the entrance of the Elbe, Weser and Jade rivers. My object was to have submarines:

(1) On all possible lines of approach from the enemy's ports, both while the carriers were hoisting out their seaplanes, and while proceeding to the position from which they would pick them up after their attempt;

(2) To lie in wait off the enemy's ports to attack his vessels if they emerged;

(3) In the seaplanes' line of retirement, to pick up any pilots who might be unable to reach their carriers; and to destroy any machines which might have to be abandoned.

I took up a position with the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* ten miles to the northward of Norderney Gat, to give the retiring seaplanes a direct line from the latter towards the carriers, and in the event of enemy vessels appearing from the Jade or the Ems, to be able to give Tyrwhitt good warning of their approach.

The weather was very fine and sunny with light variable breezes, the sea was very smooth, and the visibility to seaward was good, but hazy over the land. Everything went according to plan, except that only seven of the nine seaplanes succeeded in getting off the water.

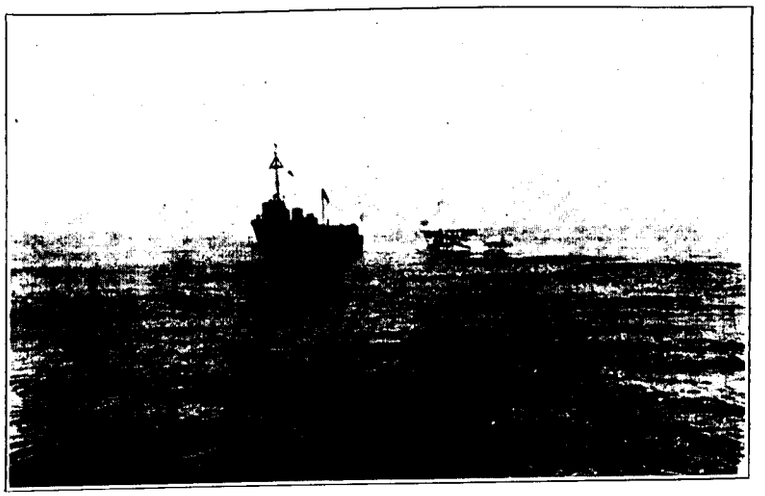
At an early hour in the morning it was evident, from the agitated state of the German wireless, that our presence had been discovered. Two Zeppelins and a Schutte-Lans airship were in sight most of the time, and a number of German seaplanes were on the wing, so I was very hopeful that heavy enemy ships would be induced to come out to drive us off, and thus give the submarines the chance they ardently sought.

At 9 a.m. when off Norderney Gat, a British seaplane alighted alongside the *Lurcher*, and the pilot reported that he had run out of petrol, so we took him on board and his seaplane in tow. Curiously enough I had flown with this pilot just before the war, to test the value of aircraft for observing submerged submarines.

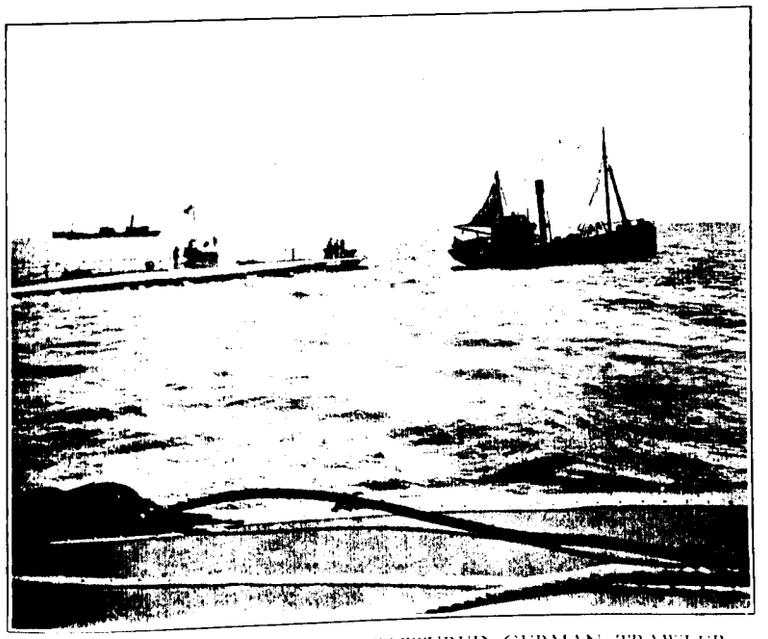
Two British seaplanes and one German passed close to the *Lurcher* in the course of the next 50 minutes, all steering in the direction of the squadron's approach from the northward. At 10.30 a.m. I stood out to the latter's rendezvous, and turned over the pilot and seaplane to the *Engadine*. Three seaplanes and their pilots had been recovered, but four were still missing when at 11.45 Tyrwhitt withdrew, as long before that time the seaplanes' fuel must have been exhausted. I was much relieved to see the last of the carriers, as it seemed incredible to me that strong enemy forces were not on their way to attack them. I then stood in again to Norderney Gat, in hopes of finding the missing planes and of drawing the enemy away from Tyrwhitt's line of retirement if any came out. However, there was not a sign of a German vessel except submarines, of which several were sighted during the day, but the calm sea made it easy to detect periscopes and their attempts to attack were avoided.

At 2.20 p.m. I received a wireless signal from *E*11 reporting that she had picked up the pilots and mechanics of three seaplanes. The story of their rescue, and the proceedings of *E*11 and *D*6 (Lieut.-Commander C. Halahan) make a brave tale. Incidentally the reports of Nasmith and Halahan taken together, give some explanation of the strange conduct of a German airship.

*E*11 was diving off Norderney Gat when at 9.30 a.m. Nasmith observed a British seaplane through his periscope, so he rose to the surface. The seaplane alighted near him and the pilot reported that he had only sufficient petrol for another five minutes; *E*11 embarked him, took the seaplane in tow and



CHRISTMAS DAY AIR RAID
Lurcher towing seaplane back from Norderney Cat



S.T. TOWED HOME BY HER CAPTURED GERMAN TRAWLER

proceeded towards the carriers' rendezvous. At 10 a.m. shortly after a hostile airship had been sighted, two more seaplanes alighted alongside *E*11 for the same reason. Soon after, Nasmith realised that the airship was closing rapidly, and to add to the complications, a submarine approaching at full speed on the surface was seen to dive, consequently it was considered hostile. He then had the task of saving four more airmen, in the face of opposition, apparently both from above and below. He cast off the seaplane he was towing, ran alongside one of the others, and hailing the pilot and mechanic of the third seaplane—which had been damaged by enemy fire, and was standing on its head with its tail in the air—told them to swim to *E*11. He then opened fire on the undamaged seaplane floats and petrol tanks, with the object of sinking them to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy. Before the crew of the third seaplane had been hauled on board, and whilst *E*11 was still firing at the other seaplanes, the airship appeared to be about to pass overhead at a height of 1,000 feet. Nasmith told me that a number of Germans could be seen craning their heads out of the windows of the gondolas. We had been told so much about the bombing we should get from German aircraft, that he thought nothing he could do would avert a discharge of bombs, which might or might not hit him ; so to show he was not downhearted, he took off his cap and waved it defiantly. This gesture was no doubt his salvation, and must have given the Germans the impression that *E*11 was a German submarine engaged in shooting at disabled British seaplanes ; which was probably confirmed by *D*6's behaviour. She was evidently British, and had been seen to dive, apparently to attack *E*11, so the airship turned her attention from the latter to *D*6, which was approaching at periscope depth, and proceeded to try to bomb her.

Halahan was quite aware of *E*11's identity, as she was broadside on to him. When he saw her surrounded by disabled seaplanes, and menaced from above by the airship, he approached at full speed on the surface to help, but was forced to dive deep as the airship passed over him on its way towards *E*11 and the seaplanes. Later when at periscope depth, Halahan saw that the airship had turned and was coming towards him again, so he dived to 60 feet, which was fortunate, as two bombs fell very close. The second was particularly heavy and shook *D*6 very severely.

Nasmith who first saw *D6* two miles away end on, and then saw him dive, apparently to attack him, began to get anxious, so as soon as he had hauled the last man on board, and all the airmen had been got below, he hurriedly dived and turned towards the direction from which he expected to be torpedoed, to present as small a target as possible. Immediately after *E11* had dived, and when she was at about 40 feet, a heavy explosion shook her considerably, and later another. Nasmith thought the first was a torpedo, and he told me he remembered wondering for a moment why he was still alive so long after the torpedo had struck.

Although bombs from the air, having no propellant except gravity, are unreliable missiles, when Nasmith and Halahan compared notes in my cabin later, we came to the conclusion that the bombs must have been intended for *D6*, as they evidently fell so much closer to her than to *E11*.

In spite of being heavily shaken by the bomb explosions, Halahan rose to periscope depth, and seeing a seaplane apparently undamaged, he came to the surface alongside it to save the pilot, when to his astonishment he found that the airship was only 100 yards away at a height of about 50 feet. Her crew were busily engaged in destroying the seaplane with machine guns, which they then turned on to him. Seeing that the seaplane was abandoned, Halahan promptly dived, and later, after satisfying himself that all the seaplanes had sunk, he returned to his station, but was hunted by the airship during the next four hours whenever he came to periscope depth.

Nasmith remained submerged until well clear, and later took *E11* to the bottom to rest in about 20 fathoms, where the crew shared their Christmas dinner of turkey and plum pudding with the five airmen, who can hardly have expected such an ending to their adventurous flight. Actually it was not quite the last of their crowded experiences, for while running back to Harwich on the surface, *E11* narrowly escaped being torpedoed by a German submarine.

At that time we had no anti-aircraft guns, and repeated attacks were made from a low altitude by airships and seaplanes on the carriers and their escorts. While proceeding to the southern rendezvous, the carrier *Empress*, which was unable to maintain her station and dropped a long way astern of the squadron, was systematically attacked by two seaplanes and a Zeppelin ; she only had a few rifles with which to defend herself, but by skilful use of her helm was able to avoid the enemy's bombs. On one occasion a German seaplane came up astern of the *Lurcher*, so low that the gunlayer of our after four-inch gun was able to get his sights on with a few degrees of elevation in hand. I happened to be standing near him and told him to give his gun a swing up as he fired, as one does for a rocketing pheasant. The seaplane twisted and turned like a pigeon when the gun fired, and like a pigeon flew away.

I remained in those waters until nightfall, and then cruised between the Ems and Terschelling, to look out for enemy craft which might be sent out to interfere with our submarines returning home on the surface. However, nothing appeared, and at 8 p.m. I made for Harwich, and, as far as I was concerned, so ended a most memorable Christmas Day. War in the air and under the sea, but none on the surface, though we trailed the tails of our coats off the enemy's ports from dawn until dark. Their reluctance to come out may have been due to a very healthy respect for our submarines—or to the Christmas holidays—but it must have been very galling to the German Navy to be treated so impertinently.

Owing to fog over the land, the seaplanes failed to find the Zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven, but bombs were dropped on military objects, and are believed to have caused damage. The appearance of our aircraft over Skellig Roads caused consternation amongst the ships of the High Sea Fleet; in their haste to get under way, the battle cruiser *Moltke* and a cruiser collided, both being severely damaged.

It was amazing that seven primitive seaplanes should have flown from 15 miles north of Heligoland, round the enemy's fortified bases, and back to the open sea, about 120 miles, without the loss of a life. I have accounted for six, the seventh was picked up by a Dutch fishing boat, which took it in tow ; when the pilot, Lieut. Hewlett, lost all hope of falling in with a British vessel, he sank his seaplane. Some days later he was landed in Holland, treated as a shipwrecked mariner, and allowed to return to England. I saw him on his arrival, and in the course of conversation, he told me that he could fly before he volunteered for the R.N.A.S. I asked him who taught him, and he told me that it was his mother !

On returning to Harwich I heard of *S*1's curious experience and narrow escape. She arrived on her station off the Ems at 4 a.m. and was about to dive to the bottom to await daylight when she struck something heavily at a depth of about 30 feet; being in ten fathoms the obstruction could only have been a submarine or a wreck. The collision knocked off her detachable keel, she came to the surface like a cork, was no longer a submarine, and like the *Archimede* was a prey to any surface craft, so she made for home at full speed. The next submarine to her was *D*7, and the next *D*8 (Lieut.-Commander J. Foster). The latter saw an enormous patch of oil and air bubbles rising the next morning, and Foster reported that he was certain a vitally injured submarine was lying on the bottom. When I received *D*8's report, I was very anxious on *D*7's account until she returned, 16 hours after her consorts, having been delayed by a Zeppelin which hunted her whenever she came to the surface. It seemed very unlikely that a German submarine would have been lying on the bottom, or diving off the Ems at 4 a.m., and it is possible that *S*1 struck the wreck of *E*3, which we knew had been sunk off the Ems; the collision might well have disturbed an airlock and oil tank, and thus account for what *D*8 saw.

In the carrier squadron two people particularly impressed me, the Squadron Commander, C. Le Strange Malone, a young naval lieutenant who had been given the command over the heads of many seniors, and Lieut. Erskine Childers, R.N.V.R., an observer in one of the seaplanes. The latter was the author of the "Riddle of the Sands," and had devoted his leisure for some years, to cruising in a small yacht in the German estuaries. His local knowledge was invaluable, and the seaplane in which he took passage, was one of the two which returned unaided to its carrier.

CHAPTER VIII

BATTLE OF THE DOGGER BANK

Loss of *C*31; Loss of *E*10; German ships reported at sea; Submarines endeavour to intercept their return; Battle of Dogger Bank; Submarine adventures; I leave North Sea for Mediterranean.

THE Admiralty were anxious to know what was going on off Zeebrugge, where the enemy's patrols had been active, and on 4th January *C*31 (Lieut. G. Pilkington) was sent from Dover to cruise off there for two days and report at Harwich on 7th. She was never heard of again. I was feeling very sore about the loss of *C*31 and her promising young captain, and on the night of the 10th, sailed with the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* to try and cut out one or two of the Zeebrugge patrol craft, which were probably responsible for her destruction. It seemed possible that if the enemy knew *C*31 had been sunk in shoal water, we might be able to surprise the salvage operations which would probably be in progress. It was high water, 12 feet above Low Water Springs, when we arrived off Zeebrugge at dawn on the 11th, and the destroyers, which only drew 11 feet, could go safely over mines. Unfortunately it came on to blow hard during the night, salvage operations would have been impossible and no patrol craft were out. As there was considerable sea and a falling tide, I thought it inadvisable to remain in waters which might be mined, so withdrew after an hour or so. I meant to return later under more favourable conditions, and in the meantime suggested aerial reconnaissance, on the first fine day, to see if salvage operations were being undertaken. However, I had no opportunity of visiting Zeebrugge again before I left the Narrow Seas for the Mediterranean.

Our Christmas Day exploit encouraged the Admiralty to make further efforts on similar lines, and a plan was prepared, to be put into execution when weather conditions permitted. In the meantime *E*10, *E*15, and *E*5 went into the Bight on 18th January;

the two latter returned on the 21st and reported very little movement there; they experienced very heavy weather on the last day. *E*10 did not return, she was last seen on the evening of 18th by *E*5, making for her station to the N.N.W. of Heligoland, to watch the western channel. *E*5 experienced an unexpected set of six miles to the southward, on her passage to the N.E. of Heligoland, and it seems probable that *E*10 was similarly set, and ran foul of the minefield, located by *E*6 to the S.W. of the island. Lieut.-Commander W. Fraser had done excellent reconnaissance work in the Kattegat and Heligoland Bight, and was a great loss; on one occasion he was away for 11 days, seven of which he spent in the Kattegat, bringing back much valuable information.

At 1 p.m. on 23rd January, I sailed from Harwich in the *Lurcher*, preceded by the *Firedrake* and eight submarines, to co-operate with Tyrwhitt in the support of an air attack by seaplanes on the enemy bases in the Heligoland Bight, but was recalled. It took some time to collect the submarines, which at 2 p.m. had all rounded the Sunk Light Vessel, and it was 4 p.m. before I returned to Harwich, to find the following telegram, which I suppose the Staff thought inadvisable to send by wireless.

> "Proceed with *Lurcher*, *Firedrake* and four submarines in the direction of Borkum Riff Light Vessel, but do not get out of wireless touch, and await any orders you may receive. Four German battle cruisers, six light cruisers, and twenty-two destroyers are sailing tonight to scout on Dogger Bank, and will probably return to harbour tomorrow night. All our available force will be at sea tonight and tomorrow. Acknowledge."

I sailed again as soon as possible in the *Lurcher*, with *Firedrake*, *E*4, *E*7, *E*8, and *E*11, but a dense fog had come down, and as Tyrwhitt's three cruisers and about 40 destroyers were also under way, some delay occurred. At 7 p.m., however, when again off the Sunk Light Vessel, the four submarines were in touch, and the weather having cleared, we proceeded with all dispatch. Before sailing I detailed the submarines, if detached, to take up positions off the Weser, and south, east, and west of Heligoland, to watch all the approaches to the enemy's fleet anchorages.

During the night I received a signal from the Admiralty to send the submarines into the Bight, one of which was to watch the south channel off Norderney Gat, and to report if they could be in their stations by daylight on the 25th.

I replied "Yes" and sent *E*11 to Norderney Gat at once, but did not alter the positions of the others, as they would be well placed to attack the enemy making for the Elbe and Jade rivers from the north.

From fragments of wireless signals, which were intercepted by the *Lurcher* on Sunday morning, 24th January, it was evident that an engagement was taking place to the northward. With the submarines proceeding at their utmost speed, I made every effort to get across the enemy's line of retreat. Our only chance of intervening lay in the possibility of an enemy ship being greatly reduced in speed, but our luck was still out, the few hours lost by our recall to Harwich, deprived my command of a share of the Battle of the Dogger Bank.

For more than a year I had looked upon the *Tiger* as my ship, and Tomkinson—Captain of the *Lurcher*—would have been her Commander, had I been able to join her, so our feelings can be better imagined than expressed, when we intercepted a signal from the *Southampton* to the Vice-Admiral Commanding the Battle Cruiser Squadron: "Salvoes apparently from *Tiger* are going consistently over." Our *Tiger* well within effective range of enemy battle cruisers—it was almost more than we could bear!

At 10.55 a.m. the Admiralty signalled: "Send submarines to Heligoland Bight, High Sea Fleet are coming out, our battle cruisers are chasing German battle cruisers towards Heligoland, position of German battle cruisers at 9.23 a.m. Lat. 54°39′ N., Long. 4°16′ E. (1055)."

I had detached *E*11 during the night to go by the shortest route to the entrance of the channel off Norderney Gat, and was scouting for the others, which were proceeding at full speed towards Heligoland.

At about 4 p.m., when 22 miles north of Borkum, at least four feet of a submarine's periscope rose about 100 yards ahead, moving from starboard to port. From the position of the object glass she could not see the *Lurcher*, but was evidently attacking the *Firedrake* about 1,000 yards on our port quarter, and in a few minutes would have been in a favourable position to fire. The *Lurcher* increased to full speed to ram her and a collision seemed

inevitable, but the submarine must have heard our propellers, her periscope dipped right under our bows, and we went over her without touching.

I scouted for the submarines until nightfall, and intended to watch the southern channel with the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*, as I thought Tyrwhitt's destroyers would be operating off Heligoland; but having intercepted signals between Beatty and Tyrwhitt, which indicated that all the destroyers were otherwise engaged, I went full speed to the northward of Heligoland, in the hope that the enemy's withdrawal was being delayed by cripples. At 8.30 p.m. Heligoland lights, which had been in sight, were extinguished. I could find no patrolling craft off Heligoland or the Ems during the night, and towards the morning withdrew and returned to Harwich.

I learnt on the return of the submarines, that *E*11 arrived off Norderney Gat at 6.30 p.m. and the others off Heligoland at 8.30 p.m. nearly 12 hours before the Admiralty had asked for them. They patrolled their stations on the surface during the night, and submerged during the day, but, with the exception of *E*8, sighted nothing but sweeping trawlers. At noon on 25th *E*8 sighted about 20 destroyers in three divisions, coming from the southern end of the island and proceeding north-east. She stood across into their wake, to be in a position to attack any large vessels which might be following them. During the afternoon the three divisions of destroyers returned independently; one division in close order, in quarter line, gave a continuous target, and *E*8 fired a torpedo, set at six feet, which was evidently seen, as the vessels of this division, and of another which was in sight, scattered and withdrew at full speed, without making any attempt to hunt her. A number of men, considerably in excess of her complement, were seen on the deck of the leading destroyer, so apparently one of their vessels had come to grief.

As soon as submarines were available, after covering the transport of the Army, I had tried to maintain a few Oversea submarines continuously in the Bight, but invasion scares and heavy winter gales had sometimes interrupted this service. It was a cruel misfortune that no submarines were there when the Germans returned during daylight hours on the 24th, and it was deplorable that it should have been thought necessary to recall me, to give me fresh orders, when I was already on my way there

should make to the light cruisers and destroyers, which were spread on a wide front seeking for the enemy. He replied, "Signals—Why?—Look!" A signal was, however, made: "Chase S.10.E." but to quote Beatty's dispatch: "My wishes had already been forestalled."

The *Aurora's* signal had acted like a "View-Holloa" to the scattered pack, and the light cruisers and destroyers, commanded by the young bloods of the Navy, had turned, and were racing towards the sound of the guns—foaming at the bows, with smoke and flames pouring from their funnels.

By 8.30 a.m. Admiral Hipper in the *Seydlitz*, having realised that he was threatened by a superior force, was in full flight for home, with the *Moltke*, *Derflinger*, *Blücher*, four light cruisers, and 22 destroyers.

Beatty in the *Lion*, with *Tiger*, *Princess Royal*, *New Zealand* and *Indomitable*, First Light Cruiser Squadron, and Tyrwhitt's Harwich Force, was in hot pursuit, 11 miles astern with over 130 miles of sea room.

By 9.35 four of our battle cruisers were engaged with the enemy's four ships, the *Indomitable* was still out of range.

At 9.50, the *Seydlitz* was hit aft by a shell from the *Lion*, with terrible effect. The guns in the two after turrets were put out of action, and their entire crews perished in the fierce fire which resulted, and which necessitated the flooding of the after magazine.

The enemy were concentrating their fire on the *Lion*, and from 10.18 onwards, she suffered considerably. At 10.27 Beatty placed his ships on a line of bearing, with orders to proceed at their utmost speed. At 10.45 the *Lion*, which had been repeatedly hit, could no longer keep the lead, owing to the damage she had sustained, and the *Tiger* drew ahead.

At 10.47, Beatty, in his anxiety to close to decisive range, signalled "Close the enemy as rapidly as possible consistent with keeping all guns bearing."

At 10.48 the *Blücher*, which had dropped astern of her consorts and was heavily on fire, broke away to the northward, and Beatty ordered the *Indomitable*, which had just come into range, to engage her.

Despite the *Lion's* injuries, she was still putting up a great fight, with only one gun out of action; and she, the *Tiger* (with one gun disabled, otherwise undamaged), *Princess Royal*, and *New Zealand* (neither of which had been hit) were heavily engaged with the *Seydlitz*, *Moltke* and *Derflinger*. The *Seydlitz* and *Derflinger* were ablaze, and the *Moltke*, which owing to a misunderstanding on the part of the *Tiger*, had not been fired at, was alone uninjured. The *Indomitable* was capable of speedily dispatching the *Blücher*—and a decisive victory seemed assured.

At 10.50 the *Lion* was hit by a heavy shell, which drove in the armour on the water line abreast of one of the boiler rooms, and stopped one engine, all power and light failed, and she took a list of 10° to port.

A few minutes later the periscope of a submarine was reported on the starboard bow, and at 10.54 to avoid it, Beatty ordered an alteration of eight points to port together,* but two minutes after this signal had been hauled down, he hoisted "Course N.E." again to close the enemy. The *Lion*, however, had rapidly lost way, and in order to ensure that the engagement would be pressed, Beatty ordered a signal to be made to "Engage the enemy more closely," but this age-old Naval battle cry had disappeared from the modern signal book. "Engage" and "Close" necessitated two signals: "Attack the enemy at some specified point" and "Keep closer to the enemy." So "Attack the rear of the enemy" and the latter, were hoisted in the *Lion* as her consorts swept by. These in conjunction with the signal "Course N.E." were either misinterpreted, misunderstood or unseen by the individual ships, which then proceeded to assist the *Indomitable* to destroy the poor tortured *Blücher*.

The *Lion's* searchlights and wireless had been destroyed, and in a few minutes Beatty had completely lost control, and although he transferred to a destroyer as soon as possible, it was noon before he could resume command, and in the meantime golden opportunities had passed. He had had no means of projecting his fierce offensive spirit, which could not rest content with anything short of complete victory, and the beaten crippled enemy, still 80 miles from home, were allowed to make good their escape unmolested, at a speed reduced by their injuries to 21 knots.

This narrow escape, following closely on that of the 16th December, made a profound impression on the German High Command. Sixteen months were to pass before German capital ships were encountered again in the North Sea.

* There was no German submarine within 60 miles.

Our casualties in this action were:

Lion . . .	1 killed	20 wounded
Tiger . . .	10 „	11 „
Meteor. . .	4 „	1 „
Total	15 killed	32 wounded

The *Meteor* (Captain the Hon. H. Meade*) suffered her losses, and was severely damaged, when gallantly leading her division of destroyers to torpedo the *Blücher*. No other British ship was damaged or sustained casualties.

Of the enemy's vessels which escaped, the *Seydlitz* alone had 159 killed, and 33 wounded. The *Blücher* which fought gallantly until she sank, lost 792 killed, 45 wounded and 189 unwounded prisoners. Many more would have been saved, had not a hostile seaplane, with true German chivalry—thoroughly appreciated by their luckless compatriots—bombed our boats which were picking up men in the water—no doubt thinking that the *Blücher* was a British ship.

Of the *Tiger's* casualties, nine of the killed were young stokers of the Fire Party, who contrary to orders, came out of their sheltered position to watch the action.

I would like to leave one more record of the spirit of the youth of our Navy. When the *Lion* took a heavy list, after being hit below the water line, and all lights went out, and dynamos ceased whirring, in the silence which ensued, a young officer's voice floated up the voice pipe to the conning tower, from the control room 80 feet below, "Well, I suppose this is Kingdom Come—or three weeks leave!"

The *Lion* was towed to Rosyth by the *Indomitable* and the *Meteor* to the Humber by the *Liberty*. According to a German official report, *U*17, *U*33 and *U*35 were sent out on the morning of 24th towards the Humber, to look out for damaged British ships. All three are reported to have unsuccessfully attacked the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* (we only noticed one attack), which appears to have delayed them so much, that the *Lion* was well to

* Captain Meade commanded the *Goshawk* in the Heligoland Bight action on 28th August, 1914, and led the division of destroyers which sank *V*187, and lowered boats to save the latter's crew.

the northward, and the *Meteor* safely in the Humber, before a German submarine arrived in the neighbourhood of the action.

Although the *Blücher* had been sunk, and the Dogger Bank action was hailed as a great success, the Admiralty were of course very disappointed, that their well-laid plans had failed to achieve an overwhelming victory. Lord Fisher, who was furious, was determined to find a victim or two, and expressed his opinion of certain officers very freely, and in scathing terms. I had known for some time that, in spite of the friendly gesture he made, after receiving my letter of 10th November, Lord Fisher was determined to get rid of me out of his neighbourhood, but I was amused to learn, quite by chance, that I was one of his Dogger Bank "suspects." I have mentioned that, at 10.55 on 24th February, the Admiralty signalled to me that the High Sea Fleet was coming out. This signal was apparently intercepted by the *New Zealand*, but reported as emanating *from* me, to her Admiral—Sir Archibald Moore—on whom the command of the battle cruisers devolved, when the *Lion* was disabled and Beatty lost control.

A few days later I was reading the official reports in the War Staff room at the Admiralty, and came across the following signal:

> "From Rear-Admiral, *New Zealand* to Commander-in-Chief, Grand Fleet. 1200. My position 212.F.60, Course N.N.W., speed 20 knots. Commodore (S) reports High Sea Fleet coming out. Am retiring."

I remarked, half in chaff, to one of Lord Fisher's Naval Secretaries who was present, "I suppose your Chief holds me responsible for the failure of the Battle Cruiser Squadron to continue the pursuit, after Beatty fell out of the line." He admitted that the point had not escaped Lord Fisher's notice, and advised me, if I had not made the signal, to write officially and say so. I wrote to the Secretary of the Admiralty: "With reference to the report of my proceedings 23rd-25th January, I understand that a signal to the effect that the 'German High Sea Fleet was at sea' was intercepted as emanating from Commodore (S). I have the honour to report that I made no such signal."

About this time, I had a conversation with the First Lord, who was well aware of what was going on. I told him that I

had hoped eventually to operate the "Oversea" submarines from the Grand Fleet, under the Commander-in-Chief, as was originally intended in the War Orders; but as this had proved impracticable, and they were operated under the direction of the Admiralty, I felt that in view of Lord Fisher's hostility, I was no longer of much value to them. Moreover, it would ease the situation in other respects, if he could find employment for me elsewhere. I mentioned that I had consulted my wise and good friend, Rear-Admiral H. Oliver, the Chief of Staff, who agreed with me. I concluded by saying, that I would have suggested this long ago, but hated the thought of deserting the submarines, while I could be of any use to them.

It was a great relief to me to get this off my mind, and I think the First Lord was relieved too, for he had expended a good deal of time and energy in fighting my battles, which was all wrong, at a moment when all our efforts should have been concentrated on fighting the King's enemies.

I was sent for by the First Lord on 8th February, and was told that I was to go out to the Mediterranean the next morning, to be Chief of Staff to Rear-Admiral Carden, who was to command an Allied Squadron, which was to force the Dardanelles. There was much to be arranged in the few hours left to me, and no time even to say good-bye to my children at Fareham, or to my splendid submariners and good friends at Harwich.

I learnt later, that some submarine officers thought I had deserted them to better myself, on the other hand I have several letters which I greatly prize, from officers who knew the circumstances of my departure, including a charming one from Sir John Jellicoe, the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet. Later when my friends heard of the fierce fighting and great events in which I was involved, many, including Tyrwhitt, wrote again to tell me that they were not in the least sorry for me—only very envious, as there was nothing doing in the North Sea.

Before parting company with the Harwich "Oversea" submarines, I must record a few incidents which occurred not long after I left, and were reported to me by Captain Waistell, who took over the direction of the "Oversea" submarines after my departure, when Captain S. S. Hall became Commodore (S).

Lieut.-Commander G. Kellett in *S*1 was cruising off Horn Reef,

when his engines completely broke down, and he was unable to come home on the surface, or recharge his batteries, and there seemed to be no alternative to sinking his submarine in the vicinity of a vessel which would save his crew. Kellett, however, quite undismayed, lay on the bottom till dusk, and then rose alongside a German trawler, which he captured by boarding, having no arms. He then manned the trawler with some of his men, took the latter's crew on board *S*1, and proceeded home about 300 miles in tow of his prize, though they had to stop frequently to repair the trawler's engines. Incidentally, on arrival at Harwich, the trawler's large supply of fish was much appreciated. Kellett sent the trawler's ensign to my wife, as she had launched *S*1, saying that the motto ("Win by Valour") she had given them had brought them luck.

Talbot in *E*6 got into a net off Borkum Riff, and was fast for an hour, with a Zeppelin overhead watching him. He kept his head and finally got clear, and the next day torpedoed a destroyer.

Leir in *E*4 got into the middle of a fleet of German fishing vessels, and annoyed them very much by coming up at intervals to get supplies of fish. Eventually two armed trawlers were sent out to attack him. He torpedoed one, which sank, the other one dropped a boat amongst the swimmers and made off at full speed. Leir put all the survivors into the boat and towed it to a German Light Vessel, only taking three of "the most intelligent looking" prisoners.

When the War started my wife prepared our house as a hospital, and when I left for the Mediterranean she had a house full of wounded men, but came up to London for a few hours to speed me on my way. Except for a flying visit to England for a few days in November, 1915, I did not see her again until June, 1916. Fortunately I kept a diary for her, and the following account of my part in the Gallipoli Campaign is based on this day-to-day record of events.

I shall always feel grateful to Winston Churchill—and to Lord Fisher, who was indirectly responsible!—for giving me this wonderful, although tormentingly disappointing experience.

On the morning of 9th February, 1915, I left to be Chief of Staff to the Naval forces engaged in the greatest amphibian enterprise in the History of the World.

PART III

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: *GALLIPOLI*

FOREWORD

BEFORE telling the story of the Fleet's attempt to force a passage through the Dardanelles in 1915, let us examine the history of Duckworth's campaign in 1807, since we are often told that his lack of success should have warned us of the futility of entering the Marmora with ships alone.*

In the autumn of 1806, under the influence of France, Turkey had closed the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to Russian ships, and on 22nd October, the Admiralty ordered Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean station, "to detach three ships of the line to reconnoitre the situation of the forts of the Dardanelles and fortifications adjacent as a measure of prudence, in case circumstances should call for an attack upon them by a British force."

On 21st November, Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Louis, to whom the mission had been confided, flying his flag in the *Canopus*, anchored off Tenedos with his small squadron.

On 27th November, the wind being favourable, Admiral Louis entered the Straits; after leaving two of his ships and a frigate in Azire Bay,† he exchanged salutes with the Castle at the Narrows, and taking careful note of the fortifications as he passed, sailed on in the *Canopus* to Constantinople.

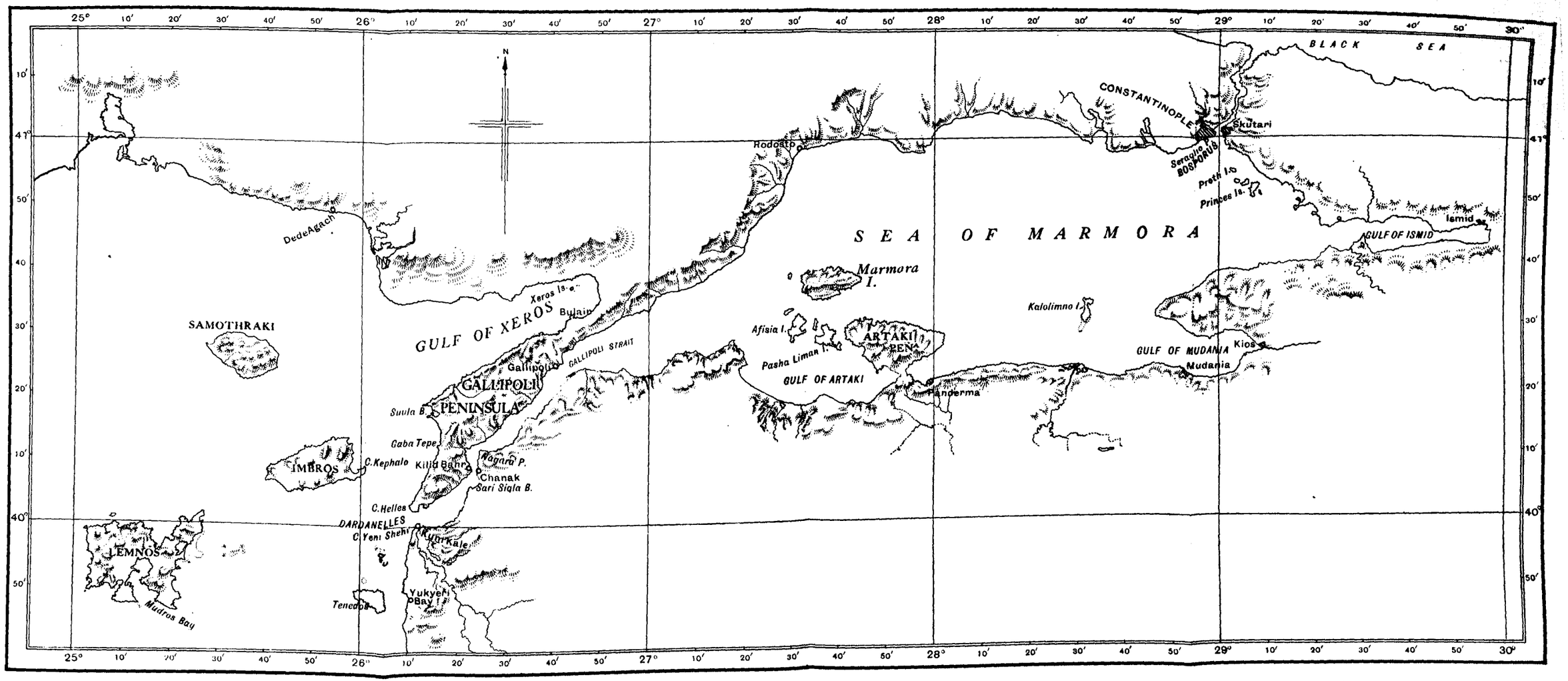
On 28th the *Canopus* anchored off Seraglio Point and remained there for a month, in company with the frigate *Endymion*, which had brought out our Ambassador, Mr. Arbuthnot.

On 28th December, Louis embarked the Russian Ambassador, who had broken off relations with Turkey, and rejoined his squadron in Azire Bay, leaving the *Endymion* to attend on Mr. Arbuthnot.

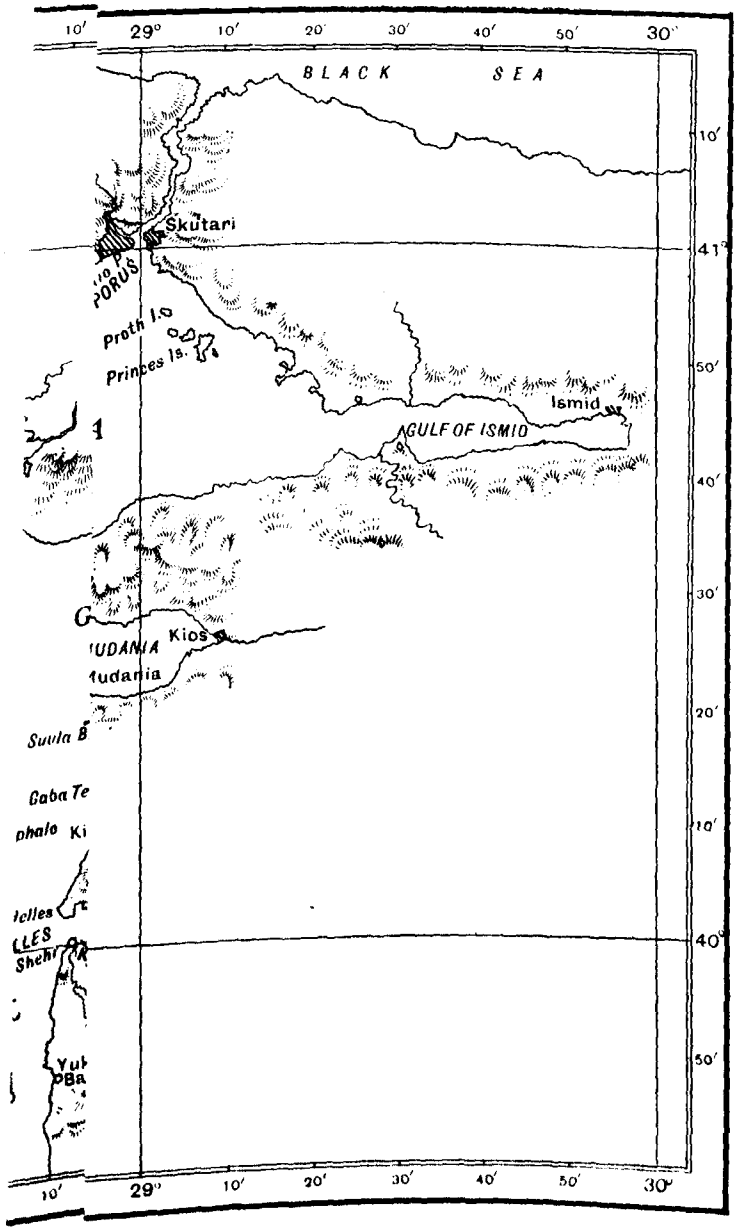
Our Ambassador and the British residents at Constantinople, seem to have been seized with a panic on the 29th December.

* The following is based on "The Naval History of Great Britain," Vol. IV, page 213, *et seq.*, by William James. The quotations and references are taken from that account.

† Sari Siglar Bay on plan.



APPROACHES TO THE DARDANELLES AND SEA OF MARMORA.



manned; and that the bulk of the Turkish Fleet lay moored in the port of Constantinople, practically unequipped, except for a small squadron at anchor above the Narrows.

On 11th he weighed and stood towards the entrance of the Dardanelles but the wind being unfavourable for the passage, he anchored off Cape Janizary.*

While waiting for the wind to change, Duckworth appears to have reflected on the hazardous nature of the undertaking, and on the 14th February, he wrote to Collingwood, pointing out "that our Minister, having left Constantinople 16 days since, and the Turks employed French engineers to erect batteries to flank every turn in our passage through the Dardanelles, I conceive the service pointed out in my instruction has completely altered. . . . Of the hazard which attends such an enterprise I am fully aware. We are to enter a sea environed with enemies, without a possible resource but in ourselves; and when we are to return there cannot remain a doubt but that the passage will be rendered as formidable as efforts of the Turkish Empire, directed and assisted by their Allies the French can make it. I entreat your Lordship, however, to believe, that, as I am aware of the difficulties we have to encounter, so I am resolved that nothing on my part (shall) be left undone that can ensure the means of surmounting them."†

During the night of 14th, the *Ajax*, one of the ships of the line, was accidentally destroyed by fire, and about 250 of her crew perished.

On 19th February, 1807, the wind having shifted to south-west, Duckworth sailed up the Dardanelles, his squadron being led by Rear-Admiral Louis in the *Canopus*, the *Royal George* flying Duckworth's flag, being the third ship in the line. The forts at the entrance opened fire, this was not replied to by the ships, at the suggestion of the Ambassador; however, as it was obvious that the Turks meant to resist the passage of the squadron, the forts at the Narrows were hotly engaged as the ships sailed by. The latter sustained only trifling damage and their casualties amounted to no more than six killed and 51 wounded.

The Turkish squadron, reported by Louis, consisting of a

* Yeni Shehr. C. on plan.

† Parliament papers ordered March 23rd, 1808.

64-gun ship, four frigates, four corvettes, some brigs and gunboats, was anchored above Nagara Point on the Asiatic shore, and rashly opened fire on the ships as they passed, otherwise it seems probable that Duckworth would have spared it. One brig was allowed to escape, without being pursued, and thus Constantinople received warning of the successful passage of the Fleet. The remainder of the Turkish vessels, except one corvette which was captured, were destroyed under the guns of a redoubt mounting 31 heavy pieces, by the three ships in the rear of the line, and two frigates under command of Sir Sydney Smith; the redoubt was most gallantly carried by a landing party of bluejackets and marines, who spiked the guns before withdrawing. Our losses in this engagement amounted to ten killed and 77 wounded.

Sir Sydney Smith, having detached the frigate *Active* and some of the boats of his ships to take possession of the prize and complete the destruction of the Turkish ships, rejoined Duckworth, who had anchored the remainder of his squadron about three miles above Nagara Point. Duckworth then weighed, and running up the Straits before a strong southerly breeze, entered the Marmora at 8 p.m. He reduced sail to such an extent during the night that little progress was made, and the wind falling light the next day, he did not arrive off Constantinople until 10 p.m. on the 20th February, and then anchored off Prince's Island, eight miles from the town.

On 21st the wind was favourable for carrying out Collingwood's instructions, but Duckworth considered that he was still bound to act as directed by the Ambassador, in spite of the hostile reception he had received from the forts and ships in the Dardanelles.

The Ambassador then started a warfare of notes, conveying threats which were not carried into effect, and demands which were treated with utter contempt by the Turks. On the 22nd the Ambassador fell sick and the Admiral carried on the paper war singlehanded.

Meanwhile the Turks were busily engaged equipping their ships, and, under the direction of French engineers, energetically erecting batteries at every assailable point. On 27th February, it was discovered that the Turks had occupied Prota Island, one of the Prince's Islands, and were erecting a battery abreast

of our squadron. Rear-Admiral Louis asked permission to drive the Turks out of the island; Duckworth agreed, subject to the proviso, "that no risks whatever were to be run, if it could be effected without hazarding the people, it might." The *Canopus* landing party was inadequate and suffered a check, and reinforcements were not permitted by Duckworth to do more than extricate their comrades. The casualties in this sorry affair were seven killed and 19 wounded.

The wind on 17th to 28th was favourable for finishing the business, in accordance with Collingwood's instructions, but the Fleet remained at anchor.

On 1st March, the wind shifted to north-east, and Duckworth weighed and formed line of battle. The temper of the Rear-Admirals, and of the Fleet generally by this time, can well be imagined; everyone must have been spoiling to wipe out the humiliations of the past ten days. However, Duckworth had no intention of fighting, despite his threats, and after standing off and on all day, as he reported, to give the Turkish "Fleet" (five ships of the line and four frigates) which were lying in the Roads, an opportunity to come out and attack him, he withdrew at nightfall and stood towards the Dardanelles, anchoring in the afternoon of the 2nd March six miles above the Narrows. He was joined there by the *Active* and her prize, the latter by Duckworth's orders was restored to the prisoners.

On the morning of 3rd March, Duckworth weighed and proceeded down channel; on approaching the Castle at the Narrows, hoping no doubt further to propitiate the Turks, Sir John fired a salute of 13 guns. The salute was returned with shot and shell as the ships again led by the *Canopus*, sailed by. The casualties in the course of the withdrawal amounted to 29 killed and 138 wounded.

There are no doubt lessons to be learned from this somewhat inglorious episode, but those lessons are certainly not that it was impossible to force the Straits of the Dardanelles, or return through them. Nor are Duckworth's experiences conclusive evidence against entering the Marmora with ships alone, but only against a misuse of opportunities when there.

Drake, Hawke, Nelson—to mention no other British Admirals—would have carried the Dardanelles enterprise to a victorious issue.

CHAPTER IX

INITIATION OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN

THE initiation of the Gallipoli Campaign is a subject which will no doubt—in this generation at any rate—continue to give rise to ill-informed criticism and argument, so I propose to relate the events which led up to the situation I found when I arrived at Malta in February, 1915.

The following account is based on the Report of the Dardanelles Commission in 1917, and the Official History, "Military Operations, Gallipoli, Vol. I" (published in 1929). The author* of the latter has also had access to every kind of British, Allied, Neutral and Enemy document on the subject published since the War.

It is clear that it was most fully appreciated from the first, both at the War Office and Admiralty, and by the First Lord, that in the event of war with Turkey the best way of bringing pressure to bear on her lay in a combined naval and military operation—a surprise landing by a large army in Gallipoli, supported by ships' guns, and the capture of the defences at the Narrows, with the object of opening the Straits for the Fleet.

On 3rd November, 1914, two days after Turkey's declaration of war, the Allied British and French Fleets carried out a brief bombardment of the Outer Forts.

On 27th December, Russia appealed to her Allies for help against Turkey. While promising that steps would be taken to make a demonstration against the Turks, Lord Kitchener declared that no troops were available, and on 2nd January asked the First Lord if the Navy could make a demonstration against the Dardanelles.

On 3rd January, 1915, Lord Fisher wrote to the First Lord and strongly urged an attack on Turkey, if it could be carried

* Brigadier-General C. Aspinall-Oglander.

out at once; after allocating various military operations to British, Indian, Greek, Bulgarian, Roumanian, Russian and Serbian troops, he concluded: "Finally, Admiral Sturdee should at the same time force the Dardanelles with ships of the 'Majestic' and 'Canopus' class." Lord Fisher followed this letter up with an official minute, stating that the naval advantages of the possession of Constantinople were so overwhelming that a plan for operations against Turkey as outlined by Colonel Hankey was "Vital, imperative, and very pressing."

The military historian remarks that:

> "This grandiose proposal, in many respects a mixture of the recent suggestions of Colonel Hankey and Mr. Lloyd George, was undoubtedly a counsel of perfection. Put into force in its entirety, had this been possible, the plan might have brought not only victory but peace. But at least three of the premises were false. . . . It is a fair assumption that when assigning to Admiral Sturdee the task of forcing the Straits, Lord Fisher had no intention that this part of his scheme should be read without its context. To force the Straits while 100,000 British and Indian troops were landing in Besika Bay, the Bulgarians marching on Adrianople, and a Greek army attacking the Gallipoli Peninsula, was a very different proposition to an unaided attack by the Fleet.
>
> Nevertheless, this was the first time in the present war that the forcing of the Straits by fleet action had even been mentioned by a responsible sailor, and the words attracted the earnest attention of the Minister to whom it was addressed. Hitherto the matter had been looked upon as a military problem, and a difficult one at that, and discussion had ranged on the possibility of capturing the shores of the Straits with a view to admitting the Fleet. But here was the First Sea Lord, with an intimate knowledge of the Dardanelles, plainly suggesting that the Straits might be forced by vessels of the 'Majestic' and 'Canopus' class, both of which came under the category of 'His Majesty's least valuable ships.' To be content with a demonstration off the mouth of the Dardanelles, if the same ships could force their way unaided into the Marmora, was unthinkable.

An achievement of this nature might well be expected to break the vicious circle which was at once preventing the adherence of Bulgaria for lack of a military success, and a military success for lack of Bulgarian help. Hitherto Mr. Churchill had been convinced that the capture of the Straits was an affair for soldiers. But as no troops were available, the question raised by Lord Fisher's plan was at least worthy of further investigation. Later in the day, with the full concurrence of Lord Fisher, he telegraphed to the Admiral at the Dardanelles, with a view to eliciting the views of the man on the spot: '3rd January, 1915. Do you consider the forcing of the Straits by ships alone a practicable operation? It is assumed older battleships fitted with mine-bumpers would be used, preceded by colliers as mine-bumpers and sweepers. Importance of result would justify severe loss. Let me know your views.'"

On 5th January Admiral Carden replied that he did not consider the Dardanelles could be rushed. They might be forced by extended operations with a large number of ships.

He was then asked to telegraph his proposals in detail, and the force he needed.

On 11th January he replied with a detailed plan for forcing the Dardanelles by ships alone. The scheme was divided into four stages.

A. Total reduction of the forts at the entrance.

B. Clear defences inside Straits up to and including Battery No. 8.

C. Reduction of defences at the Narrows, Chanak.

D. Clearing the minefield, advancing through Narrows, reducing forts above the Narrows and final advance into the Marmora.

He asked for 12 battleships, four to be fitted with mine-bumpers. Three battle cruisers, two to be available on entering Marmora. Three light cruisers, one flotilla leader, 16 destroyers, six submarines, four seaplanes, 12 minesweepers, including four fleet sweepers, one hospital ship, six colliers, and two supply ammunition ships. The duration of the operation would depend

on the weather, gales being frequent, and on the *morale* of the enemy under bombardment; it might be done in about a month.

This plan was generally accepted at the Admiralty, and on 12th January Lord Fisher suggested the addition of the *Queen Elizabeth* to Carden's squadron and concurred in the following minute, which the First Lord addressed to the Chief of Staff through the First Sea Lord:

"The forcing of the Dardanelles as proposed and the arrival of a squadron strong enough to defeat the Turkish fleet in the Sea of Marmora would be a victory of first importance and change to our advantage the whole situation of the War in the East. It would appear possible to provide the force required by Admiral Carden without weakening the margin necessary in home waters."

The minute then gave full details of the ships to be employed and concluded by saying:

"All arrangements should be secretly concerted for carrying the plan through, the seaplanes and auxiliary craft being provided, Admiral Carden to command . . . definite plans should be worked out accordingly."*

On 13th January the First Lord explained Admiral Carden's plan to the War Cabinet, and though the operation was not finally approved, it was decided that "The Admiralty should prepare for a Naval expedition in February, to bombard and take the Gallipoli Peninsula, with Constantinople as its objective."†

On 15th January Admiral Sir Henry Jackson submitted a Staff memorandum on Admiral Carden's plan. It began with the words "Concur generally in his [i.e. Carden's] plan. Our previous appreciations of the situation differed only in small details." Admiral Carden was then informed that his scheme was approved in principle, that he was to have command, and that the *Queen Elizabeth* would join his flag.

With the full concurrence of the Prime Minister, Lord Kitchener, Sir Edward Grey, Lord Fisher and the Naval Chief of Staff, Mr. Churchill informed the French Government of

* Dardanelles Commission First Report, page 51.

† Dardanelles Commission First Report, page 21.

Admiral Carden's scheme; they promised to provide a squadron to co-operate, and agreed that the Allied Fleet should be under Admiral Carden's command.

On 19th January the Russian Government was informed of our intention to try to force the Dardanelles, and asked to assist the operation by simultaneously attacking the Bosphorus with ships and troops.

Meanwhile the plans for the naval attack were maturing, but as the time arrived for definite action, Lord Fisher weakened, and on 25th January he submitted a memorandum to the War Council, giving his views on naval policy generally, and on the folly of subsidiary operations. "Even the older ships should not be risked, for they cannot be lost without losing men, and they form the only reserve behind the Grand Fleet." This and the concluding sentence, which follows, sum up his whole outlook and that of the *Matériel* school which flourished under his long peace-time administration. "Being already in possession of all that a powerful fleet can give a country, we should continue quietly to enjoy the advantage without dissipating our strength in operations which cannot improve matters."

Mr. Churchill replied on 27th January, "The main principle of the First Sea Lord's paper is indisputable. The foundation of our naval policy is the maintenance in a secure position of a Battle Fleet with all ancillary vessels capable at any time of defeating the German High Sea Fleet in battle, and reserved for that purpose above and before all other duties. This principle has been and will be fully and strictly observed." Then followed a complete analysis of the comparative strength of the British and German Fleets, which showed that the margin of our superiority over the German Fleet in modern fighting ships was overwhelming, and that in addition to the eight "King Edwards," three "Lord Nelsons" and six "Formidables," which could certainly destroy the whole of the German pre-"Dreadnought" battle fleet, we had 21 old battleships, completely manned and supplied with their own ammunition and its reserve. In conclusion he declared: "Not to use them where necessary, because of some fear that there would be an outcry if a ship is lost, would be wrong, and if a certain proportion of loss of life among officers and men of the Royal Navy in these ships can achieve important objects of the War, and save a very much greater loss of life among our comrades and Allies on shore, we ought certainly not to shrink from it."

The Dardanelles Commission dealt at great length with Lord Fisher's attitude towards a purely naval attack, which may be summed up in the following quotation from page 20 of their "First Report":

> "All the evidence we have received, including that of Lord Fisher himself, tends to confirm the perfect accuracy of the following statement made to us by Mr. Asquith. . . . 'It is quite true, that, I think throughout, he thought the best chance of success for such an operation would have been a combined operation in which both land and sea forces were engaged; but Lord Fisher's main objection, at least the one he always impressed on me, was not based in any degree upon the technical or naval merits or demerits of the Dardanelles operations, but upon the fact that he preferred another objective.'"

Lord Fisher's other objective was the entry of the British Fleet into the Baltic, to land a Russian army on the unprotected northern seaboard of Germany. For this great project he was building a considerable flotilla of specially designed vessels for landing on open beaches, and he proposed to use the heavily armed monitors which were coming into service for this operation.

His Baltic scheme was dependent on one of the Russian armies, which might or might not be available, and in any case it could not be put into operation while the German Fleet was in being, with free access to the North Sea and Baltic through the Kiel Canal, a condition which prevailed until the end of the War.

Lord Fisher's Turkish scheme had been dependent on the employment of British and Indian troops, which could not be spared from France and Flanders, Allied Armies, and the Armies of Neutral Powers whose war intentions were not yet declared.

Neither scheme therefore was very helpful at a moment when we and our Allies were at a deadlock, Russia calling for help, no troops available, neutrals waiting on events; on the other hand we had a great fleet of old battleships, heavily armed and well protected for action at moderate ranges lying idle since they were unfit to meet the enemy's modern ships, and in

consequence had to be kept out of the main naval theatre of operations.

On 28th January, the First Lord and First Sea Lord met in the Prime Minister's room. Mr. Churchill advocated the naval attack on the Dardanelles. Lord Fisher did not criticise the latter on its merits but spoke in favour of his Baltic scheme. The Prime Minister, after hearing both sides, expressed his concurrence in Mr. Churchill's views. Immediately after this interview the War Council met.

Mr. Churchill asked if the War Council attached importance to this operation, which undoubtedly involved some risk.

There was no hostile criticism.

Lord Kitchener considered the naval attack to be vitally important. If successful, its effect would be equivalent to that of a successful campaign fought with the new armies. One merit of the scheme was that if satisfactory progress was not made, the attack could be broken off.

Mr. Balfour then dwelt on the advantages which would accrue from a successful attack on the Dardanelles, and concluded by saying that "it was difficult to imagine a more helpful operation."

Sir Edward Grey said it would also finally settle the attitude of Bulgaria and the whole of the Balkans.

Mr. Churchill said that the Naval Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean had expressed his belief that it could be done. He required from three weeks to a month to accomplish it. The necessary ships were already on their way to the Dardanelles.

The War Council then decided that the naval operation was to be carried out as soon as possible, and adjourned until the afternoon.

Lord Fisher apparently intended to resign, but after an interview with the First Lord he definitely consented to carry out the task with which the Admiralty had been charged, and the War Council were so informed, in his presence, by the First Lord that afternoon.

The military historian concludes his account of the initiation of the naval attack thus:

> "The decision thus arrived at on the 28th January marks the first great landmark in the history of the Dardanelles campaign. In an effort to satisfy the urgent needs of diplomacy, Britain's Fleet was to attempt, without the aid of a single soldier, an enterprise which in the earlier days of the War both the Admiralty and the War Office had regarded as a military task. The operation would, moreover, be many times more difficult than in the early days of the War. The Germans had already had six months in which to improve the defences of the Straits, and the minefields were continually growing. The enterprise was perhaps still capable of accomplishment, if the Government were ready to face the inevitable loss of ships. This was the opinion of the German Admiral von Usedom, who knew better than anyone the strength and the weakness of the fortress and the capacity of its defenders. But there must be no indecision, no faltering and no delay. Nothing but iron will and grim determination, both at home and on the spot, could snatch the hazardous victory."*

There is overwhelming proof that our enemies were under no illusion as to the menace of this great strategic turning movement, which was initiated and pressed so vigorously by Winston Churchill—to his temporary undoing—and that Neutral Powers, in their anxiety to be on the winning side, watched with intense interest and anxiety the progress of our effort, which if successful, *they knew* would bring about the downfall of the Central Powers.

It is so easy to say that the bombardment on the 3rd November was folly—that the purely naval attack added enormously to the difficulties of the military attack—that we made this mistake or that—but a moment arrived when brave decisions had to be made, in order to carry the enterprise to a victorious issue, and then those with whom the responsibility lay faltered. As Winston Churchill said, "Not to persevere, that was the crime."†

I was present when the first shot of the campaign was fired in February, 1915, and the last in January, 1916, and during all the intermediate fighting, serving as Chief of Staff to the three Admirals who successively commanded the naval operations. I spent many hours in the Dardanelles under fire from

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I.

† "World Crisis, 1915," page 169.

the forts and concealed howitzers—a greatly exaggerated menace. I saw ships sink by mine and torpedo, watched the Homeric fighting on the beaches, and the great battles which followed, in the course of which thousands of soldiers perished.

I lived in close association with the administrative officers at the advanced bases and the fighting soldiers in Gallipoli. I watched, and helped in the organisation of the three unopposed evacuations. I wish to place on record that I had no doubt then, and have none now—and nothing will ever shake my opinion—that from the 4th April, 1915, onwards, the Fleet could have forced the Straits, and with losses trifling in comparison with those the Army suffered, could have entered the Marmora with sufficient force to destroy the Turco-German fleet. This operation would have cut the communications—which were sea-borne—of any Turkish armies either in Gallipoli or on the Asiatic side, and would have led immediately to a victory decisive upon the whole course of the War.

CHAPTER X

DESTRUCTION OF OUTER DEFENCES

I join Admiral Carden at Malta; Proceed to Tenedos; Admiral Carden takes command of Allied Fleet off Dardanelles; Attack on Outer Defences; Bad weather delays; Outer Defences destroyed by bombardment and landing parties; General Birdwood arrives.

I CROSSED the Channel in half a gale on the afternoon of 9th February, 1915, travelled across France to Marseilles, and embarked in the 24-year-old Messageries Maritime steamer *Australie* for Malta, where she arrived on the 14th February, after breaking down on three occasions and drifting about for several hours at a time. Fortunately there were no submarines about in the Mediterranean in those days.

Among the passengers were General Pau, a one-armed veteran of the Franco-Prussian War, and his Staff, who were going on a mission to Russia, and two French naval officers. I had made friends with one of the latter—Capitaine de Frégate Herr—in Paris in 1904. At that time he was naval aide-de-camp to Admiral Fournier, who presided over an International Commission of Admirals, appointed to enquire into the attack of the Russian Baltic Fleet on British fishing vessels off Hull, and I was naval adviser to the British delegation of lawyers and diplomats who presented our case.

Captain Herr was the bearer of a despatch to the French Commander-in-Chief—Admiral Boué de Lapeyrére—commanding the Allied Fleet in the Mediterranean, telling him of the Dardanelles project, and directing him to place four French battleships and some destroyers under the command of Rear-Admiral Carden. Captain Herr had been told the nature of my appointment, and I asked him if he would care to join my Admiral's Staff as liaison officer, if I could arrange it. He said he only wished he could do so, but as he had been appointed to the staff of his Admiral, he knew he would not be spared.

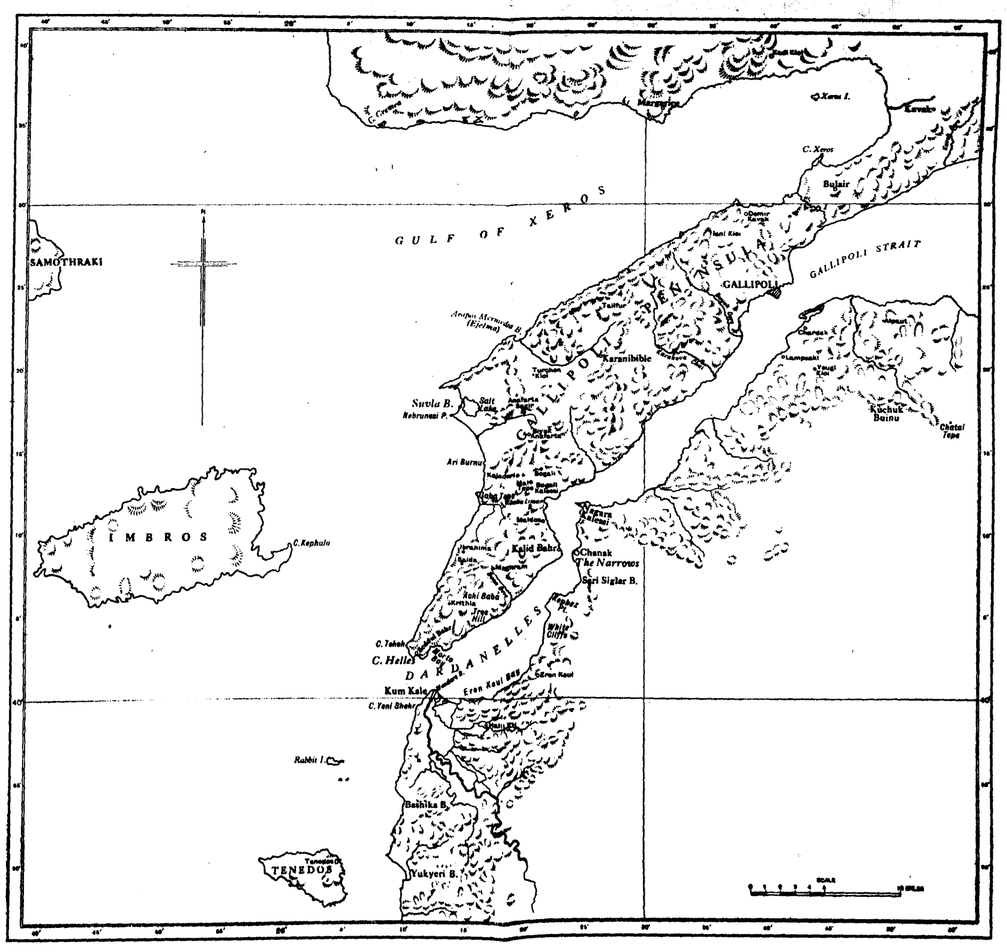
Eventually, when I had obtained Admiral Carden's approval, I arranged for the other French officer who took passage with me in the *Australie*—Lieut. de Vaisseau C. Millot—to join our staff, and for the next 16 months he proved a charming companion and messmate, and a very valuable link between the French and British squadrons.

My Admiral—who had been Admiral Superintendent of Malta Dockyard at the commencement of the War—was appointed in September to command the squadron which had been blockading the Dardanelles since the entry of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* into the Marmora; his appointment at Malta being filled by Rear-Admiral Limpus, who had been head of the British naval mission at Constantinople, until our relations with Turkey became strained.

When I arrived at Malta, Admiral Carden had been there a few days, having left Admiral de Robeck—who I was surprised and delighted to find had arrived on the Station—in command of the ships off the Dardanelles.

Admiral Carden was living in Admiralty House, Valetta, and his small staff were using the offices, the appointment of Commander-in-Chief being in abeyance, owing to the arrangement which placed the Allied ships in Home Waters under a British, and those in the Mediterranean under a French admiral. The staff included Commander the Hon. Alexander Ramsay, Gunnery officer, and Captain W. W. Godfrey, Royal Marines, War Staff officer, with both of whom I was to be closely associated throughout the campaign. They were responsible for working out the details of the plan, which had been submitted by Admiral Carden, approved by the Admiralty, and which we were about to carry out.

A number of old battleships and cruisers had assembled at Malta, and I found the Club crowded with British and French naval officers. Our enterprise was still a closely guarded secret, but there was an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation in the air and, when I walked into the Club before dinner the evening I arrived, I was greeted by the captain of one of our old battleships with "Halloa you stormy petrel, what's in the wind out here?" Within five weeks his was the first of the five British battleships which were to sink off Gallipoli with their colours flying.



GALLIPOLI AND THE DARDANELLES.

The submarines of the local defence flotillas at Malta and Gibraltar were taking part in the blockade of the Straits. As each flotilla was commanded by a senior submarine officer, I arranged for one—Lieut.-Commander C. G. Brodie, from Gibraltar—to join the staff, leaving Lieut.-Commander Pownall, the commanding officer at Malta, to take charge of both flotillas. There were three submarines at Malta, refitting or resting, including *B*11, whose captain—Lieut.-Commander Norman Holbrook—had won the V.C. for his gallant attack on the Turkish cruiser *Messoudieh*, which was lying in Sari Siglar Bay, below the Narrows, protected by four lines of mines, when he torpedoed and sank her.

I invited the submarine officers to dinner at the Club, and told them of the exploits of our submarines in Home Waters, and listened to their experiences.

On the 16th February, the Admiral and his staff embarked in the *Albion* (Captain A. Heneage) and sailed for the Dardanelles. It was given out that we were going to Naples and Gibraltar, but when clear of Malta, we stood to the eastward, and by nightfall were well started on our great adventure. A young moon and Orion ablaze in a starry sky, seemed to me portents of good fortune, and I recorded that night that I had never felt more buoyant and confident.

When I was a midshipman in the *Raleigh*, her chaplain, a most enthusiastic lover of the Heavens, often spent an hour or two of a night watch telling me its story, which I used to know by heart, but when Orion was aloft, I never had eyes for any other constellation, and I always looked upon him as my champion. One day I happened to remark to the First Lord that Orion contained my lucky star, and how pleased I was to see his warlike figure blazing in the sky, on the eve of one of our actions in the Heligoland Bight. Whereupon Winston Churchill said: "Your star, why he is my star," and I was amused to read many years later, in his "My Early Life" a reference to his faith in Orion. Well I don't mind sharing even Orion with such a fearless fighter, who, if he had been sustained by his First Sea Lord, and supported by his colleagues in the Government, would have carried his great strategical enterprise to a victorious conclusion.

We arrived off Tenedos on the 18th February, and transferred to the *Inflexible*, commanded by Captain R. Phillimore. After

the Battle of Coronel the *Inflexible* had proceeded with the *Invincible* in pursuit of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, to avenge the sinking of the *Good Hope* and *Monmouth*; after which she relieved the *Indefatigable* in the Mediterranean as flagship of the Dardanelles Squadron.

It was very interesting to hear at first hand all about the Battle of the Falkland Islands. The *Inflexible* had only been hit two or three times, and had one man killed and three wounded. The *Invincible* suffered some damage, but not one casualty; and they had had no more difficulty in destroying the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* than the latter had had in sinking the obsolete *Good Hope* and weakly-armed *Monmouth*.

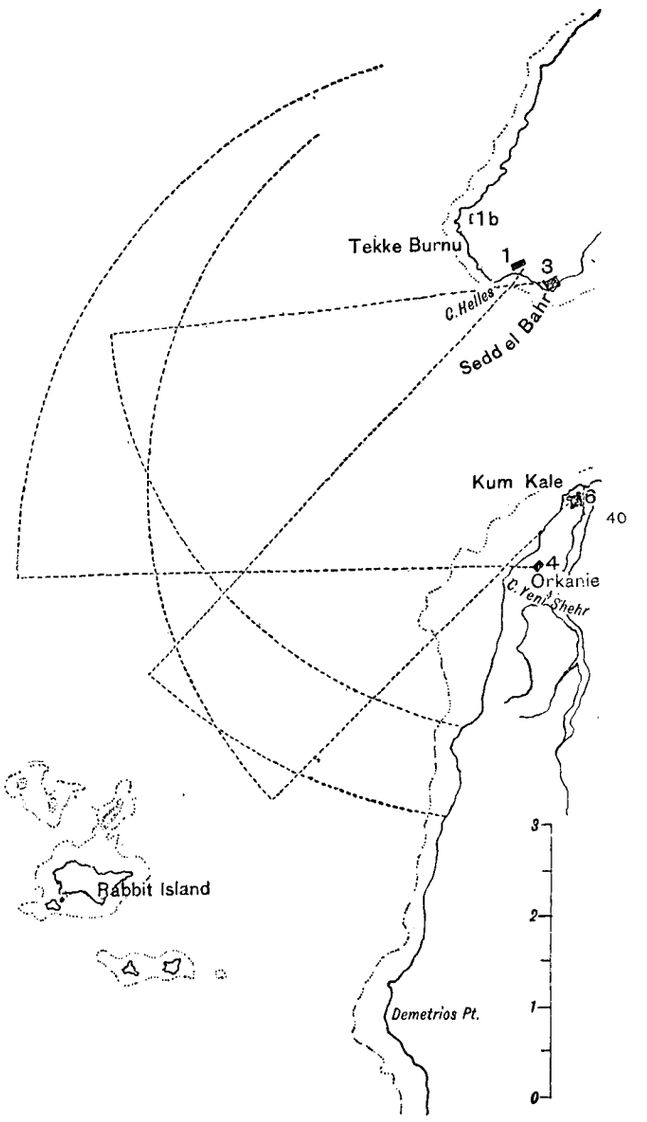
The squadron off the Dardanelles anchored during the day north or south of Tenedos, according to the wind and weather, and cruised at night to minimise the risk of torpedo attack, from the Turkish torpedo-boats and destroyers in the Marmora. In accordance with this practice, we got under way for the night, and arrived off the Dardanelles at daylight on 19th February, to take up our positions for the attack on the outer forts, the first phase of Admiral Carden's plan.

A number of battleships, cruisers, destroyers and minesweepers had been ordered to join his flag (*see* Appendix 1), but some of them did not arrive off the Dardanelles in time to take part in the early engagements. Nevertheless, on the 19th February, those present had an overwhelming superiority of heavy long range guns to oppose to the Outer Defences. These consisted of two old masonry forts mounting 11-inch, 10.2-inch and 9.4-inch guns, whose range was limited to 8,000 yards; and two fairly modern earthworks, each containing two 9.4-inch guns, with a range of about 11,000 yards.*

The attack was to open with a deliberate long range bombardment, either out of range, or out of bearing of the enemy's guns; followed by a direct bombardment at medium range, using secondary armament; and finally an overwhelming fire at very close range—2,000 to 4,000 yards.

On 3rd November, 1914, a short bombardment had been carried out by the battle cruisers *Indefatigable* and *Indomitable*,

* The forts and batteries in the Outer Defences, indicated by their numbers, are shown on the plan opposite. Details of their armament will be found in Appendix 2.



Plan of Outer Defences issued with operational orders for engagements of 19th and 25th February. The bombarding ships were given berths outside the pecked lines and all ships remained out of range of the forts until they were silenced, when the older ships closed in to point-blank range.

and the French battleships *Suffren* and *Verité*. They ran past the forts at a range of about 13,000 yards. The enemy replied almost at once, although their guns were out of range, and they maintained their fire until the squadron had completed their run ; only a few 9.4-inch projectiles from Forts 1 and 4 fell anywhere near the ships. On the other hand the latter made good practice, and a heavy magazine explosion resulted in Fort 3. Information received later indicated that the casualties to the personnel of the forts had been high.

The enemy had evidently learnt a lesson from this premature attack, and on 19th February kept the garrison under cover, making no reply until our ships came well within range.

Conditions of light were very difficult until the sun had risen to a certain height, and, on this account, the engagement did not open until nearly 10 a.m.

The *Cornwallis* engaged Fort 4 by direct fire from a position in which she could not be fired at by Fort 6.

The *Triumph* engaged Fort 1 by indirect fire, screened by the high land of Tekke Burnu.

The *Suffren*, spotted for by the *Bouvet*, engaged Fort 6 by indirect fire, from a position close inshore off Yeni Kreui village, outside the arc of fire of Forts 6 and 4. The *Gaulois* remained in her vicinity to drive off any mobile artillery which might be brought down to the coast to annoy her.

After half an hour, all the firing ships were ordered to anchor ; and the *Vengeance*, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral de Robeck, took the place of the *Cornwallis*, as the latter had some defect in her capstan which prevented her anchoring in deep water.

At 11.45, the *Triumph* having failed to hit Fort 1, the *Inflexible* engaged it at a range of 13,000 yards, and by 1 p.m. appeared to have made such good practice that she shifted her fire to Fort 3 and repeatedly hit it.

A slow deliberate fire was maintained until 2 p.m., when the Admiral considered that the effect produced by the long range bombardment was great enough to allow ships to close, and the engagement continued at medium range, the ships remaining under way, as they were well within the range of 1 and 4, but the latter did not reply.

At 4.10 p.m., there still being no reply from the forts, the

Admiral ordered the *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis* to go into close range, and engage them with secondary armament.

By 4.40 p.m. the forts were enveloped in clouds of dust and smoke and showing no signs of life, and the Admiral ordered the *Vengeance* and *Suffren* to cease fire and examine the forts.

At 4.45 when the *Vengeance* was standing in to the entrance of the Straits, Forts 1 and 4 opened a heavy fire, mainly on the *Vengeance*, and she was fortunate to escape serious damage. Whereupon the *Inflexible*, *Agamemnon* (which had just arrived with the *Queen Elizabeth* from Malta) and the three French ships assisted the *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis* to retaliate. The fire from the forts at once became very erratic and died away, and at 5.20 as the light was failing and the forts were indistinguishable in the dust and smoke, the Admiral signalled a general recall. De Robeck asked to be allowed to continue the action, but as the visibility towards the land was bad, the ships were silhouetted against the setting sun, and it was obviously impossible to finish the business before nightfall, the Admiral decided to wait until we had a few hours of good visibility in hand.

The result of the day's action showed that the effect of long range bombardment on modern earthworks was slight. Forts 1 and 4 appeared to have been hit by 12-inch shells on many occasions, but when the ships closed, all four guns in those two forts were intact. Nevertheless, I felt absolutely confident that Admiral Carden's plan was the solution of the problem and could be carried to a successful issue ; that the enemy's forts and batteries could be dominated by heavy fire, from ships which were themselves out of range, while other ships could close to decisive range or *pass by unmolested* by gunfire.

When I was Naval Attaché at Constantinople, 1906-07, I spent hours with a powerful telescope, looking into the rear of the forts, both in the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. In the latter I was much assisted by the captain of a salvage steamer working from Chanak, who took me in his ship to points of vantage, from which I was able to make a close study of the forts. I had not a doubt that once the ships were past, the forts taken in reverse, could be dominated and destroyed. " Nevertheless," as I recorded at the time, " very early in the proceedings I made up my mind that the military occupation of Gallipoli

would become a necessity, even if, as the Government anticipated, the whole Turkish opposition collapsed with the arrival of a fleet off Constantinople. I felt strongly that in any case the Government should be prepared for a military operation on a large scale to ensure the Straits being kept open for further operations in the Marmora, if the appearance of the Fleet off Constantinople did not have the expected effect. Between 20th and 24th February I discussed this with Admiral de Robeck, Captain Phillimore, and Captain Godfrey, who shared my views, and of course with Admiral Carden, who had spent the whole winter off the Dardanelles, and was able thoroughly to appreciate the great difficulties of supplying an army under the prevailing weather conditions; on this account he was averse to undertaking military operations unless essential."

The Admiral had every intention of continuing the operation on the 20th, but it came on to blow heavily from the southward, and weather and light conditions were unfavourable for gunnery or seaplane observation, and we could not afford to spend ammunition on indecisive action.

On the 21st, the Admiral telegraphed to the Admiralty, that owing to the south-westerly gale and low visibility, operations were impossible, but he considered that the old battleships could now approach and engage at close range, under cover of long range bombardment.

On 22nd February, we learnt that the General in Egypt had been ordered to hold 10,000 troops in readiness for service in the Dardanelles. After an exchange of telegrams with the General, the Admiral telegraphed to the Admiralty on the 24th that if only 10,000 troops were sent he proposed at first to base them on Mudros, making occasional feints in the Gulf of Xeros, without actually landing them. If it became necessary to prevent serious interference with the Fleet by concealed guns, the force could be landed at Sedd el Bahr to occupy the Peninsula up to the line of the Suan Dere River–Chana Ovasi, supported on both flanks by ships. A landing at Sedd el Bahr and the maintenance of troops after landing being so dependent on the weather, he did not propose to take this step unless it was essential. He reported that he had asked for the troops to be sent to Mudros as soon as possible, and suggested that if the Royal Marine Brigade was to be employed in conjunction with this force, the Portsmouth and Deal battalions should be sent out to complete the Brigade.

Rear-Admiral Rosslyn Wemyss arrived that afternoon in the *Dartmouth* to take up his appointment as senior naval officer at Mudros, which was to be the principal base for the Allied naval and military forces engaged in the operations.

The First Lord having launched his great enterprise was naturally impatient and anxious for news, indeed it was very evident, from telegrams, that our apparent inaction was causing concern. My Admiral was rather troubled, so I suggested the following telegram, which I had no doubt the First Lord would understand and appreciate:

128. Dispatched 11.44 a.m. 24th February.

"Weather same as yesterday. I do not intend to commence in bad weather, leaving result undecided, as from experience on first day I am convinced, given favourable weather conditions, that the reduction of the forts at the entrance can be completed in one day, on the lines indicated in telegram of 21st instant."

Towards the evening the weather improved, and by the morning of the 25th it was favourable for good gunnery, but still too rough for seaplane reconnaissance. At 10 a.m. the attack was reopened by the *Queen Elizabeth*, *Agamemnon*, *Irresistible* and *Gaulois* anchoring and commencing a deliberate long range bombardment at Forts 3, 1, 4 and 6 respectively. Unfortunately, the *Agamemnon* anchored 1,000 yards closer than was intended, and Fort 1 got her range in a few minutes, and she was hit seven times before she could weigh and take up her proper position. The shooting from the ships was excellent, and at 1 o'clock the *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis* went in and engaged Forts 1 and 4 at close range. They did not reply, but 3 and 6 fired a few ill-directed rounds. De Robeck reported that both guns in Fort 1 appeared to be out of action and Fort 4 was not manned. At 2 p.m. the *Suffren* and *Charlemagne* ran into close range and engaged Forts 3, 4 and 6.

By 3 p.m. it was evident that the forts were incapable of further resistance; minesweepers and destroyers were ordered to the entrance, to be ready to carry out the prearranged sweeping operations, the *Albion* and *Triumph* to cover them,

by closing the forts to within 2,000 yards on south and north shores respectively.

Forts 1, 4 and 6 each fired one more gun, but were promptly silenced, and by 4 p.m. all the forts appeared to be completely deserted. Sweeping operations were then commenced, covered by the *Vengeance*, *Albion*, *Triumph* and six destroyers under the direction of Admiral de Robeck. The remainder of the fleet returned to Tenedos, where they were now able to remain at night without risk of attack.

When the engagement ceased, Admiral Guépratte, standing at the salute in a prominent position on the bridge of the *Suffren*, led his squadron past our flagship, his bands playing "God save the King" and "Tipperary." We responded with the "Marseillaise" and hearty cheers for our gallant Allies, whose excellent gunnery had greatly contributed to our success.

From our safe position in the flagship, outside the enemy's range, we had watched de Robeck and Guépratte with admiration—and some anxiety—when they laid their divisions right alongside the enemy's forts, for we knew, after the *Vengeance's* experience on the 19th, that very few of the guns in the forts could have been actually destroyed. Our fire on that occasion had been checked too soon; on the 25th, however, it so completely dominated that of the enemy, that the reply was, as we had hoped, quite ineffective, and the only casualties we suffered during the two days were in the *Agamemnon*, when she anchored well inside her assigned position.

After the *Inflexible* anchored off Tenedos, I returned to the entrance of the Straits in a destroyer, to make arrangements with de Robeck for the subsequent operations, which were to be carried out under his command. I spent the night with him on board the *Vengeance*, and at daylight on the 26th visited the sweeping flotillas in the destroyer *Grasshopper*, and watched the *Majestic* move in behind them, to be in a position to fire into the rear of the forts if necessary. Then back to the *Vengeance* to suggest to de Robeck that we should land demolition parties, supported by the two battalions of Marines, under cover of the ships, to destroy all the guns and searchlights at the entrance of the Straits. He fully concurred, and I went back to Tenedos in the *Grasshopper* to tell Admiral Carden how things were going, and to suggest an immediate landing operation.

We had been expecting seaplanes all the morning; none had appeared, but on the way back to Tenedos, I saw two taxi-ing round the *Ark Royal*. They had not been able to fly since the 19th, on account of rough weather, and on this occasion it was too calm for them to rise off the water. When they eventually did so, they could not rise to any great height, with the result that their very gallant pilots were continually shot up by rifle fire.

In the meantime de Robeck had signalled to Admiral Carden, asking permission to land demolition parties at once, but he did not wish to land anybody until seaplane reconnaissance had been carried out, and when the report eventually came, it was too late to disembark the Marines from the transports, which were still at anchor off Tenedos. So he decided to postpone the landing until next morning.

I returned to the *Grasshopper* with Ramsay (the gunnery commander) and went up the Dardanelles, to select a position for a ship to observe the *Queen Elizabeth's* indirect fire, over the Peninsula, at the forts in the Narrows. When we arrived, we found the *Majestic* and *Albion*, preceded by sweepers, four miles up the Straits, the latter engaging Fort 8 at a range of 12,000 yards. They were being fired at by concealed guns and howitzers from the high land; these were annoying, but not formidable or very dangerous to armoured ships.

At the entrance, the *Vengeance* and *Irresistible* were covering parties which de Robeck had landed from those two ships at Kum Kale and Sedd el Bahr respectively just before I returned. He had decided to do this without waiting for Admiral Carden's reply, in order to take advantage of the probably only temporary absence of the enemy from the vicinity of the forts, from which they had been seen streaming, when the *Majestic* and *Triumph* had thrown a few shells into them from the rear. This withdrawal was mentioned in the seaplanes' report I have referred to, and had decided Admiral Carden to land the next day. After Ramsay had selected a position from which to observe the *Queen Elizabeth's* indirect fire, I ordered the *Grasshopper* to close the *Vengeance*; as we passed the *Majestic* she was hit two or three times, and we were straddled by two six-inch shells, which were probably intended for her. One carried away our wireless, and the other wrecked the whaler, which was about to be manned

to take Ramsay and me to the *Vengeance*. By this time the enemy were dropping shells among the minesweepers, and as we could not afford to lose any at this early stage, they were withdrawn until dusk. They had swept a wide channel to four miles above the entrance without finding any mines.

I then went on board the *Vengeance* and through my excellent telescope watched the proceedings on the Asiatic shore. One could clearly distinguish small bodies of Turks disputing the advance of our little force, which kept in good signal communication, and directed the *Vengeance* exactly where to fire. Lieut.-Commander Robinson, who was in charge of the demolition party, in full view of his Admiral and ship's company, was seen to place his men under cover, run forward alone with a demolition charge and disappear into Fort 4. An explosion followed, after which he returned for another charge, with which he destroyed the other gun.*

The *Vengeance's* party destroyed a new battery, well concealed in the vicinity of Achilles' tomb, which had been annoying us, and several pom-poms and light guns; and they entered Forts 4 and 6, and blew up several guns which appeared to have been only partially disabled by our bombardment.†

The *Irresistible's* landing party did equally well at Sedd el Bahr, but could not reach Fort 1, as they were held up by a Turkish post, which could not be reached by the ship's guns. Several guns were destroyed in Fort 3 and a magazine was blown up. These two enterprising and successful expeditions, consisting of only about 50 marines and 30 bluejackets in each party, succeeded in destroying a number of guns, and withdrawing to their ships, with a loss of one killed and three wounded in the *Vengeance* and three wounded in *Irresistible*. The *Dublin*, *Basilisk* and *Racoon* also gave valuable support to the landing parties, and contributed to the success of the operation.

Owing to the late hour of the landing, it had been impossible to make a thorough examination of the two fortified areas before dark, and Admiral Carden decided to repeat the operation the next morning, supported by the Royal Marine battalion.

* For this and other gallant actions which will be recorded later, Robinson eventually received the Victoria Cross.

† From Turkish information, obtained after the Armistice, it appears that all the guns in Forts 1, 3, 4 and 6 were smashed or put out of action on 25th February—"Official History, Naval Operations," Vol. II, page 160.

During the night of 26th-27th the sweepers, covered by destroyers, continued to sweep the Straits; they sank a number of range buoys, but found no mines. Unfortunately, the weather broke on 27th, and a north-easterly gale with heavy rain and low visibility much impeded our operations until 1st March, when the weather moderated, and the operations inside the Straits were resumed.

On 26th February a telegram was received from the Admiralty, in reply to the Admiral's telegram of 24th (see page 194), stating that the War Office considered the occupation of the southern end of the Peninsula to the line Suan Dere-Chana Ovasi was not an obligatory operation for ensuring success of first main object, which was to destroy the permanent batteries; though troops should always be held in readiness to assist in minor operations on both sides of the Straits, to destroy masked batteries and engage enemy forces covering them. Our main army could remain in camp at Lemnos, till the passage of the Straits was within our hands, when it might be necessary to occupy the Bulair Lines in order to stop all supplies reaching the Peninsula. If, however, our operations were successful, they considered it necessary that ample military forces should be available to reap the fruits.

The Royal Naval Division of 8,500, two Australian Divisions of 30,000 and a French Division of 18,000 were being moved or held in readiness to move within striking distance; and it was possible that the 29th Division of 18,000 would be sent out from England. The telegram also confirmed that 10,000 troops would be sent from Egypt to Mudros for unexpected contingencies, should our operations proceed more rapidly than had been estimated. It was not intended that they should be employed in present circumstances to assist naval operations, which were independent and self-contained. General Birdwood, who would command the Army, was on his way from Egypt in the *Swiftsure*, to discuss the matter with the Admiral, who was enjoined to make recommendations if he thought the Army could help our operations.

This telegram was dispatched before the Admiralty knew of the success of our attack on the outer forts, and was received at a moment when less than a couple of hundred bluejackets and marines had taken almost undisputed possession of most of the

forts on both sides of the entrance to the Dardanelles and withdrawn with trifling loss.

Major-General William Birdwood arrived off Tenedos in the *Swiftsure* on the 1st March, but was weatherbound until the next day, when, accompanied by Wemyss, he had an interview with the Admiral. I was engaged elsewhere, but I understood that, in the event of it being necessary to land troops, Birdwood was in favour of landing at Bulair; but when it was pointed out to him that he would be 30 miles from the Narrows, with formidable Turkish defences barring his way to them, and with a hostile fleet on his eastern flank, he decided on landing at Helles, as the Admiral had suggested, and we knew that he had reported to Lord Kitchener to that effect.

I did not know, however, until I read the official history, that Birdwood's interview with the Admiral had left him with such a gloomy impression of our prospects, or that he had reported on the 5th March "that he did not believe the Fleet alone could force the Dardanelles. In any event the operations must take a considerable time. The outer forts had been an easy prey; the Fleet could stand off and shoot from anywhere. Inside the Straits it was another story, and the ships were hampered by unlocated fire. The weather was atrocious, only one day in several being fine, and operations were continually delayed in consequence. 'Before troops could be landed,' he added, 'it is absolutely necessary to have settled weather, the landing sites are indifferent, and a small force cannot be safely landed, for fear of being cut off by a gale.'"

However, Lord Kitchener at that time had no intention of undertaking any considerable landing operation, and telegraphed to Birdwood to this effect on the 4th March. "From the Admiral's estimate he expected the Fleet to reach the Marmora by the 20th. The Anzac corps, the French Division and the Royal Naval Division would be assembled at Mudros by the 18th, but there was no intention of using these troops to take the Gallipoli Peninsula unless the Admiral subsequently found it impossible to get through without them. Their concentration was principally intended for operations in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. While the Admiral continued to silence the forts successfully, he would require nothing but small bodies of troops for subsidiary operations, and Birdwood could find these

from the brigade already at Mudros. Extensive operations on the Peninsula were not to be undertaken without further orders from home, and in this case more troops would probably be sent out from England." Lord Kitchener did not anticipate that any such large landing would be required. "It will most probably only be necessary," he said, "to leave a force large enough to hold the Bulair Lines, as it is anticipated that the Turks will evacuate the Peninsula."

Birdwood replied: "I consider the Admiral's forecast too sanguine and I doubt his ability to force the passage unaided. . . . I have no intention of rushing blindly into the Gallipoli Peninsula, and I quite realise that my movements must depend entirely on the Navy's progress." He added that even if the Fleet did get through without the Army's help, transports would be unable to follow without being exposed to fire from the hidden guns, which the Navy could not destroy. It was this difficulty which had prompted his suggestion of a landing in force at Helles."*

We knew nothing of this at the time, but it explains a telegram which the Admiral received on the 6th March from the General Officer Commanding in Egypt: "On further consideration it has been decided to change the plan originally suggested by Birdwood, and force will now land near Bulair Lines, for attack on position there. A feint will be made by part of force at Cape Helles, in hopes of deceiving enemy that real attack will be made there. Birdwood will explain fully when next he sees you."

We could only picture our Army landing under great difficulties in the vicinity of Bulair, between the Turkish armies in Europe and Gallipoli—with a heavily fortified zone guarding the 30-mile approach to the Narrows—and a Turco-German Fleet on its eastern flank, covering the sea communications of both Turkish armies and transporting reinforcements from one to the other at will.

If that was the Army's plan, it was essential that the Fleet should force the Straits before any attempt was made to land troops. This view was shared by Admirals Carden and de Robeck and governed all their actions and decisions during the next fortnight.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, pages 84 and 85.

CHAPTER XI

DISAPPOINTING DELAYS

Bad weather interferes with operations; Direct and indirect bombardments; Progress held up by inefficiency of minesweepers; Admiral Carden resigns owing to illness; Succeeded by Admiral de Robeck; British and French troops ordered to Dardanelles; General Sir Ian Hamilton appointed to command Allied Army.

FOR a few years before the war, we had a Naval Mission at Constantinople, and possessed accurate knowledge about the Turkish defences at the Dardanelles. We knew that five lines of mines had been laid in the Straits when Turkey came into the war; we also knew that several batteries and lines of mines were added to the defences after the bombardment of 3rd November, 1914, and before our attack in February, 1915.

After the Armistice we obtained detailed information of these batteries and minefields, and learnt that another new line of mines had been laid on the 8th March, 1915.*

The northerly gale, which was bitterly cold and accompanied by snow, was followed, as is usual at that season, by a southerly blow, mild and balmy, but very disturbing to our undertaking, as we seldom had more than one or two calm days at several days interval.

When it was possible to resume operations, on 1st March, the *Vengeance*, *Ocean*, *Albion*, *Triumph*, *Irresistible* and *Majestic* entered the Straits and engaged Battery 8, the guns near Erenkeui village, and those on the European shore. These latter proved extremely hard to locate, and when seen great difficulty was experienced in obtaining points of aim—the guns being well concealed—but their fire was inaccurate and ineffective and inflicted neither casualties nor damage.

During the afternoon a demolition party, covered by marines, was landed by the *Irresistible* at Sedd el Bahr. It was attacked

* These and the forts and batteries, indicated by their numbers, are shown on the plan facing page 228. Details of their armaments will be found in Appendix 2.

during the operation, but the fire from the covering ships and destroyers in Morto Bay dispersed the enemy, and the party re-embarked without loss, having completed the destruction of all the guns in Fort 3.

During the night of 1st-2nd March minesweepers, covered by destroyers, entered the Straits and swept to within 3,000 yards of Kephez Point. When abreast of Suan Dere River, the enemy opened fire, and the sweepers retired, destroyers covering the withdrawal. No vessel was hit.

On 2nd March, the *Canopus*, *Swiftsure* and *Cornwallis* engaged Batteries 7 (the new defences in the vicinity of Suan Dere River) and 8. They were again much annoyed by concealed guns, but they had no casualties and suffered very little damage.

On 1st and 2nd March the French squadron reconnoitred the Gulf of Xeros, bombarding the forts and earthworks of the Bulair Lines and the bridge over Kavak. French minesweepers swept along the coast, but discovered no mines.

During the night of 2nd March our destroyers and minesweepers continued the attack on the Kephez minefield, but made no progress in the face of heavy fire, although no vessel was hit.

On 3rd March the *Albion*, *Prince George* and *Triumph* attacked Batteries 7 and 8, and during the night sweeping operations continued. Very little progress was made in the face of the enemy's fire, but again we sustained neither casualties nor damage.

The landing operation to destroy all the guns in the fortified areas at the entrance to the Straits was postponed from day to day, as the Admiral did not wish it to take place without a preliminary seaplane reconnaissance, and in the meantime the enemy, who no doubt anticipated an attack, had ample time to make preparations to meet it.

On the morning of the 4th, seaplanes were able to examine the vicinity of the forts and the villages near them, and reported no movement of troops. At 10 a.m. demolition parties were landed at Sedd el Bahr and Kum Kale, supported by 250 men of the Royal Marine Brigade on either side.

Both parties met with opposition. At Sedd el Bahr no progress could be made, and the party withdrew at 3 p.m. At Kum Kale an attempt was made to reach Fort 4, but without success, the enemy being in some force in well-concealed trenches,

which could not be commanded by the ships. Two seaplanes attempted to locate the trenches without success. One was hit eight and the other twenty-eight times.

Great difficulty was experienced in withdrawing the attacking force, the enemy having gained possession of a cemetery near Mendere Bridge, commanding the ground over which our men had to fall back after their repulse. Eventually destroyers went close in and covered the retirement. At dusk the destroyers *Scorpion* and *Wolverine* ran in and landed parties to search the beach from Kum Kale to the cliffs below Fort 4 for wounded stragglers. The former brought off two officers and five men who had been unable to reach the boats.

The *Inflexible* lay off Kum Kale all day watching this unfortunate affair—an object lesson of the folly of procrastination in war.

It was the first time I had watched men being killed and wounded—from a position of perfect safety—unable to do anything to help—and it was a most distressing experience. Our actual casualties were 20 killed, 27 wounded, and 3 missing.

On 5th March the *Queen Elizabeth* anchored close to the shore, in a berth two and a half miles south-west of Gaba Tepe, and commenced the attack on the forts at the Narrows by indirect fire over the Peninsula. The value of this method of attack, of course, depended entirely on the spotting of observers. On account of the concealed guns it was considered necessary for the observing ships in the Straits to keep under way, and on this account the observation from the ships was very unsatisfactory. That from the seaplanes was abortive. One of the latter had engine trouble and fell into the sea, the pilot and observer being seriously injured. Another was forced to return, her observer being wounded by a bullet, and the third only succeeded in giving one spotting correction.

The *Queen Elizabeth* engaged Forts 13, 17 and 16; a magazine blew up in the latter, but only 29 rounds were fired, and it was impossible to say what damage had been done to the guns in the forts. There can be little doubt, however, that given unlimited ammunition, and aeroplane spotting, such as that developed later in the War, the eight 15-inch guns of the *Queen Elizabeth* could have wrecked the forts at the Narrows. As her expenditure was strictly limited by the Admiralty—at

that time—and our seaplanes could not rise clear of rifle fire, and were quite ineffective for spotting, it is not surprising that the great hopes which had been placed on her magnificent armament, were not realised.

The *Inflexible* and *Prince George* attended on the *Queen Elizabeth* to keep down the fire from the shore, but were quite unable to do anything to prevent a light field gun battery, which was brought down abreast of the ship, firing at her from a position in which it could not be attacked from seawards. It hit her 17 times, and although it caused neither casualties nor damage to her military qualities, it was most annoying, and among other minor injuries wrecked her bakery and the engine of a motor launch.

The ships in the Straits, thanks to keeping under way, were not hit; on the other hand, as I have mentioned, their spotting was of little value.

On 6th March the *Queen Elizabeth* continued her indirect bombardment from the same position, but the enemy had brought down a heavy mobile howitzer, which hit her three times on the armour below the water line, and caused her to shift berth twice and eventually to anchor outside its range, 21,000 yards from her objective; with the result that she had only fired seven rounds by 4 p.m. As these could not be satisfactorily spotted owing to the howitzer fire directed at the observing ship in the Straits, de Robeck ordered her to cease fire. He then engaged the four 9.4-inch guns in Fort 13 at a range of 12,000 to 13,000 yards, with the *Vengeance*, *Albion*, *Majestic*, *Prince George*, and *Suffren*, whose gallant Admiral came in to look on, and could not resist the temptation of joining in. They were occasionally hit by the howitzers, but again suffered neither casualties nor serious damage.

I spent that day on board the *Queen Elizabeth*; it was obviously waste of time and ammunition to persevere with indirect bombardment without observation, and—since this was not forthcoming—it was evident that if we were to make any use of the *Queen Elizabeth* she must go into the Straits and engage the forts with direct fire. In the Admiral's original orders this was not permitted, but on 1st March he asked to be allowed to take her in, if he wished to do so, and the Admiralty had approved the previous day—subject to "due precautions."

On the night of 6th March the minesweepers went in, supported by destroyers, and the *Amethyst*, *Ocean* and *Majestic*. When the sweepers came into the glare of the searchlights, the ships and destroyers fired heavily at the latter, but did not succeed in extinguishing them for more than a few minutes at a time. When the enemy opened fire on the sweepers they withdrew unscathed, having accomplished nothing.

On 7th March the four French battleships entered the Straits to cover a bombardment of the defences at the Narrows by the *Agamemnon* and *Lord Nelson*. The former attacked the intermediate defences, and our two sister ships engaged Forts 13 and 19, steaming to and fro across the Straits, at ranges from 12,000 to 14,000 yards. The forts replied, but were silenced after a heavy engagement, in the course of which explosions occurred in both forts. Our ships then went on until the light failed, slogging them from well within the effective range of the forts, without provoking reply.

This was the first real engagement between forts which had not been dominated and ships, and to my mind was most encouraging, for although both ships were hit by heavy projectiles, their fighting efficiency was in no way impaired, and our only casualties were three slightly wounded in the conning tower of the *Lord Nelson*. She also had a blow on her armour just below her water line, which caused leaks in two bunkers. The *Agamemnon's* most serious injuries were a hole 16 feet in diameter in the quarter deck which wrecked the wardroom, and another which wrecked the men's sanitary arrangements.

It was, of course, a waste of ammunition because, judging by our previous experience it was unlikely that we had inflicted much permanent damage, and while the forts were dominated we had not attempted decisive action—e.g. swept a way through the minefields, to enable the old battleships to close the intermediate defences to within secondary armament range. However, it strengthened me in my opinion that we could silence the forts whenever we wished to do so.

On the night of 7th March the French minesweepers went into the minefields, with seven of our destroyers, to fire at the searchlights; however, nothing was achieved, the French trawlers finding it impossible to sweep against the current.

On 8th March the Admiral and his Staff embarked in the *Queen Elizabeth* to carry out a direct bombardment of the forts at the Narrows, covered by the *Vengeance*, *Cornwallis* and *Irresistible*, the object being to try to knock out the heavy long-range guns in Forts 13, 16 and 19. (As she had those in Fort 1 on 25th February.) Unfortunately the visibility became very bad, which made observation impossible, and the *Queen Elizabeth* withdrew without having achieved anything.

I wrote in the evening of that most disappointing day: "It is so annoying being fired at by guns one can't see, and can only very approximately locate—and can't attack," and my thoughts turned to France and Flanders, and the desperate fighting which had been raging there for several months—and here were we, held up from day to day, reporting with painful reiteration our failure to make progress in the face of heavy fire—which inflicted neither casualties to the personnel nor damage to the ships.

It would of course have been folly to risk ships and personnel unless decisive results could be achieved, but it was a hopeless proposition to go on "looking at" our difficulties—we had got to set our teeth and overcome them—or admit failure and withdraw, and that would have been unthinkable.

We could not go on expending ammunition on these futile bombardments. The ammunition question was serious, as was the wear and tear of the old guns, which only had a limited life. Ramsay never ceased reminding us of this. The Admiralty, too, had stressed this point in their original orders to Admiral Carden: "Wasteful expenditure of ammunition may result in the operation having to be abandoned before a successful conclusion is arrived at." But their view as to future operations after the forts at the entrance of the Straits had been put out of action, bore little relation to realities. "The operations will probably develop into a slow, methodical progress of perhaps a mile a day, silencing fire of concealed guns, and keeping down fire from trenches or machine gun pits, which will inconvenience minesweepers. The slow, relentless sweeping forward of the attacking force, mile by mile, will tend to shake the *morale* of the garrison, etc., etc."

My record written that evening runs on: "We are going to get through, but it is a much bigger thing than the Admiralty

or anyone out here realised, and I am insisting on the absolute necessity of telling the Admiralty the exact position and all it means. Godfrey, our invaluable War Staff Officer, and I spent hours drafting an appreciation. . . ." But it was very difficult to get it off.

On the afternoon of the 9th March the Admiral decided to go to Mudros the following morning with the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Inflexible* to inspect the Base, which was developing apace, under the vigorous and tactful direction of Admiral Wemyss. The *Inflexible* had to go to Malta to change two guns, and the Admiral proposed to transfer his flag to the *Queen Elizabeth* during her absence. I felt I would be of more use off the Straits, where so much had to be done, and asked the Admiral to leave me behind in the *Vengeance* with de Robeck. He approved, but later I learnt that he had given de Robeck permission to reconnoitre the Bulair Isthmus, leaving the Force at the entrance of the Straits under the command of the captain of the *Ocean*.

This filled me with consternation; it was vital and essential to clear the minefields without further delay. How could the captain of the *Ocean* be expected to initiate new and perhaps rather desperate methods in the absence of the two Admirals. The Admiral was exceedingly kind to me and allowed me to express my views very freely. My record of the 9th shows that "I had a battle royal with the Admiral that night. I said I simply could not understand his going and sending de Robeck away to the Bulair Lines, leaving no one with any real responsibility off the Dardanelles to run the sweeping of the minefields. I was aware that he had a high opinion of the officers in charge of the sweeping, but five or six days had passed in which they had done nothing, and had made nothing but difficulties. That was not the right spirit—we *must* attack the minefields vigorously, and I wished to satisfy myself that we were going to do so. For instance that night all that was proposed was a reconnaissance by two picket boats—when we had 35 sweepers—that was not acting vigorously. . . . The captains of the *Ocean* and *Canopus*, one of whom would be in command at the entrance of the Straits each night, were both senior to me, so I could not take command, and could hardly expect them to take the responsibility of taking their battleships into the Straits at night, for instance,

if I asked them to do so.* Either he or de Robeck *must* stay. We discussed this and the terms of a long telegram to the Admiralty. Eventually at 11 p.m. the Admiral signalled to de Robeck telling him I would join him in the morning, and that he was to stay off the Dardanelles. Then a telegram was sent to the Admiralty giving the Admiral's appreciation of the situation." After a very fair summary of our operations after the fall of the outer forts, it (194) concluded thus:

> "The risks run by the bombarding ship are not excessive from the forts, providing she does not close inside 14,000 yards or anchor, but she is under fire from the howitzers. The effect of indirect fire has not yet been confirmed, as seaplanes have not been able to observe. Both methods of attack may be employed simultaneously, *Queen Elizabeth* bombarding from Gaba Tepe and *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon* from inside Straits, with old battleships ready to close and take advantage of results of long-range fire.
>
> By this means the attack would be pushed more vigorously. The methodical reduction of the forts is not feasible, without expenditure of ammunition out of all proportion to that available.
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> Ships inside Straits are constantly exposed to the fire from concealed guns, with which it has been found impossible to deal effectively; their plunging fire is very destructive, but up to the present its accuracy has been poor, though that is improving.
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> To sum up the situation. We are for the present checked by absence of efficient air reconnaissance, the necessity of clearing the minefield, and the presence of a large number of movable howitzers on both sides of the Straits, whose positions up to the present we have not been able to locate. Meanwhile, every effort will be made to clear the minefield by night, with two battleships in support. Two battleships watch the shore on both sides of the entrance by day and prevent the enemy from collecting in that locality or bringing up guns.

* A Commodore cannot take command over the head of a Captain senior to him.

Until it is considered advantageous to resume bombardment on a large scale, it is not desirable to send battleships far inside by day, as it only affords practice to the enemy's howitzers. . . .

Our experience shows that gunfire alone will not render forts innocuous; most of the guns must be destroyed individually by demolition."

Personally I thought we exaggerated the danger of gunfire. Against moving ships it was very inaccurate and not really dangerous. The protection of even the older armoured battleships was so good that direct gunfire, particularly at short range, was unlikely to inflict vital damage, and, while the personnel remained in their action stations behind armour, casualties would be very slight. Indirect fire over the hills from fixed and mobile howitzers and guns was most inaccurate, and when projectiles hit they caused little damage. Armoured ships certainly had nothing to fear from this indirect fire, and the odds against moving ships being hit were considerable. Hundreds of rounds had been fired at us by the heavy guns of the forts and concealed howitzers and guns, and up to date, beyond a little temporary inconvenience to the *Agamemnon* and a leak in the *Lord Nelson*, speedily made good, which were caused by the forts at the Narrows, and a little superficial damage in other ships, we had "suffered neither casualties nor damage."

I felt it was time to get on with the business, and that the minefields must be swept at all costs.

My record continues: "Finally I got to bed at 2 a.m. and joined the *Vengeance* when the *Inflexible* sailed, early on 10th March. I gathered that de Robeck was annoyed at having his plans altered at the last moment, but he was very nice to me, though I am afraid he thought I was very interfering. However, when I put forward all my arguments for a vigorous attack on the minefield, he warmed to it and quite agreed that we must organise it. So he ordered a meeting of all concerned, about 15 officers, to learn what they had done the night before—and what they proposed to do next. The answer to the first question was nothing, and to the second, another reconnaissance by two picket boats. The Admiral said that we must get on, there was not time to arrange for that night, but we must do better

the next. Then, I began 'Why not time? It could be arranged. We must not waste another night. . .' To cut it short—the Admiral decided that seven sweepers (there was not room for more in the channel below Chanak) should go into the Dardanelles after dark, supported by the *Canopus* (Captain Heathcote Grant), *Amethyst* and destroyers, attended by picket boats. The *Canopus* to go in first and bombard the searchlights from just below the minefields, then the sweepers were to steam up against the current, through the minefield, and when above it, get out their sweeps and sweep down with the current."

Hitherto the sweepers had been able to make very little progress with sweeps out, against the current, which runs out of the Narrows in varying strength. After a northerly blow the current is very strong—sometimes up to four knots; after a southerly gale it does not exceed one knot. I asked Grant, who was senior to me, if he would mind my going as a passenger, as I wished to see the operation carried out. He said he would be delighted to take me.

After hearing the views of the officer in charge of the sweepers I sent a wireless message to the Admiral at Mudros, suggesting that the Admiralty should be asked to give the sweepers' crews a bonus if successful. I was told that they recognised sweeping risks, and did not mind being blown up, but they hated gunfire, and pointed out that they were not supposed to sweep under fire, and had not joined for that.

The Admiralty replied that the Admiral could give them anything he thought fit. I also suggested that young officers should be invited to volunteer for service in sweepers, as their crews needed a lead. The Admiral signalled his concurrence, but the reply did not come in time to collect them for that night or the 11th.

When we got into the Dardanelles we found five brilliant searchlights working—there are none more powerful in the world. When the *Canopus* got close she opened fire on the lights. They kept on going out, but only for a few minutes, and it seemed impossible to put them out of action, though we often thought we had succeeded. We were fired on from all directions. One saw stabs of light in the hills and in the direction of the six-inch batteries covering the minefield, on both sides of the Straits, followed by the whine of little shells,

the bursting of shrapnel, and the scream of heavy projectiles, which threw up fountains of water. It was a pretty sight. The fire was very wild, and the *Canopus* was not hit, and for all the good we did towards dowsing the searchlights we might just as well have been firing at the moon.

When the sweepers went in they got above the minefield without loss, but they were so agitated that four out of the six—the seventh is a leader—did not get their kites down, and so swept the surface. The third pair exploded two mines in their sweep, and then one of them struck a mine and blew up; the other saved all the crew. A tremendous fire was opened on them as they came down, and they and some of the destroyers in support were hit; but our only casualties were one trawler sunk by a mine and two men wounded. The picket boats did splendid service, creeping with grapnels for the cables across the Straits, to which the mine-sinkers were attached and blowing them up with explosive charges. This caused a great many mines to break away, and they were destroyed in the morning as they floated out of the Straits. At any rate this was a move in the right direction. It was something, but not good enough.

On the morning of 11th March Admiral de Robeck arrived from Tenedos in a destroyer, and we had another meeting, at which he presided. It was agreed to do it again that night without a battleship—some thought the battleship only woke the enemy up, and that it would be better to go up stealthily without warning them. The less said about that night the better. To put it briefly, the sweepers turned tail and fled directly they were fired upon. I was furious and told the officers in charge that they had had their opportunity, there were many others only too keen to try. It did not matter if we lost all seven sweepers, there were 28 more, and the mines had got to be swept up. How could they talk about being stopped by a heavy fire if they were not hit. The Admiralty were prepared for losses, but we had chucked our hand in and started squealing before we had any.

On the morning of the 12th the *Vengeance* intercepted a signal from the Admiralty which I thought so important that, after discussing it with de Robeck, I went at once in a destroyer to Mudros to see the Admiral. Before I sailed, de Robeck arranged for the French to try that night and our people the

next. He gave orders that every trawler was to have a commissioned officer in command, and a midshipman, mate or warrant officer, a petty officer, and a signalman, to stiffen the sweeper's crew. The picket boats were to be commanded by officers, and a battleship was to go into the Straits in support. The sweeping must be carried out regardless of cost. Any number of volunteers begged to be allowed to take part, but we could not afford to risk those essential to the fighting efficiency of the ships, and when the selection was made, a number of officers and men were rejected, much to their disgust.

When I arrived at Mudros, the *Inflexible* had already sailed for Malta, to change two guns, and the Admiral was on board the *Queen Elizabeth*.

The telegram which drew me away from the Straits, and took me full speed to Mudros was as follows:

Admiralty to Vice-Admiral.

101. "Your 194. Your original instructions laid stress on caution and deliberate methods, and we approve highly the skill and patience with which you have advanced hitherto without loss. Results to be gained are, however, great enough to justify loss of ships and men if success cannot be obtained without. The turn of the corner at Chanak may decide the whole operations and produce consequently a decisive character upon the war, and we suggest for your consideration that a point has now been reached when it is necessary to choose favourable weather conditions to overwhelm the forts at the Narrows at decisive range by the fire of the largest number of guns great and small that can be brought to bear on them. . . . Under cover of this fire the guns at the forts might be destroyed by landing parties and as many as possible of the minefields swept up. This operation may have to be repeated until all the forts at the Narrows have been destroyed and the approaches cleared of mines. We do not wish to hurry you and urge you beyond your judgment but we recognise clearly that at a certain period in your operations you will have to press hard for a decision and we desire to know whether you consider that point has now been reached. We will support you in well-conceived

action for forcing a decision even if regrettable losses entailed. We wish to hear your views before you take any decisive departure from the present policy."

I was not surprised that the Admiralty were getting restless. This, as we know now, was the First Lord's drafting, concurred in by Lord Fisher and the Chief of the Staff. The Admiral's telegram 203 reporting our proceedings on 11th-12th could not have been very reassuring :

" Operations inside Dardanelles during daylight confined to destroying floating mines and preventing enemy moving guns. Sweeping operations last night not satisfactory owing to heavy fire—no casualties. Volunteer officers and men have been called to assist in each sweeper ; large number have responded."

The Admiral decided to go to the Dardanelles and he and his Staff embarked in the destroyer *Wear* the following morning. When we arrived we found that the French had failed to make any impression on the minefield during the night, and the Admiral decided to try one more night attack, our sweepers being commanded and manned as arranged by de Robeck. He then returned to Mudros and dispatched the following telegram :

209. " Fully concur with the view of Admiralty telegram 101. It is considered that stage reached when vigorous sustained action necessary for success. In my opinion military operations on large scale should be commenced immediately in order to ensure my communication line immediately Fleet enters Sea of Marmora. The losses in passage through Narrows may be great therefore submit that further ships be held in readiness at short notice and additional ammunition be dispatched as soon as possible.

Position with regard to minefields as follows. In order to immediately follow up silencing of forts at Narrows with close range bombardment it is necessary to clear the minefield at Kephez. In order to economise ammunition the attempt being made to clear it at night. This so far has been unsuccessful. A final attempt is to be made tonight ; if it fails also it will be necessary to destroy fixed and mobile light guns defending minefield before continuing sweeping.

Destroying these guns will bring ships under fire from the forts at the Narrows and will therefore entail silencing the latter which must now go on irrespective of air reconnaissance. This accomplished sweeping will be carried out working day and night but as minefield is extensive operations may occupy some time and expenditure of ammunition will be great as the forts will require repeated silencing. Request further half outfit may be sent at once for all ships except *Queen Elizabeth*."

I remained off the Dardanelles that night to watch the attack, which is described in my diary as follows :

" The *Cornwallis* bombarded the lights and batteries for an hour, then the sweepers went in, covered by the *Amethyst* and destroyers, attended by picket boats, the latter with explosive creeps. The enemy were very much on the alert. They let the seven sweepers and five picket boats get right into the middle of the minefield on the way up, only firing a single gun occasionally—then all the searchlights went out—a minute later they all flashed on again, and concentrated on the sweeping flotilla. The enemy then opened a heavy fire which followed them up to the turning point, after they had turned, and while they were sweeping down. All except two were so damaged that they could not get their sweeps out, kites were smashed, wires cut, and winches destroyed by gunfire. They were hit by projectiles ranging from six-inch to shrapnel from field guns. One pair swept the whole way down. Two of the picket boats commanded by midshipmen stuck to it most gallantly and exploded four creeps. This had a great effect and the mines have been coming down to the entrance to be destroyed ever since. Six battleships and the *Blenheim* provided the volunteers —a trawler to each ship. The *Vengeance's* trawler (commanded by the gallant Robinson) had 84 hits, her kites and winches were damaged, but she had no casualties, thanks to the most efficient steel plate protection, fitted to the trawlers by Malta Dockyard, which saved many lives. The *Amethyst* remained on the edge of the minefield throughout the operations to fire on the lights and cover the retreat. Her casualties would have been slight, but for one heavy

shell which happened to burst in the vicinity of the stokers' mess deck and bath room at 4 a.m. when all the stokers who had the middle watch were washing before turning in. She had 24 killed and 36 wounded. The trawlers only had nine casualties, five killed and four wounded, including one volunteer officer killed and one wounded. The trawlers and picket boats really had charmed lives. They were all drenched by spray from shells and had innumerable hits. Four trawlers and one picket boat were put out of action, but none sank. It was a gallant enterprise."

I concluded my record of our attempt to clear the minefield by night thus :

"We had hoped to knock out the searchlights and sweep more or less unmolested in darkness, but an enormous volume of fire from battleships, cruisers and destroyers had failed to make any appreciable impression on the searchlights, so we must now sweep by day under cover of the Fleet.

I have had a very busy time and spent the night of the 9th in the *Inflexible*, 10th in the *Canopus*, 11th in the *Vengeance*, 12th in the *Queen Elizabeth*, 13th in the *Blenheim*, and 14th in the *Queen Elizabeth* again.

My poor Admiral is very seedy, which is most unfortunate. . . ."

During the nights of 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th the trawlers were engaged in sweeping the area in which the ships would manœuvre while covering the attack on the Kephez minefield. No further bombardments were carried out, but the ships were completed with fuel and ammunition, and every preparation was made for the onslaught on the forts and minefield at the Narrows, which we hoped to deliver on 17th or 18th March.

On the 14th March the following telegram was received from the First Lord of the Admiralty to Admiral Carden :

105. "Your 203 gives the impression of your being brought to a standstill both by night and day during 12th and makes me anxious to receive your reply with reference to Admiralty message No. 101. I do not understand why minesweepers should be interfered with by firing which causes no casualties. Two or three hundred casualties would be moderate price to pay for sweeping up as far as Narrows. I highly approve your proposal to obtain volunteers from the Fleet for minesweeping. This work has to be done whatever the loss of life and small craft and the sooner it is done the better.

Secondly, we have information that the Turkish forts are short of ammunition, that the German officers have made despondent reports and have appealed to Germany for more. Every conceivable effort is being made to supply ammunition, it is being seriously considered to send a German or an Austrian submarine, but apparently they have not started yet. Above is absolutely secret. All this makes it clear that the operation should now be pressed forward methodically and resolutely at night and day. The unavoidable losses must be accepted. The enemy is harassed and anxious now. The time is precious as the interference of submarines is a very serious complication.

Thirdly, Sir Ian Hamilton leaves tonight to command the Army and will be with you on Tuesday, 16th. Take him fully into your confidence and let there be the most cordial co-operation but do not delay your operations on this account. The First Sea Lord has ordered *Queen* and *Implacable* to sail tonight to strengthen your fleet and provide further reserve for casualties."

To which the Admiral replied :

To the First Lord of the Admiralty.

211. "Your 105. I fully appreciate the situation and intend as stated in my 209 to vigorously attack the forts at the Narrows clearing the minefield under cover of the attack. Good visibility is essential and I will take the first favourable opportunity. I am requesting C.-in-C. East Indies to hold *Triumph* and *Swiftsure* in readiness to join me at short notice. . . ."

Then followed a reference to the inefficiency of the minesweepers against the strong current, and our unsuccessful effort to sweep down stream.

"Our sweepers which were driven back on night of 11th behaved splendidly on 13th led by volunteer officers who testify to the excellent behaviour of the crews. . . .

Fleet sweepers urgently needed, meantime am fitting some destroyers for this purpose with light sweeps."

On the 15th March the Admiralty's reply to Admiral Carden's 209 was received.

From Admiralty to Vice-Admiral.

109. "You must concert any military operations on a large scale which you consider necessary with General Hamilton when he arrives on Tuesday night, meantime we are asking War Office to send the rest of the two Australian divisions to Mudros Bay at once, thus giving with the French approximately 59,000 men available after 18th, this will be confirmed later. 29th Division 18,000 additional cannot arrive until 2nd April. Secondly we understand it is your intention to sweep a good clear passage through the mine-field in order to enable the forts at the Narrows eventually to be attacked at close range, and to cover this operation whether against the forts or light movable armament, by whatever firing is necessary from the battle fleet, and that this task will probably take several days. After this is completed we understand that you intend to engage forts at Narrows at decisive range and put them effectually out of action. You will then proceed again at your convenience with attack on the forts beyond, and any further sweeping which may be necessary. If this is your intention we cordially approve it. We wish it to be pressed forward without hurry but without losing time. We do not gather at this stage you contemplate any attempt to rush the passage without having previously cleared a channel through the mines and destroyed the primary armament of the forts.

We wish to be consulted before any operation of such a nature is decided on and, before undertaking it, the part to be played by the Army and Navy in close co-operation would require careful study and it might then be found that decisive military action to take the Kilid Bahr Plateau would be less costly than a naval rush. You will be informed later about ammunition, aeroplanes and minesweepers."

The Admiral replied:

15th March. From Vice-Admiral to Admiralty.

217. "Your 109. I will meet General Hamilton in consultation as soon as possible after he arrives.

Your secondly expresses my intentions exactly, hope to commence operations, plans for which are practically complete, on 17th inst., but as good visibility and a wind which will prevent smoke interference are essential, the start may have to be delayed. In the meantime the area in which ships will have to manœuvre is being carefully searched for mines. . . . There is no intention of rushing the passage without first clearing a channel."

This telegram was of course sent with de Robeck's full concurrence.

The Admiral's health had been causing us a good deal of anxiety, he worried terribly, everything he ate gave him a severe pain, and he was not eating enough to keep him going in such strenuous times. On the 15th he told me he thought he would have to go on the sick list, and that he did not feel well enough to meet the Rear-Admirals and Captains, who had been summoned to be given orders for the attack on the Narrows. So de Robeck presided, but he told me he was determined to persuade Carden not to give up his command. After the meeting, de Robeck and I saw the Admiral, and begged him to rest for a few days, and not worry, but after we left him, he sent for the Fleet Surgeon, who told him that he ought to go on the sick list for at least a fortnight, whereupon he told his Flag-Lieutenant to signal that he had transferred his flag to the *Blenheim*, and the command to de Robeck.

This, of course, meant the end of Carden's career, so I held up the signal, and went to the Admiral, who told me that he must give up the command, it was only fair to de Robeck, who was much too nice to object but must feel that it was wrong, that I should practically run the Fleet, making signals in his—Carden's—name, etc., etc. I said de Robeck was quite incapable of thinking any such thing, his one object was to support him in his command, and serve him loyally. I begged him to see a first-class Harley Street physician, who was serving in the Hospital ship *Soudan*. He agreed to do this the next morning,

and to let the matter stand over until then, so I cancelled all the arrangements he had made, and wrote to de Robeck, to tell him what had happened, and he replied as follows :

H.M.S. *Vengeance.*

" My dear Commodore,

It is good news to hear that you have averted what would have been nothing less than a catastrophe, had V.A. sent a wire or carried out his idea. Please impress on him that nothing would upset me more than his going sick ; I am proud to serve under him and will continue to do my level best ; at the same time I would view with the gravest misgivings any other Admiral being sent out to relieve him at this period of the operations, which are now ready to be taken to a successful issue ! Nothing pleases me more than to be the Second in Command under him. I can see no earthly reason why he should not rest for a day or two and we can carry on the work such as it is ; everything being now arranged I only wait the day !

Please tell him the *whole Fleet* would be *upset* if he carried out his proposal and we will all loyally see him through to the end of his work.

In haste,

Yours ever,

J. DE ROBECK."

That night, Wemyss signalled that he was coming from Mudros next morning, with a telegram from the Admiralty, which had arrived by land wire from Malta, with instructions that it was not to be transmitted by wireless. This was very fortunate, as Wemyss was senior to de Robeck and the command devolved on him, if Carden hauled down his flag.

After thoroughly overhauling the Admiral, the fleet surgeon and the doctor from the *Soudan* reported very unfavourably, they declared that he would completely break down, unless he had three or four weeks' thorough rest and freedom from anxiety. So the die was cast.

I was in the confidence of all three Admirals, and my task that day was a difficult one. Carden's one idea was to efface himself and do what was best for the Service. De Robeck was in full agreement with all the orders which had been prepared for the

attack on the Narrows, and had been consulted at every step, since the close fighting was to be carried out under his leadership. It was so important that this should be made clear to the Admiralty, in order that the First Lord might have some guidance in making his selection of a successor. Admiral Carden thoroughly appreciated this, and in telegraphing his resignation to the Admiralty, he said that de Robeck was in full touch with all the arrangements, present and future, and had been of the greatest assistance in their preparation ; he had the fullest confidence in his judgment and determination. He added a very nice reference to me, which touched me deeply, for I was very conscious that I had been a great trial to him.

Admiral Carden had sustained the long and trying blockade of the Dardanelles throughout the winter months, he was responsible for the plan we were carrying out, and for its initial success. It seemed so hard that he should be denied the credit for the great achievement, which we felt confident was within reach, and de Robeck made every effort to persuade him to retain the command.

At that time I only knew Wemyss as a cheery forceful personality, possessed of unbounded energy and tact, and admirably fitted to tackle the many difficulties which lay before him, in organising the Allied naval and military bases at Mudros. I admired and applauded his helpful telegram to the Admiralty : " I am quite prepared to act under the orders of de Robeck, if you think it desirable to promote him. De Robeck and I are in perfect accord, and can loyally co-operate, whichever way you decide."

I concluded my record of that trying day, from which the foregoing is extracted, after expressing my admiration for the bearing of the three Admirals who had honoured me with their confidence, " I went to bed very weary, and was woken in the morning by the arrival of a telegram from the Admiralty, appointing de Robeck Acting Vice-Admiral in command of the operations. It was written."

Commenting on the change of command, and his reasons for the appointment he made, Winston Churchill wrote : " The decision was virtually inevitable. Thus carefully did destiny pick her footsteps at the Dardanelles."*

* " The World Crisis, 1915," page 221.

CHAPTER XII

PREPARATIONS FOR NAVAL ATTACK

Sir Ian Hamilton and General d'Amade confer with Admiral; Lord Kitchener's instructions to Sir Ian; Plan of Naval Attack.

ADMIRAL DE ROBECK and I had started the War hundreds of miles apart—he in command of a squadron of old cruisers in the Atlantic, I in the Narrow Seas—without apparently the remotest chance of serving together; and yet here was I, on the eve of what promised to be a great battle, in the *Queen Elizabeth*, the finest ship in the world, Chief of Staff to de Robeck, the Admiral who had helped me so much in my efforts to prepare the submarines for war, and for whom I had a great admiration and affection.

My brother-in-law, Hugh Bowlby, happened to be his Flag-Lieutenant, which was very pleasant, and I looked to the future with contentment and great confidence.

In appointing Admiral de Robeck to the command of the Eastern Mediterranean Squadron, the First Lord asked him, on 17th March, if he was in full accord with Admiralty telegrams 101 and 109, and Carden's answers to them; and if he considered "After separate and independent judgment that the immediate operations proposed were wise and practicable." If not he was not to hesitate to say so. If so, he was to execute them at the first favourable opportunity, working in close harmony with General Hamilton.

The Admiral replied on the same day, that he was fully in agreement with the telegrams mentioned, and that operations would proceed on 18th March, weather permitting. He expressed the view that everything depended on our ability to clear the minefield before forcing the Narrows, and that this necessitated silencing the forts during the process of sweeping.

Later he reported that he had met and discussed the situation

with Generals Hamilton and d'Amade, the French general, but pending the result of our attack on the Narrows, no joint naval and military action would be decided upon. In the event of his entering the Sea of Marmora, Wemyss would take command of the ships that remained behind.

Vice-Admiral de Robeck's flag was transferred to the *Queen Elizabeth* on the 17th, when Admiral Carden sailed for Malta in the *Minerva* and all was ready for the attack on the morrow. A memorandum giving the plan of attack on the Narrows had been issued on the 15th, and though signed by Admiral Carden, it was prepared in close co-operation with Admiral de Robeck, and, as he had reported, was fully in accord with his views.

The meeting referred to in the Admiral's telegram, took place on board the *Queen Elizabeth* that afternoon, and in addition to Generals Sir Ian Hamilton and d'Amade, it was attended by Major-General Walter Braithwaite, Sir Ian's Chief of General Staff, and Captain Pollen, his military secretary, Admirals Wemyss and Guépratte and myself.

Admiral de Robeck told the soldiers that he could silence the fortress guns, but the mobile artillery was his chief difficulty, as it interfered with the clearing of the minefield; he expressed, however, confidence in his ability to force a passage through the Straits without military assistance on a large scale, and he intended to do so. If our army could then land at Bulair, the Turks on the Peninsula would be cut off. He said the Turks were working like beavers every night, none were seen during the day, but new trenches and wire appeared every morning. All possible landing places were being protected by trenches and wire, and ships' guns would not be able to give the troops much support—an opinion which he based on their failure to help the Marines on the 4th March.

The Admiral then asked if he might see Sir Ian's instructions. General Braithwaite read them, and when he had finished, I asked if that was all; their recital acted on us rather like a cold douche—there seemed to be so many reservations. Great stress had been laid in the Admiral's telegram 209 on the importance of military operations on a large scale, in order to ensure our communications immediately the Fleet entered the Marmora. Lord Kitchener's instructions to the General—dated it is true, a few hours before the Admiral's telegram could have reached

London—laid down that once the Dardanelles had been forc the security of the passage was a matter for the Fleet. Howev before many days passed, Lord Kitchener, Sir Ian, and the Art were to prove that they had no reservations in their determinatic to see the Fleet through the Straits.

Lord Kitchener's instructions are given fully in Appendix I o Vol. I, "Military Operations, Gallipoli." The following paragraphs are of particular interest from the naval point of view, and in the light of subsequent history.

"1. The Fleet have undertaken to force the passage of the Dardanelles. The employment of military forces on any large scale for land operations at this juncture is only contemplated in the event of the Fleet failing to get through after every effort has been exhausted.

3. Having entered on the project of forcing the Straits there can be no idea of abandoning the scheme. It will require time, patience, and methodical plans of co-operation between the naval and military commanders. The essential point is to avoid a check, which will jeopardise our chances of strategical and political success.

4. This does not preclude the probability of minor operations being engaged upon to clear areas occupied by the Turks with guns annoying the Fleet, or for the demolition of forts already silenced by the Fleet. But such minor operations should be as much as possible restricted to the forces necessary to achieve the object in view, and should as far as practicable not entail permanent occupation of positions on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

6. Under present conditions it seems undesirable to land any permanent garrison or hold any lines on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Probably an entrenched force will be required to retain the Turkish forces in the Peninsula and prevent reinforcements arriving at Bulair, and this force would naturally be supported on both flanks by gun-fire from the Fleet. Troops employed on the minor operations mentioned above (paragraph 4) should be withdrawn as soon as their mission is fulfilled.

7. In order not to reduce forces advancing on Constantinople, the security of the Dardanelles passage, once it has been forced, is a matter for the Fleet, except as in paragraph 6 with regard to Bulair.

The occupation of the Asiatic side by military forces is to be strongly deprecated."

Paragraph 3 made a deep impression on me at the time—and remained fixed in my memory—being in harmony with my own faith that our race could be relied upon to carry through anything we undertook. This belief sustained me in the blackest hours —until December, 1915, when it was shattered by a shameful decision, for which politicians cannot alone be held responsible, in view of the conflicting advice they received from soldiers and sailors.

So far, my record of the meeting is in close agreement with that given in the official history, but Admiral de Robeck noted at the time that when Sir Ian was asked if he proposed to land at Bulair, he replied that he did not think he could land anywhere else, as he had no transport for a longer line of communications. This was no doubt qualified by a remark that he would like to look at the Peninsula, as far as it was possible to do so, before making any decision. Nevertheless the Admiral and I both formed the impression that, if the Army landed, it would be at Bulair, and I mention this because it had a very definite influence on the Admiral's actions during the next few days.

I had not previously met Sir Ian, but he had served under my father on the Indian Frontier, was a friend of my mother's, and from the first he was exceedingly kind, and discussed matters freely with me. In addition to having seen much service on the Indian Frontier, and in both Boer Wars, he had been military attaché with the Japanese army in the Russo-Japanese war, and had watched many great battles, including the taking of Port Arthur. As I have already mentioned, I was in charge of the section of the Admiralty Intelligence Department which dealt with the naval side of this war, and I had studied Sir Ian's graphic dispatches with great interest, so knew that he had probably seen more of modern warfare and desperate fighting than any living soldier, prior to the Great War.

I had met Braithwaite a few years before, and during the eight months we worked together as Chiefs of the Military and Naval Staffs respectively, we became fast friends. Besides the Admiral

and I finding Sir Ian and Braithwaite charming people to work with, it would be impossible to exaggerate the good comradeship which existed between Sir Ian's General Staff and the Admiral's Naval Staff throughout our co-operation. After all we were united by a mutual determination to see the matter through, whatever it might cost—and any conduct that fell short of that was unthinkable.

Before parting with the General on the 17th March, the Admiral arranged that he and his staff should be taken round the Gallipoli Peninsula as far as the Gulf of Xeros in the *Phaeton*, the fast light cruiser which had brought him full speed from Marseilles. Later he was to look at the Peninsula inside the Straits from the conning tower of a battleship.

Before going into action, I will quote the opening paragraph of Admiral Carden's memorandum, on which Admiral de Robeck's operation orders were based :

> " The general idea is to silence the defences of the Narrows and of the minefield simultaneously, so as to enable sweepers to clear a passage through the Kephez minefield ; if this is successful the attack to be at once continued on the remaining defences until the Fleet has passed through the Dardanelles."

This was intended to make it clear—and I think it definitely does so, that the only object we sailors had in view at that time was to get into the Marmora with sufficient force to defeat the Turco-German fleet if it came out of the Bosphorus to fight us.

That was the task with which we were charged by the Government. What happened afterwards was not our concern. We presumed that the Government had good reason for their belief that our arrival off Constantinople would greatly affect the political situation, help Russia, bring Neutrals in on our side, bring about the downfall of Turkey in Europe, and cut off Turkey in Asia from its munitions and supplies.

Such success as we had achieved up to date, we knew, had already had remarkable reactions, and there can be little doubt, in the light of our knowledge today, that if we had succeeded, the Government's anticipations would have been fully justified.*

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, pages 82 and 83.

The Military Historian states :

> " The effect produced throughout Europe by the fall of the outer forts had exceeded expectations. From a trustworthy source in Bucharest the news arrived that there was now great hope of Italy joining the Entente. Bulgaria was already visibly influenced. Russia offered to send an army corps of 40,000 men to co-operate at the Black Sea entrance to the Bosphorus. Most important of all, Venizelos proposed on the 1st March that three Greek divisions should be landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and it was reported that the Greek King was now ready for war. But the latter hope was doomed to disappointment. On 2nd March, 1915, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs telegraphed to the Russian Minister in Athens : 'In no circumstances can we allow Greek forces to participate in the Allied attack on Constantinople.' On 3rd March, the Greek General Staff declared that the moment for successful military action on the Peninsula had passed, and the King refused to consent to Venizelos' proposal."

After our experience on 4th March it was obviously impossible to land demolition parties, as we had done with such ease on 26th February and 1st March, and we knew we could not destroy the forts without military aid, so if the Government wished to transport troops and munitions through the Straits, it would be necessary to occupy the Gallipoli Peninsula. Hence Admiral Carden's telegram 209.

If we succeeded in getting into the Marmora, we knew we could greatly assist military operations by cutting the sea communications of the Turkish armies in Gallipoli and Asia Minor—which were dependent on sea transport—and seriously interfere with reinforcements and transport which might attempt to cross the Bulair Isthmus into Gallipoli.

If, on the other hand, the Government's anticipations were not realised, and the Fleet was at a deadlock in the Marmora with dwindling ammunition and fuel ; without British or Russian troops or those of potential Allies to exploit the situation, and we were forced to withdraw ; we knew we could do so without undue risk, whenever we wished. The concealed howitzers and guns were very inaccurate against moving ships and no menace

to the passage of warships, neither would the forts be any obstacle to our withdrawal if hammered in reverse for a short time before passing them.

These views were fully shared by Admiral de Robeck on the 17th March, and he accepted the command knowing what was expected of him.

The Allied Fleet consisted of three modern and ten old British battleships, one battle cruiser, and four old French battleships.

The plan of attack was as follows :

The *Inflexible*, *Lord Nelson*, *Agamemnon* and *Queen Elizabeth* were to form line "A," and were to open the engagement with a long range bombardment of Forts 16, 17, 18 and 19 respectively ; the *Queen Elizabeth* was also to silence Fort 20.

The *Suffren*, *Bouvet*, *Charlemagne* and *Gaulois* were to form line "B" one mile astern of "A," ready when ordered, to pass through the intervals between the ships of "A" to engage the forts at closer range ; their advance was to be gradual until a range of 8,000 yards from Fort 13 was reached. During their advance the *Gaulois* was to destroy the torpedo tubes at Suan Dere, and the *Suffren* that at Kephez Point.* Line "B" was to be supported by line "A," which was to close to within 12,000 yards of Fort 13.

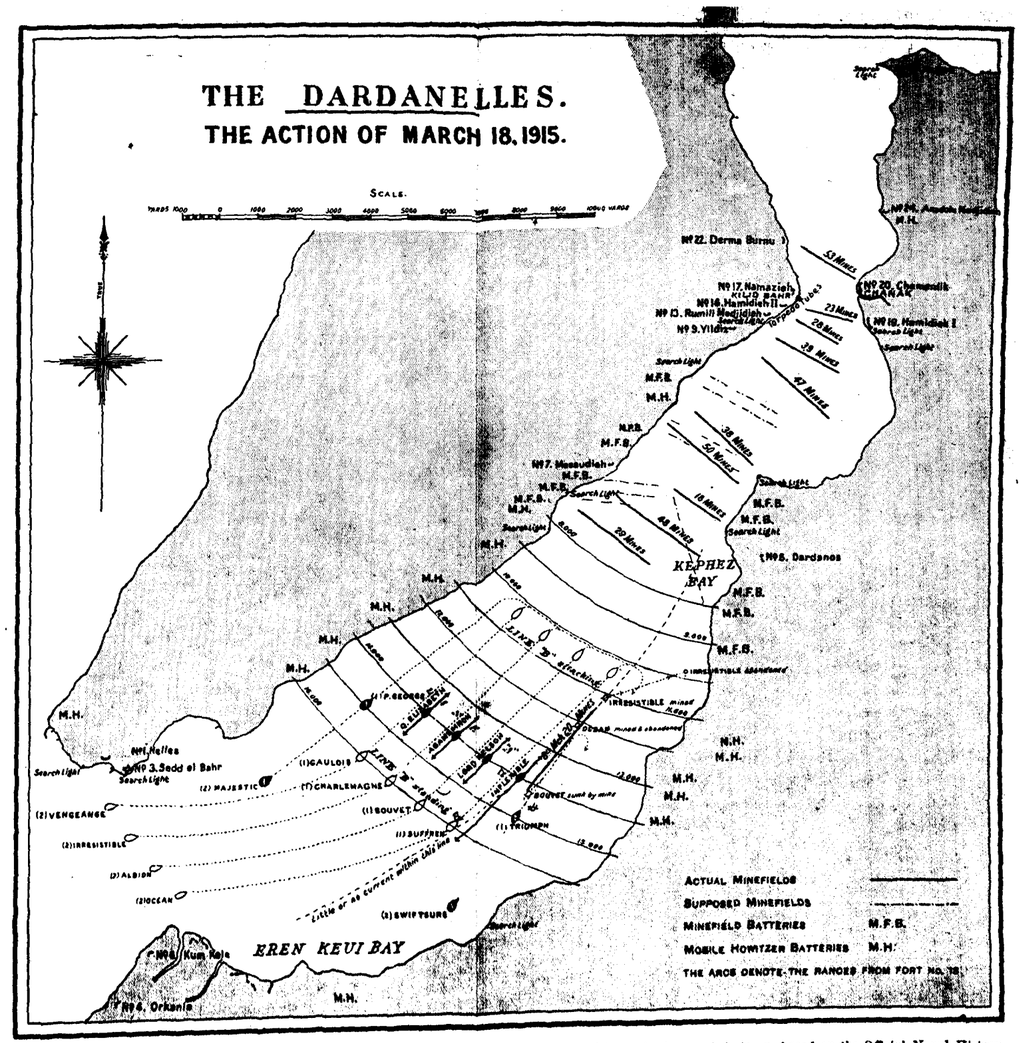
The *Triumph* and *Prince George*, advancing in the rear of line "B" were to move to the flanks, and engage the permanent Batteries 8, and White Cliffs, on the Asiatic shore, and Batteries 7 and 9 on the European side respectively. The *Suffren* and *Gaulois* were to assist the *Triumph* and *Prince George* if necessary.

When "B" line reached a position 8,000 yards from Fort 13, the *Queen Elizabeth* was to silence Fort 24, advancing to close the range if necessary.

The area to the southward of the 8,000 yards line was considered to be absolutely free of mines, and no ship was to go to the northward of that line without sweepers ahead.

Light gun defences of the minefield at Kephez and on the European shore were to be engaged by the *Bouvet* and *Charlemagne*

* We knew that the enemy had two barges each carrying on its upper deck an 18-inch torpedo tube ; and it was thought that these might be brought down and moored on either side of the channel. However they were not brought into action, with good reason, for they could have been easily destroyed, in daylight, by gunfire.



The positions of mines and forts are based on the Official Naval History.

respectively; howitzers and field guns which could be located, were to be engaged by the flank ships of the two lines.

In the event of line "B" being subjected to too heavy a fire, the senior officer present was to turn the line to starboard, and lead round behind line "A," the *Triumph* and *Prince George* forming up in rear of line "B." The attack was then to be continued by line "B" and the *Triumph* and *Prince George* circling round line "A," and running past the forts at gradually decreasing ranges, until the 8,000 yards line was reached. These ships were to be prepared to resume the first method of attack when ordered to do so.

The four ships of line "A" were to remain in the Straits ready for action throughout daylight hours on the first day. The other 12 battleships were to relieve one another in line "B" and on the flanks, at four-hour intervals.

Three groups of British sweepers and two of French were to sweep continuously, one group at a time, in four-hour reliefs. The first group was to be ready to move into the Straits two hours after the bombardment commenced.

Directly the forts and guns defending the minefield were silenced and dominated by the guns of the fleet, the minesweepers would be ordered to commence sweeping a passage along the Asiatic shore 900 yards wide, to enable ships to enter Sari Siglar Bay and reduce Forts 13, 16, 17, 19, and 20 at close range. As long as the guns bearing on the minefield remained silent, sweeping was to proceed during the night, the *Cornwallis* and *Canopus* covering the sweepers—one on duty at a time. Four destroyers were to protect the sweepers, and they were also responsible for preventing enemy destroyers attacking the battleship supporting the minesweepers inside the Straits.

Detailed instructions were laid down in the operation orders for the exact conduct of the reliefs, in order to ensure a vigorous continuity of effort throughout the operation; and for the continuation of the attack at daylight on the second day.

A pair of destroyers fitted with a light mine-seeking sweep was to proceed ahead of the battleships while taking up their stations for bombarding. Each ship had orders to provide a picket boat carrying a three-pounder gun, to work just ahead of its ship and destroy floating mines; and the destroyer *Wear* was detailed to attend on the *Queen Elizabeth* and act as a dispatch vessel,

in case the Admiral wished to send me to ascertain and report on the progress of the detached squadrons, in course of the engagement.

Since the 26th February, British and French ships and minesweepers, the latter with their sweeps out, had continuously passed through the waters in which we were to operate, and during the four previous nights the whole area had been regularly swept. During this latter period four moored mines were discovered and destroyed, and on each occasion, a careful search was made to the eastward and westward of the mine in case it might be one of a line laid across the Straits, similar to the lines whose existence was known—but none were found. It will be remembered that when the picket boats' creeps blew up the cables stretched across the Kephez minefield, a number of mines were released which, some towing their moorings, others floating free, drifted down to the entrance of the Straits, there to be destroyed by gunfire. It was concluded that these four mines were stray ones, which had tripped their moorings, when the cables to which they had been attached were destroyed, and had drifted down in the strong current until their moorings "brought them to" again in the slack backwater of Erenkeui Bay.*

Seaplanes which had carried out experiments off Tenedos, claimed to be able to see mines at a depth of 18 feet in the clear water of the Mediterranean, and to have located mines in the Kephez minefield, including a line running out from Suan Dere Point. (I will refer to this line later.)

As they had been unable to find any mines in the area in which the ships were to operate, their negative report was taken as corroboration of the sweepers' report, that the area was clear of mines on the morning of the 18th March.

I have related on page 206 that on the afternoon of 7th March, the *Agamemnon* and *Lord Nelson*, steaming to and fro across the Straits, had heavily engaged and silenced the forts at the Narrows, while the four French ships covered them by silencing the batteries in the intermediate defences. We know now, from a Turkish report, that during the night of 7th-8th—in anticipation of the attack being repeated—the small Turkish steamer *Nousret*,

* This opinion was held until after the War, and the presence of the mines, which caused the losses on 18th March, was attributed to the same cause.

laid a new line of 20 mines parallel to the shore, just inside the slack water in Erenkeui Bay, right across the track our ships had taken during the attack of the previous afternoon. If these mines were laid on the night of 7th-8th, they must have been just missed over and over again, between two parallel sweeps, sweeping down stream. The Military Historian mentions another Turkish report which states that this line of mines was laid on the night of 17th-18th March.* I think the later date is very improbable. On the night of the 7th-8th, French sweepers, supported by seven British destroyers, attempted to sweep the Kephez minefield, but gave up the attack and reported that they were unable to sweep against the current, so the whole force withdrew. On the night of 17th-18th, British and French sweepers, supported by four British destroyers, were in the Straits all night, moreover the four mines which were destroyed were discovered prior to the 17th.

The plan which I have outlined was based on a month's experience, and, I think, provided for every possible contingency, except the unsuspected presence of a line of moored mines, in the actual position in which the ships, working on the starboard flank of our attack, were to manœuvre throughout the engagement.

For this oversight we were to pay bitterly on the morrow.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 96.

CHAPTER XIII

ACTION OF THE 18TH MARCH

Action of 18th March; *Bouvet*, *Irresistible* and *Ocean* sunk by mines; Fleet withdraws.

THE 18th March broke under ideal weather conditions for our attack, and I felt elated. A considerable army was assembling to co-operate with us, the restrictions in Carden's original instructions had been withdrawn, de Robeck had been given practically a free hand, and the real business was about to begin.

At this season the light for engaging the forts at the Narrows was not favourable until even a later hour than it had been for attacking the Outer Forts. As we could not afford to waste ammunition, and had neither aerial nor flank observation, it was necessary to wait until the forts were clearly distinguishable to the firing ships, and we knew from experience that this would not occur until 11 a.m. at the earliest.

At 10.30 a.m. ten battleships entered the Straits, attended by their picket boats, and the *Wear*, and preceded by the *Colne* and *Chelmer* towing a light mine-seeking sweep.

Howitzers and field guns opened fire from both sides on the destroyers and battleships, directly they came within range, and the latter replied with their secondary armament, as they steamed by, whenever they could see anything to fire at. The angle of descent of the enemy's indirect fire was very steep, there was so much more water than ship for them to hit, and while we were steaming up the Straits, though scores of rounds were fired, I think the only hit they made was on the whaler at the davits of the *Chelmer*.

On arriving at the 14,000 yards line, the *Queen Elizabeth*, *Agamemnon*, *Lord Nelson* and *Inflexible* took up their positions (see plan facing page 228); *Prince George* and *Triumph* took station on either flank on the 15,000 yards line—about 8,000 yards from their targets in the Intermediate Defences; and the French

Squadron waited on the 16,000 yards line for further orders. The *Wear* took station ahead of the *Queen Elizabeth* and the picket boats moved out ahead of their parent ships, to destroy floating mines. The *Colne* and *Chelmer* withdrew out of the Straits, their sweep had failed to pick up any of the mines in the new minefield, though they steamed at right angles through it, and they must have passed through the gap made by the explosion of one or more of the four mines we had found and destroyed.

The remaining six battleships, destroyers and minesweepers waited outside the Straits. The *Dublin* watched Yeni Shehr and Besika Bay; the *Dartmouth* the northern side of Gallipoli, with orders to engage any batteries she might locate firing at the ships inside the Straits; and the *Phaeton* was making a reconnaissance for Sir Ian Hamilton along the northern coasts of the Peninsula.

It was considered inadvisable to anchor—as we had done in our attack on the Outer Forts—on account of the six-inch and eight-inch howitzers and field guns of medium calibre, which were capable of inflicting considerable damage to unarmoured superstructure. The ships, however, found no difficulty in keeping in a stationary position when stemming the current, and were able to promptly fix a new position accurately, by cross bearing on shore objects, when forced to move a little to throw off the enemy's indirect fire.

The *Queen Elizabeth* could not get a good view of her targets until 11.25, when she opened fire on Forts 19 and 20; shortly afterwards the *Agamemnon*, *Lord Nelson* and *Inflexible* engaged Forts 13, 17 and 16, the *Triumph* and *Prince George* Batteries 8 and 7 respectively.

The forts replied, but the range was evidently too great, and they ceased fire after a few shots. On the other hand our fire was very accurate, the forts were repeatedly hit, and at 11.50 a very heavy explosion occurred in Fort 20.

All the battleships were now under a heavy indirect fire from howitzers and field guns; the only people actually exposed to any danger from it were the officers and men in the fighting tops employed in fire control, and the crews of the *Wear* and picket boats, which were often surrounded by fountains of spray, which must have been a very trying experience for them, but no one seemed to be in the least disturbed by it.

At 12.6, Admiral de Robeck ordered the French Squadron to

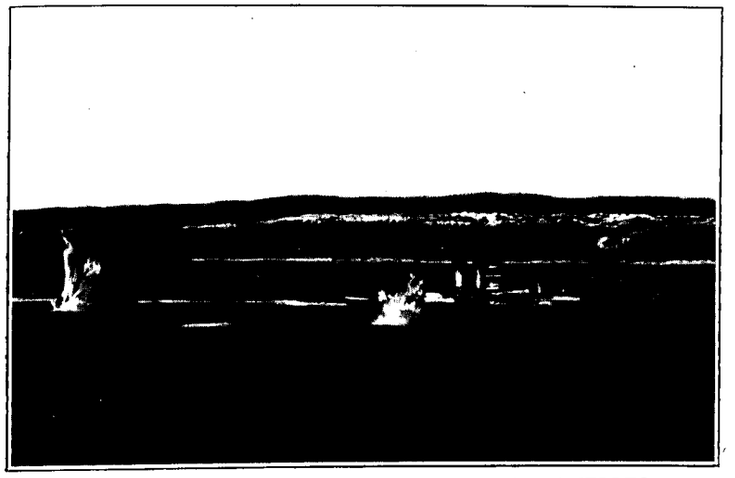
close the forts. Admiral Guépratte had begged to be allowed to lead the van in this attack, as Admiral de Robeck had done so in the attack on the Outer Forts. The old French battleships made a brave show as they passed through our line to engage the forts at closer range; the *Suffren* and *Bouvet* then drew out towards the Asiatic, and the *Charlemagne* and *Gaulois* towards the European shore to leave a clear field of fire to " A " line.

Their approach woke up the enemy, who had been silent for about 20 minutes, and a tremendous cannonade ensued.

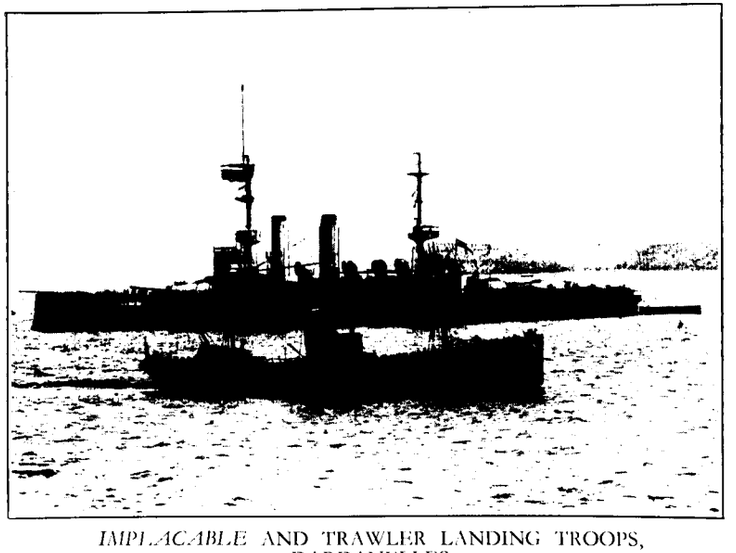
At this time a light breeze was blowing our smoke up the Straits towards Chanak, which made observation of fire sometimes rather difficult. It could be seen, however, that Fort 13 was firing four guns, and that some of the guns in 19 and 16 were in action. Batteries 7 and 8 in the Intermediate Defences were also firing heavily, as were the howitzers and field guns from both shores, the latter fired a good deal of shrapnel, apparently directed against our fighting tops, which fortunately afforded fairly good protection against shrapnel bullets.

A battery of four six-inch howitzers on the Asiatic shore found the *Agamemnon's* range and hit her 12 times in 25 minutes—without, it is true, causing casualties or seriously affecting her military qualities, but one of her 9.2-inch guns and two of her 12-pounder guns were damaged, and so she turned through 32 points to throw it off.

The *Inflexible* was very unlucky that day. A shell from a six-inch or eight-inch howitzer put one of her 12-inch guns out of action at 12.16, and at 12.29 a four-inch projectile fired from a field gun near Erenkeui, hit a signal yard and burst on the roof of her fighting top, killing three men and wounding two officers and three men, the two former mortally; only one man escaped. At 12.47 one of the forts at the Narrows found the *Inflexible's* range. A heavy shell, probably 14-inch, fell close alongside her, and though it did not strike her, it burst just below the surface and caused a leak in a couple of compartments on the port side aft. Almost simultaneously a 9.4-inch shell made a jagged hole in her starboard side above the water line, and a few minutes later a 9.4-inch shell went through her foremast, and bursting in the Navigator's deck cabin, caused a severe fire which destroyed all communication with the foretop. Her picket boat was also hit at the same time by a heavy shell, but the crew managed to



QUEEN ELIZABETH UNDER FIRE IN DARDANELLES
18TH MARCH, 1915



IMPLACABLE AND TRAWLER LANDING TROOPS, DARDANELLES
25TH APRIL, 1915

bring her alongside and escape unscathed before she sank. The flames from the fire shot up all round the foremast and scorched and smoked the wounded, and prevented their removal for some time.

In the *Queen Elizabeth* we could probably see what was happening, better than those in the *Inflexible's* conning tower, and the Admiral ordered her to open the range. At that time the French ships were closing the forts, and wanted all the support we could give them, so Captain Phillimore, still heavily engaging Fort 16, turned the *Inflexible* until the smoke and flames were blowing clear of the foremast, and remained in action until his fort was silenced. He then withdrew a mile for a short time, to extinguish the fire and restore communications.

Meanwhile, covered by the ships of " A " line, and reinforced by the *Triumph* and *Prince George*—which moved up to support them—the French ships were having a tremendous battle with the forts at the Narrows, at ranges closing from 10,000 to 9,000 yards, engaging at the same time with their secondary armaments, the batteries in the Intermediate Defences. The latter were soon silenced, and the forts at the Narrows were smothered with bursting shells and clouds of debris—nevertheless they managed to keep a certain number of guns in action, and heavy shells dropped all round, and occasionally on the ships in the inner line.

At 1.45 all the forts were practically silenced, and the only ship which had suffered any serious damage was the *Gaulois*, which had been badly holed below the water line by a heavy shell. When the French ships first closed, and the forts opened fire after their long silence, apparently undamaged by the hammering they had received from the ships in " A " line, I must confess I felt a bit anxious, as the old French ships were not well protected. However, they put up a most valiant fight, and we proved once again, after a terrific exchange of fire, that we could silence and dominate the forts whenever we wished.

I felt also, at that time, that concealed howitzers and field guns would never be a decisive factor. Up to 1.45, after more than two and a half hours ceaseless fire, and the expenditure of an enormous amount of ammunition, they had damaged one gun in the primary armament of two ships, and caused less than a dozen casualties in the Fleet. By that time, even the howitzer

fire had subsided to a great extent, and the Admiral ordered the French Squadron, *Prince George* and *Triumph* to withdraw, and the six battleships waiting outside, to come in and take their places, accompanied by the first division of minesweepers. A Turkish General Staff account of the situation at this moment is as follows :

> " By 2 p.m. the situation had become very critical. All telephone wires were cut, all communications with the forts were interrupted, some of the guns had been knocked out, others were half buried, others again were out of action with their breech mechanism jammed ; in consequence the artillery fire of the defence had slackened considerably."*

So the enemy were in a worse plight than even I imagined—and I was always regarded as an optimist.

At 1.54 the *Suffren* was leading " B " line out, the *Bouvet* being immediately astern of her. I happened to be looking at them, to see if they had been much knocked about, the *Suffren* had just passed, and the *Bouvet* was almost abreast of us, when I saw a great column of smoke shoot up, which I thought was the burst of a heavy shell striking her, followed by a tremendous explosion, which looked as if her magazine had blown up, she heeled over, still going very fast, capsized and plunged out of sight, with incredible swiftness. Within a minute of the explosion there was nothing to be seen but a few heads in the water. Five officers and about 30 men, who were engaged in the fire control and upper deck batteries, were picked up by the *Wear* and our picket boats ; 639 of her company, and her gallant Captain Rageot, lie entombed in her.

I well remember being struck with Captain Rageot's eager bearing when our plans were explained to his Admiral and the Allied Captains by Admiral de Robeck on the 15th March, he and his heroic Admiral were simply spoiling for battle, and made no secret of their joy at being given an opportunity of proving to their soldier brethren that the French Navy was also taking its part in the great struggle in which their country was involved. Indeed that was the spirit which animated the Allied Fleet throughout the Gallipoli Campaign. The *Bouvet* had fought a gallant fight and, in the few seconds left to him after he realised

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 97.

that his ship was doomed, I am quite sure Rageot felt content to pass with her.

It never occurred to the Admiral, or to me at the time, that the *Bouvet* had struck a moored mine, but after her survivors had been interviewed, it was decided that a mine and not a heavy shell had blown up her magazine. We know now that she was the first victim of the *Nousret's* minefield.

In peace time, a loss like that of the *Bouvet*, in full view of her consorts, would have made a tremendous impression, but in the heat of action such things are soon forgotten, and in a few minutes I was intent in watching our old battleships taking up the gage. The loss of the *Bouvet* had encouraged the enemy to bring such guns as they could into action again, and the *Ocean* and *Irresistible* on the Asiatic, and *Albion* and *Vengeance* on the European flank, supported by the *Swiftsure* and *Majestic* respectively, opened fire at 12,000 yards, and closed the range to 10,000 yards. The only fort which was making any effective reply was Fort 19, though other guns were firing wildly. At 3.15 Fort 19 dropped one or two heavy shells alongside the *Irresistible*, and the *Queen Elizabeth* treated the fort to a few salvoes, which silenced it again.

> "At 4 p.m. the forts at the Narrows were practically silenced, batteries guarding the minefields were contained, and the situation appeared to be most favourable for clearing the minefield. . . . The personnel of the trawlers, with a few notable exceptions, is not satisfactory for sweeping under fire."*

It only remained for the sweepers to play their part, and had they done so we would have been spared two of the losses we were about to suffer.

Before 2 p.m., as I have said, I did not think the fire from concealed howitzers and field guns would ever be a decisive factor. I was wrong. The *fear* of their fire was actually the deciding factor of the fortunes of that day. For five hours the *Wear* and picket boats had experienced, quite unperturbed and without any loss,† a far more intense fire from them than the sweepers encountered when they entered the Straits, but

* Admiral de Robeck's telegram 237, March 19th, 1915.

† The *Inflexible's* picket boat was sunk by a shell from the Narrows.

captain had decided to abandon her and go on board the *Ocean*, as an hour had passed since she was disabled, and the *Ocean* seemed to have no intention of taking her in tow. This was shortly afterwards confirmed. Under the circumstances, I think the captain of the *Irresistible* was justified, since nothing was to be gained by exposing his officers and men to the enemy's fire, at a range at which they could hardly fail to hit so large a target at rest.

The *Irresistible* was then heading towards the Asiatic shore, in the backwater of Erenkeui Bay, drifting slowly towards Kephez Point, only a few hundred yards inshore of the current setting swiftly down the Straits in the opposite direction. At the same time a light southerly breeze was drifting her towards the shore. I felt it was imperative, if she was to be salved, to tow her those few hundred yards into the current as soon as possible. So I signalled to the *Ocean:* "The Admiral directs you to take *Irresistible* in tow." To which the *Ocean* replied that there was insufficient water to do so.

It was obvious that the *Irresistible* would eventually drift on shore, unless she foundered first, and I made up my mind to torpedo her; the possibility of her falling into the hands of the enemy was simply unthinkable. I told Metcalfe (captain of the *Wear*) to have two torpedoes ready, but first to sound towards the shore, as I felt certain that she was much farther out than the captain of the *Ocean* imagined. I was soon able to signal to the *Ocean* that there was more than 15 fathoms of water for half a mile inshore of the *Irresistible*, and I repeated the Admiral's signal, directing the *Ocean* to take the *Irresistible* in tow, but received no reply. Meanwhile the *Ocean* was steaming to and fro at a good speed, engaging Batteries 7 and 8 with primary and secondary armament, and the *Swiftsure* was lying still in Erenkeui Bay plastering the Asiatic hillsides, from which much indirect fire from howitzers and field guns was coming; Whitecliffs seemed to be screened from her. Battery 7 was firing at the *Ocean*, and 8 and Whitecliffs transferred their attention to the *Wear*, when she drew out clear of the *Irresistible* on her sounding expedition. The fire from the six-inch guns at Whitecliffs was particularly unpleasant; the battery was in the hills above us, sufficiently close to clearly distinguish men at the guns; and the flash of the guns and the arrival of the

projectiles seemed almost simultaneous. However, we steamed about while we were sounding and were only hit by fragments of shell which burst close to us, and wetted by the spray they threw up.

When the division of destroyers outside the Straits received the Admiral's signal directing them to join me, the *Racoon*, *Mosquito*, *Kennet*, *Jed*, *Colne* and *Chelmer* came rushing in at full speed and gathered round the *Wear* and *Irresistible*. As they could do no good at that stage, and were under considerable fire, I hoisted a signal to them to "Open," i.e. extend their distance from me, and they withdrew a mile or so down the Straits to wait for further orders.

As it was evident the captain of the *Ocean* still did not think it possible to take the *Irresistible* in tow, and she was steaming about firing rapidly to no purpose, since there was nothing to be gained by expending ammunition except for a definite object, I signalled: "If you do not propose to take *Irresistible* in tow, the Admiral wishes you to withdraw." At the same time I ordered the *Swiftsure* to go. (Her captain was junior to me.) I did not feel justified in ordering her to close the *Irresistible*, as she was poorly armoured in comparison with our old battleships, and might have suffered heavily at such close range, if the forts at the Narrows opened fire, as I expected them to do at any moment. The Admiral had intended to leave the *Triumph* and *Swiftsure* behind on that account when he went into the Marmora.*

As the result of our survey, Metcalfe and I came to the conclusion that the *Irresistible* would not drift ashore for some time, and I was loath to torpedo her if there was any possibility of salving her. She had lost her list, was practically on an even keel, and though down by the stern, she seemed still to have plenty of buoyancy and was apparently no lower in the water than when I arrived nearly an hour previously. So I decided to leave her and go full speed to the Admiral to suggest that trawlers might try and tow her into the current after dark.

The *Ocean* was still steaming about blazing away at the forts, much to my anxiety, as it was obvious that the enemy had some

* *Triumph* and *Swiftsure* were being built in England for Turkey at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, and we bought them from her, though they were not quite up to our standard at the time, to prevent Russia buying them.

unpleasant form of mine about, and it seemed only a question of time before she hit one.

I had just told Metcalfe to close the *Ocean*, in order that I might repeat the Admiral's directions to her to withdraw, when at 6.5 p.m. (nearly two hours after the *Irresistible* was disabled) there was a tremendous explosion alongside the *Ocean*, and she took an ugly list, having struck a mine. Metcalfe wanted to go alongside her at once, but I thought the *Ocean's* crew had better try and save the ship, so told him to lay off in a position to run alongside if necessary.

I learnt later from the captain's report that when she struck the mine a shell hit her steering gear almost simultaneously, jammed the helm hard over, and she could only steam in circles, which accounted for her remaining stopped instead of steaming out of the Straits. Thinking that she was in danger of sinking and too badly damaged by the mine to salve, the captain decided to abandon her at once and hoisted a signal for all destroyers to close the *Ocean*. They all raced towards her; the *Colne*, *Chelmer*, *Kennet* and *Jed*, which were the first to arrive, ran alongside, and she was abandoned in a few minutes.*

By this time the batteries in the Intermediate Defences and the howitzers and field guns were firing from both shores at the *Ocean* and destroyers, and shells were falling all round us; however, they caused no casualties and the *Chelmer* was the only vessel that received any damage, a six-inch shell flooding one of her stokeholds while she was lying alongside the *Ocean*.

When I felt quite certain that she was well in the stream and that there was no risk of her going ashore before she reached the entrance of the Straits, I went to the *Queen Elizabeth*, which was lying just outside. The captains of the *Irresistible* and *Ocean* were already on board her. I told the Admiral exactly what I thought about the proceedings of the last two hours and our failure to salve the *Irresistible*. I feared it was now too late, as we had been much delayed by the *Ocean's* misfortune, but I proposed to go back at once, and if there was no chance of getting the *Irresistible* into the current I would torpedo her. If the *Ocean* remained afloat as long as the *Irresistible* had done, there was no reason why we should not

* According to the Turkish Account, she did not sink until about 10.30 p.m. "Naval Operations," Vol. II, page 222.

tow her out, and ground her if necessary in shoal water off Tenedos or Rabbit Island. I suggested that a battleship should stand by at the entrance to take her in tow, and that some trawlers should come in and assist to keep her in the current.

I could well imagine the Admiral's feelings, but he was apparently undismayed; his chief concern seemed to be that I should get something to eat before I returned into the Straits, and that I should have definite written orders to cover me if I decided to torpedo the *Irresistible*. I considered the latter absurd, and told him so, saying I had nearly torpedoed her two hours earlier, and the thought had not troubled me. He insisted, however, saying that I had no idea what a fuss the Admiralty would make about sinking one of his Majesty's ships; anyhow, the responsibility was his, and he meant to take it.

While his secretary was preparing my orders for his signature, he sat beside me while I had a hurried meal and then gave me my orders, which were as follows:

"Chief of Staff. I request the following:

1. Salve *Ocean* if possible. *Vengeance* is to stand by at the entrance and take *Ocean* in tow if she drifts out of the Dardanelles. Minesweepers should try and tow *Ocean* and keep her in the current.
2. *Irresistible* is to be destroyed if she goes ashore. If she looks like drifting ashore she is to be torpedoed or blown up."

He explained that he did not wish vessels to be risked so close to the forts, in the full glare of the searchlights, attempting to salve the *Irresistible*. Meanwhile Hope had arranged for a cutter from the *Vengeance* and the *Canopus'* steam pinnace, to accompany me, and I left at once to return to the *Wear*, but it was pitch dark and I could not find her. However, I ran across the *Jed* and went on board her. I was very sorry to miss my *Wear*, as I knew how disappointed Metcalfe and his admirable crew would be, but time was passing and I had none to waste. However, I found the *Jed's* captain (Mulock) and his ship's company spoiling to acquire merit.

Mulock told me of his experiences during the day. The *Jed* waited outside the Straits with the other destroyers of her division until the *Bouvet* foundered, when they ran in to try

and save life, but were too late to pick up anyone. A little later, seeing the *Gaulois* with a heavy list and down by the bows, apparently sinking, they closed her and the *Jed's* boats assisted to pick up some of her crew, who, alarmed by the sudden fate of the *Bouvet*, had jumped overboard. When the *Inflexible* was mined the destroyers kept her in company until she was well on her way to Tenedos.

On receiving the *Ocean's* signal to close, the *Jed* ran alongside her and embarked the captain, 12 officers and 48 men, and was the last destroyer to leave. She was steaming down the Straits when the captain decided to go back and have another look at his ship. The *Jed's* return was fortunate, as they found three men still on board and one swimming close to her. The *Jed* then took the *Ocean's* people to the *Queen Elizabeth*, and was lying off waiting for orders when I fortunately fell in with her about 8 p.m.

I found Mulock, like Metcalfe of the *Wear*, a good companion for such an enterprise, and during the hours I spent on the bridges of those two small craft I had plenty of time for reflection.

I felt that the *Ocean* could take care of herself until the minesweepers arrived. The salvage or sinking of the *Irresistible* was of immediate importance, and the *Jed* with all dispatch went to the position in which I had last seen her, keeping a good look out for the *Ocean* as we ran up the Straits. If she was still afloat we missed her in the darkness.

The next four hours which I spent in the Dardanelles were intensely interesting and made a lasting impression on me. Indeed, I think they were to a great extent responsible for my feeling of absolute certainty—which has never wavered—that our Fleet, with a flotilla of efficient minesweepers, would have had no difficulty in forcing a passage into the Marmora.

It can hardly be said that the events of the afternoon had been very encouraging, but I found the atmosphere of the Dardanelles very exhilarating when I got back there that evening.

The *Jed* ran up to the spot in which I had left the *Irresistible* and followed the drift of the current and southerly breeze in the direction I thought she would take, but there was no sign of her. So we slowly followed the coast up to Kephez Point, and thanks to the powerful searchlights which steadily swept

the approaches to the Narrows, and occasionally lit up the shore, we were able to make quite certain that the *Irresistible* was not aground on the Asiatic side. It was just possible that she might have been caught in an eddy as she approached Kephez Point and have been carried into the current; so we stood over to Suan Dere Point, where we ran into a line of buoys awash which looked like old observation mine cases; they were probably supporting some kind of anti-submarine net. These buoys had been reported by a seaplane as a line of mines.

We followed the European shore for a while, and at length I felt quite certain that the *Irresistible* had sunk in deep water. We then searched very thoroughly for the *Ocean* until I satisfied myself that she also had sunk. We often had to wait for a long time for a particular reach of the shore to be lit up by the enemy's searchlights; this delayed our search, which occupied us until after midnight, and in the course of it we were continually illuminated by one searchlight or another, and were sometimes within a couple of thousand yards of the enemy's batteries.

About midnight the Admiral sent the captains of the *Ocean* and *Irresistible* in the *Colne* to see how their ships had fared, but as they were entering the Dardanelles they intercepted a signal from me to the Admiral, telling him that I could find no trace of either ship; so they returned to Tenedos.

Except for the searchlights there seemed to be no sign of life, and I had a most indelible impression that we were in the presence of a beaten foe. I thought he was beaten at 2 p.m. I knew he was beaten at 4 p.m.—and at midnight I knew with still greater certainty that he was absolutely beaten; and it only remained for us to organise a proper sweeping force and devise some means of dealing with drifting mines to reap the fruits of our efforts.

I felt that the guns of the forts and batteries and the concealed howitzers and mobile field guns were no longer a menace. Mines moored and drifting must, and could, be overcome.

This is not a case of knowledge after the event; there is plenty of contemporary evidence that I held this view strongly, apart from my own records. Sir Ian Hamilton mentions it in his "Gallipoli Diary," page 51. I swore it on oath before the Dardanelles Commission two years later and have reiterated

my belief ever since. Somehow I must have sensed what was happening a few miles away, but it was some years before I received confirmation that my view of the situation was the correct one.

The enemy were at great pains to put about that the forts were practically undamaged: only one or two guns were put out of action, their casualties were slight, etc., etc. These reports reached us and were believed by some and later were quoted in the Admiral's telegram, as an argument against delivering another attack. The Naval Historian (Sir Julian Corbett), writing in 1921, dwells on the magnitude of our defeat. He states, however, that: "Long afterwards, reports which were received from Constantinople went to show that the day's work had had as serious an effect on the Turks as on the Allies. So terrible was said to have been the havoc of the heavy ships' guns, and so far spent the *morale* and ammunition of the garrison, that further resistance seemed hopeless. The impression prevailed that, had the attack been renewed, nothing would have induced the men to stand to their guns, and all the forts must have been abandoned." He then goes on thoroughly to discredit this story, but there is abundant proof now to bear out its accuracy. He tells us that: "It must be borne in mind that only one of the fort guns was permanently damaged." Later he says: "It is true the Nagara group of forts was obsolete and practically negligible, but the chances against getting so far through the unswept minefields, which in all contained nearly 350 mines, are calculated to have been 15 to 1—that is, out of sixteen ships only one could have hoped to reach the Marmora."* In fact he blows hot and cold and is rather difficult to follow; besides, there was never any question of taking battleships through unswept minefields.

I have recorded the Turkish General Staff's account of the situation at 2 p.m. The Military Historian, writing in 1929, tells us that:

> "On the evening of the 18th March the Turkish command at the Dardanelles was weighed down by the premonition of defeat. More than half the ammunition had been expended, and it could not be replaced. The antiquated

* "Naval Operations," Vol. II, page 224.

> means of fire control had been seriously interrupted. The Turkish gun crews were demoralized and even the German officers present had, apparently, little hope of successful resistance if the Fleet attacked next day. Of the nine rows of mines many had been in position for six months, and a large proportion of these were believed either to have been carried away by the current, or to such a depth that ships would not have touched them. For the rest, many were of old pattern and not too trustworthy, and owing to the shortage of numbers they were, on an average, 90 yards apart, more than three times the beam of a ship. A German journalist describes the great astonishment of the defenders of the coast forts when the attack suddenly ceased. He records that the German naval gunners who were manning the batteries at Chanak told him later that they had made up their minds the Fleet would win, and they themselves could not have held out much longer."*

The above statement is based on "Der Kampf um die Dardanellen, 1915," page 74, the German official account written by Mühlmann, a Staff Officer of General Liman von Sanders; also "Zwei Kriegsjahre in Konstantinopel," by Stuermer, and the Turkish official account, which says: "In Fort Hamidieh [19] there were but five to ten rounds left, and the batteries on the European side were equally low."

The *Jed* was one of the destroyers fitted with a light mine-seeking sweep, and her ("River") class had proved their ability to work them efficiently. These sweeps were not strong enough to clear mines, but they were valuable for giving warning of their presence. The "River" class had no room to handle a proper minesweeping outfit, but I felt that something could be improvised to enable these to be worked from the eight "Beagle" class destroyers.

We now had two whole ships' companies to draw on to man the sweepers, whose crews could be sent home. I knew that some of the latter and a great number of officers and men of the ships would volunteer for service in sweepers, some of which could lay tunny nets to protect bombarding ships; others could assist the destroyers to clear the minefields.

* "Military Operations," Vol. I, pages 105 and 106.

The utter contempt for danger displayed by the destroyers and picket boats throughout that day was an inspiration, and I knew that directly our new sweeping force was organised and trained, it would simply tear a way through the minefields, and enable the ships to close to a range from which they would pulverize the forts and batteries, as they did the Outer Forts.

If I felt elated on the morning of the 18th March, I felt coldly confident before the next dawn broke that in spite of our misfortunes of that day success was now within our reach.

It was in that frame of mind I went into my Admiral's cabin, to tell him that the *Ocean* and *Irresistible* were safely at the bottom in deep water, and our anxiety that the latter might have drifted into the enemy's hands was at an end.

I was distressed to find him very unhappy. He told me he felt sure that he would be superseded the next day. I told him there could be no question of that. The First Lord would not be discouraged by our check, and I knew that he would rely on us to see the matter through—which we would do in the course of a few days. The *Queen* and *Implacable* would be with us shortly; they were more than a match for the *Ocean* and *Irresistible*, and though we had no battle cruiser for the *Goeben*, the *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon* could overwhelm her—even if we were not allowed to take the *Queen Elizabeth* into mined waters again.

We discussed the new mine "destroying" force, and since it was the only thing that mattered, I begged him to allow me to lead it. He would not hear of this, but gave me a free hand to organise a minesweeping and net protection force.

In the meantime some of the exhilarating atmosphere of the lower reaches of the Dardanelles must have drifted down to Tenedos, for when the 19th broke we were all full of confident hope, and determination to overcome all opposition.

After two or three hours' rest I was shaving to Rudyard Kipling's "If," as is my wont. "If" has always sustained me when the Fates have been unkind.

CHAPTER XIV

REORGANISATION

Review of damage sustained by ships; Reorganisation of minesweeping force; Preparation for renewal of attack; Admiral postpones Naval attack until Army is ready for combined operation.

DURING the forenoon of 19th March I went on board the *Inflexible* and found the indomitable Phillimore confident of his ability to take his ship to Malta to be docked, as soon as temporary repairs had been effected. As my Admiral reported: "He displayed high qualities as a seaman and leader of men, and it was due to the admirable conduct and devotion to duty of all ranks, that the *Inflexible* was saved to the Navy."

Sir Ian Hamilton describes, in his "Gallipoli Diary," the scene he witnessed when the *Phaeton* arrived off the entrance of the Straits, as the *Inflexible* steamed slowly out, listing to starboard and down by the bows, her ship's company standing strictly to attention on the upper deck. "A spectacle of great virtue," to use his words. I wish I had his graphic pen to describe what was going on down below. The explosion of the mine flooded the fore submerged torpedo flat, and killed one officer and 26 men stationed there; flames and poisonous fumes rose through the escape trunk, rendering several men in the vicinity unconscious. The electric ring main was cut, thus extinguishing all electric lights, and stopping the ventilation fans. The shock of the explosion extinguished almost all the oil lamps, which are kept alight during an action in case of electric failure. The two steaming watches behaved with great coolness, and when the captain ordered one watch on deck—considering the condition of the ship critical, and one watch sufficient to steam her—both watches claimed the right to stop below in the darkness and great heat, disdaining the comparative safety of the upper deck.

The *Inflexible*, like all our ships at that date, was a long way behind contemporary ships of the enemy in protection against under-water explosion, and she was undoubtedly saved by the devoted bravery of officers and men, who worked in the fore magazine, shell room and other compartments in complete darkness, amid poisonous fumes and rising water, until all valves, ventilators and watertight doors were secured. Indeed the *Inflexible* well upheld the fighting traditions which the battle cruisers had already established, and to which they were yet to add glorious pages.

The *Inflexible* was certainly unlucky, but except for the damage and loss of life for which the mine was responsible, she only had one casualty from gunfire, other than the officers and men who were killed and wounded in her fighting top by a small shell from a field gun fired from the Asiatic shore. The only damage she suffered was, as I have mentioned, one 12-inch gun out of action.

Of the other ships engaged the *Gaulois* was the most seriously damaged by gunfire, a heavy shell having penetrated below the water line. Flooding spread, due to faulty ventilating trunks, and she came out of the Straits in a sinking condition. At one time it seemed doubtful whether she would reach Rabbit Island, on which she was eventually beached. So critical was her state, that her captain decided to disembark her crew, with the exception of those necessary to steam and navigate her, and our destroyers ran alongside and took about 400 men off her.

The old French ships were even less able to compete with under-water damage than ours, and the *Suffren* was also leaking from the effects of a plunging shell, which exploded below her water line. The French ships carried no skilled divers, and our divers put patches on both vessels, and when the *Gaulois* had been pumped out and refloated, she and the *Suffren* proceeded in company to Malta, to be docked and repaired. This only left the *Charlemagne*, which was not hit during the action, and Admiral Guépratte transferred his flag to her.

Except for under-water damage, the *Gaulois* was ready for action, and her casualties were only 11 slightly wounded. The *Suffren* was hit in one of her six-inch turrets by a heavy shell, which killed 12 men, put a gun out of action, and necessitated

the flooding of a magazine. She had no other casualties nor serious damage, other than a leaky compartment.

Of the British ships engaged, the *Ocean*, up to the moment when she struck a mine, had only been hit two or three times, and had suffered neither damage nor casualty. Three men were wounded when abandoning the ship, one man was scalded by an escape of steam when the explosion occurred, and nine men were injured jumping on board the destroyers when the ship was abandoned. One man was missing.

The *Irresistible*, up to the time she struck a mine, had not been hit to any extent by howitzers, and not at all by the heavy guns at the Narrows. While she was being abandoned, the six-inch guns in the Intermediate Defences, which had been silent for a long time, opened fire, and 10 were killed and 17 wounded while embarking in the *Wear*, and one was wounded later when the remainder were taken off. The *Vengenace* was not hit, and the *Albion* was hit by one shell which did little damage. These two ships, like the *Ocean* and *Irresistible*, were well within range of the forts at the Narrows, and within very close range of the six-inch batteries of the Intermediate Defences for nearly three hours, and the two latter for an hour longer, unprotected by their consorts of "B" line, or the ships in "A" line.

Of the flanking ships, the *Swiftsure* was not hit, the *Triumph* was slightly damaged on the upper deck and in a cabin by one howitzer shell, and had no casualties. The *Prince George* had three slightly wounded and no damage. The *Majestic* was hit by two shells, which did no material damage but wounded eight men, one of whom died. Of the ships in "A" line, the *Queen Elizabeth*, which was nearest the European shore and was a target for howitzer and field guns for six hours, was hit three times; the most serious damage was from a howitzer shell, which blew a hole in the deck above the gunroom (Junior Officers' Mess). She had no casualties. The *Lord Nelson* reported that she had been "hit four or five times by howitzers and field guns"; one 9.2-inch gun was put out of action, otherwise she suffered neither damage nor casualties. The *Agamemnon* was hit 12 times, five hits on her armour which had no effect, seven others damaged superstructure and funnels, and put a 12-inch gun (temporarily) and two 12-pounders out of action. She had no casualties.

To sum up the losses and damage suffered by the 16 ships engaged:

By Mines. Three ships were sunk and one severely damaged by the *Nousret* mines, with the loss of 666 officers and men.

By Concealed Howitzers and Mobile Artillery. During an engagement lasting nearly seven hours, in the course of which hundreds of rounds were fired by howitzers and field guns at practically stationary ships and destroyers, minesweepers and picket boats, the damage they inflicted was simply negligible. The casualties for which they were responsible amounted to no more than six killed or died of wounds, and less than a dozen seriously and a few slightly wounded; the losses being confined to three ships.

By the six-inch Batteries in the Intermediate Defences. The guns in these batteries were silenced early in the action, but when the *Irresistible* was in trouble and inadequately supported, they certainly hit her repeatedly at very short range, and were responsible for the casualties she and the *Ocean* suffered when they were being abandoned.

By the Forts at the Narrows. The heavy guns at the Narrows fired scores of rounds during the five hours in which the old battleships of "B" line were well within effective range, and those in "A" line at extreme range, and they were responsible for the damage and losses sustained by the French ships, but they only succeeded in hitting the *Ocean* once and the *Inflexible* in "A" line three times, killing one man in the latter—and yet we are told over and over again that it was folly for ships to try and engage forts, and that the concealed guns and howitzers were a serious menace to the passage of ships through the Straits.

It is true that the latter had been regarded as such by my Admirals, and that reports to this effect had been made to the Admiralty; further, that General Birdwood had endorsed this view in the appreciations he sent to Lord Kitchener, but our experience on the 18th March, and the facts I have stated, surely conclusively dispose of any idea that fortress guns, concealed howitzers and mobile artillery could have prevented the Fleet from forcing the Straits.

The *Nousret* minefield had been responsible for all our troubles, and other writers have recorded their belief that this line of mines altered the whole course of history. Those

mines, and the inefficiency of our sweepers at that time, were the sole cause of the failure of the Fleet on 18th March to carry out the task with which the Admiralty had been charged. But the responsibility for the ultimate failure of the Fleet to force a passage through the Dardanelles, lies on the shoulders of those who would not allow us to accomplish our task, after the cause of our check had been discovered, and efficient minesweepers had been provided.

The thought that the Fleet had shot its bolt and was never to fight again of course did not enter into my head for a moment. Mines, moored and drifting, had to be conquered, and to the solution of this problem I immediately concentrated all my efforts.

The crews of the trawler sweepers were given the option of returning to England at once; 115 did so, but some brave stalwarts insisted on staying to wipe out the past, and they seized every opportunity of most gallantly doing so. Officers and men of the *Ocean* and *Irresistible* volunteered in great numbers for minesweeping duties and service in trawlers, as did all who could be spared from the *Inflexible* during her lengthy refit. Numbers far in excess of those required were available, and splendid crews were selected for the trawlers. Kites and large quantities of wire were ordered up from Malta with all dispatch. Greek fishermen were engaged at Tenedos to make and fit tunny nets, and the organisation of a thoroughly belligerent minesweeping and netting force was pressed on with feverish haste. No one worked less than 18 hours a day, but we were much hampered by bad weather; on the 19th it blew a gale from the southward, on the 20th the wind switched round and blew a gale from the northward. The vessels undergoing repairs and fitting out under the lee of Tenedos had to shift berth from one side to another at short notice. Meanwhile the *Queen Elizabeth* remained off Tenedos, generally superintending the repairs of damaged ships and preparations for an overwhelming onslaught on the Narrows.

On the 19th the Admiral heard from Sir Ian Hamilton that he proposed to take his army to Alexandria and Port Said, to reorganise it in shape for landing, and he asked for the Admiral's concurrence. The troops had been embarked in transports, irrespective of any tactical requirements, and were quite unready

for action until they could be landed, resorted and re-embarked.* There were no facilities at Mudros, hence the General's wish to use the well-equipped Egyptian ports as a preliminary base.

The Admiral replied on 20th March:

> "As a military measure I concur with your proposal to make Egypt the headquarters, but submit that political result of withdrawing troops from Mudros at the moment requires the gravest consideration. If Governments of Balkan States take it to mean failure, or abandonment of attack on Dardanelles, result might be far reaching. To prevent the wrong interpretation being placed on the movement of the troops, I suggest that their departure be delayed until our attack is renewed in a few days' time; in the meantime feints of landing on a large scale on several points of the coast of Gallipoli might tend to draw off field guns from DARDANELLES, where they are likely to seriously hamper our sweeping operations."

Our preparations were advancing apace, and on the 20th the Admiral was able to telegraph to the Admiralty that eight "Beagle" class destroyers were being fitted as minesweepers; six "River" class and four torpedo boats—the latter from the Suez Canal—were being fitted with light sweeps as mine seekers, and a flotilla of picket boats with explosive creeps. Eighteen British minesweepers, manned entirely by volunteers, and 12 French were ready for action.

The whole area in which the ships would manœuvre, in order to dominate the forts at the Narrows, and the batteries protecting the Kephez minefield, would be thoroughly swept by day. [With a regular naval sweeping force the howitzers and more mobile artillery could be disregarded.] No night minesweeping would be carried out. Tunny nets and indicator nets would be laid across the Straits during the night, before the attack was renewed. The Admiral said he hoped to be in a position to commence operations in three or four days; the delay was inevitable, as the new crews and destroyers would need preliminary practice, and this was being held up by heavy weather. He concluded by saying that no ships would enter the Straits until everything was ready for a sustained attack. This last

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 108.

because it was important to make the Admiralty understand that it was futile to go into the Straits unless one had a definite object in view. It was quite easy to dominate the forts, and carry out an operation within their range, while they were dominated; but unless our object was attained before it was necessary to break off the action, the whole business had to be started afresh. Until we had an efficient naval sweeping force it would have been folly to go in and engage the forts; we simply had not the ammunition to spare, and could not afford to wear out our old guns in engagements which could not be carried to a decisive issue.

This telegram crossed one from the Admiralty, dispatched about midnight on 19th, which was appreciative and encouraging, and informed the Admiral that in addition to the *Queen* and *Implacable*, which would join him in a few days, the *London* and *Prince of Wales* had sailed that night. So it was evident that the Admiralty were supporting us and were not discouraged by our check. This is confirmed by a statement made by Mr. Churchill to the Dardanelles Commission:

> "I regarded it as only the first of several days' fighting, though the loss in ships sunk or disabled was unpleasant. It never occurred to me for a moment that we should not go on, within the limits of what we had decided to risk, till we reached a decision one way or the other. I found Lord Fisher and Sir Arthur Wilson in the same mood. Both met me that morning (the 19th) with expressions of firm determination to fight it out."*

The Admiralty telegram (120) concluded: "It seems important not to let the forts be repaired, or to encourage enemy by any apparent suspension of the operations. Ample supplies of 15-inch ammunition are available for indirect fire of *Queen Elizabeth* across the Peninsula." We took this to mean, perhaps wrongly, that the *Queen Elizabeth* should not be taken into mined waters again.

To this the Admiral replied (246):

> "21st March.
>
> "From experience gained on 18th, I consider that the forts at the Narrows, and the batteries guarding the

* "Dardanelles Commission," First Report, page 38.

minefields, can be dominated, after a few hours' engagement, sufficiently to enable minesweepers to clear Kephez minefield. The howitzers and concealed gunfire must be faced, as it is impossible for the ships to deal with them.

Our first consideration must be the organisation of a strong military sweeping force, with which to first clear the area in which the Squadron will manœuvre, to cover the minesweepers operating in the Kephez minefield. Until preparations for this are thoroughly complete, I do not propose to engage the forts by direct attack.

For the *Queen Elizabeth* to fire by indirect laying from Gaba Tepe, it is essential she should have a seaplane up to spot; strong southerly gale and low visibility have prevented flying since 18th. It is hoped to continue this form of attack directly weather moderates."

The Admiral concluded by saying that he would confer with General Hamilton as soon as possible.

Sir Ian replied on 21st to the Admiral's telegram of 20th, to the effect that he thought the political question raised was a matter for the Cabinet, and that he was personally a sceptic as to the value of feints without landing, but agreed, as he was anxious to meet the Admiral's wishes, that the transfer to the new base should be gradual. On receipt of this the Admiral decided to go to Mudros on the following day.

It is important to note that at this time there was no question of any action other than a renewed attack by the Fleet on the Narrows, with the object of forcing a passage into the Marmora, directly the reorganised minesweeping force was ready. The Admiral's telegrams to the Admiralty and the General are ample proof of this.

I was very much occupied with the preparations which were being made to renew our attack, and was away from the ship in this connection when Generals Hamilton, Birdwood and Braithwaite, and Admirals de Robeck and Wemyss met on board the *Queen Elizabeth* on the morning of 22nd March to discuss—as I thought—future military movements. On my return I learnt with dismay from Captain Godfrey that the Admiral had abandoned all idea of renewing the naval attack, until the Army was landed and sufficiently in occupation of the Gallipoli

Peninsula to ensure an easy passage for the Fleet through the Straits. As there was no prospect of the Army being able to undertake operations for some weeks, it seemed folly to wait and give the enemy time to organise his defence, if our arrival in the Marmora was likely to have the effect the Government anticipated. Godfrey, who had spent the 18th March in the foretop of the *Queen Elizabeth*, which was a target for scores of shells all day, and had had a good view of all that was going on, was entirely in agreement with me, and has never wavered from this opinion.

I lost no time in having it out with the Admiral, and learnt from him that Sir Ian Hamilton had told him that a landing at Bulair, which was now a veritable fortress, was out of the question, and he had expressed his intention of landing at the toe of the Peninsula, and advancing to the Kilid Bahr Plateau with the Fleet on either flank. I am sure that the Admiral would have renewed his attack if the General had decided to land at Bulair, or had made it clear (in accordance with No. 1 of Lord Kitchener's instructions) that there would be no question of a landing in force until the Fleet was in the Marmora, or had finally failed. (*See* page 224.) But the General's readiness to land at the toe of the Peninsula of course entirely altered the situation from the point of view of the Admiral, who was not as sanguine of a naval success as I was.

Later in the day I accompanied the Admiral to the *Franconia*, on board which the General and his Staff were living, and he told Sir Ian that I was very anxious to go on, without waiting for the Army, directly the reinforcements arriving from England and the new sweeping force were ready for action. Then, turning to me, he asked me when I expected to be ready with the latter. I said that the weather and difficulties experienced in fitting the destroyers to work heavy sweep wires were causing delay, but we would be ready in all respects to renew the attack by 3rd or 4th April. The Admiral then remarked that as the General expected to be ready to land by 14th April, it only entailed a wait of ten days. So the matter was finally settled. I returned to the *Franconia* that evening with the draft of his telegram to the Admiralty, reporting his change of plan, and a message from him asking for the General's concurrence. Sir Ian raised no objection and actually suggested the wording of

the last paragraph. The following telegram was then sent to the Admiralty:

256. "At a meeting today with Generals Hamilton and Birdwood, the former told me the Army would not be in a position to undertake any military operations before 14th April.

In order to maintain my communications, when the Fleet penetrates into the Marmora, it is necessary to destroy all guns of position guarding the Straits; these are numerous and only a small percentage can be rendered useless by gunfire.

The landing of demolition parties on 26th February evidently surprised the enemy. From our experience on the 4th instant, it seems that in future the destruction of guns will have to be carried out in face of strenuous and well-prepared opposition; I do not consider it a practicable operation to land a force, adequate to undertake this service, inside the Dardanelles. General Hamilton concurs in this opinion.

If the guns are not destroyed, any success by the Fleet may be nullified by the Straits closing up after the ships have passed through, and as the loss of material will possibly be heavy, ships may not be available to keep the Dardanelles open.

The mine menace will continue till the Marmora is reached, being much greater than was anticipated; it must be carefully and thoroughly dealt with, both as regards minefields and floating mines.

This will take time to accomplish, but our arrangements will be ready by the time the Army can act.

It appears, therefore, better to prepare for a decisive effort about the middle of April, rather than risk a great deal, for what may possibly be only a partial solution."

I was not aware until I read the Dardanelles Commission's Final Report several years later, that Admiral de Robeck had added the following to the foregoing telegram:

"It now appears to me that there may, possibly, be above the Narrows minefields of which we have very little information.

Obstacles may be sunk in the Channel by the Germans, and submerged hulks and pontoons placed there. I have in mind particularly the very large pontoons in the Golden Horn, on which the old Road Bridge from Stamboul to Pera was laid.*

The howitzers, which it is difficult to spot from the sea, will, of course remain.

I think it will be necessary to take and occupy the Gallipoli Peninsula by land forces before it will be possible for first-rate ships, capable of dealing with the *Goeben*, to be certain of getting through and for colliers and other vessels, upon which the usefulness of the big ships largely depends, to get through."

I must confess that I was fearfully disappointed and unhappy, but the Admiral contended that since the General was prepared to seize the Gallipoli Peninsula below the Narrows, it would be far better to make a certainty of it, with a big combined operation, than to risk another naval attack alone, only ten days before the Army was ready to co-operate. I had seen him, when he was Second in Command, gallantly leading his old ships into the fray, and laying them almost alongside the Outer Forts—had watched him showing a stiff upper lip on the 18th March, when all his hopes were being shattered, and I had a great admiration for him and unbounded confidence in him. Moreover, the Chief of Staff, having done his best to place his views and those of the Staff before his Admiral, is bound in all loyalty—while he holds the appointment—to do all in his power to carry out the policy his Admiral decides upon.

At the time, of course, one did not know what was going on behind the scenes, but "The Dardanelles Commission Report" (published 1917), Sir Ian's "Gallipoli Diary" (published 1920), Winston Churchill's "World Crisis," Vol. II (published 1923), Admiral Wemyss' "The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign" (published 1924), and the "Military Operations, Gallipoli" (published 1929) fill in a great many gaps in my records.

* There are over 40 fathoms of water from shore to shore in the Narrows, and abreast of Nagara Point, and the blocking of the channel in the manner suggested would have been a physical impossibility.

It appears that on the 19th March, Sir Ian, under the influence of the spectacle of the *Inflexible* and *Gaulois* limping out of the Straits, apparently in a sinking condition, telegraphed to Lord Kitchener:

> "I am being most reluctantly driven to the conclusion that the Straits are not likely to be forced by battleships, as at one time seemed probable, and that if my troops are to take part, it will not take the subsidiary form anticipated. The Army's part will be more than mere landing parties to destroy the forts; it must be a deliberate and prepared military operation, carried out at full strength, so as to open a passage for the Navy."

Sir Ian goes on to refer to the telegram he sent to the Admiral regarding the transfer of troops to Alexandria: "so as to shake them out there and re-ship them ready for anything," and he quotes from the Admiral's reply: "Until our attack is renewed in a few days' time"—and comments, "Bravo the Admiral."

On 20th March Sir Ian records:

> "An answer came from K., straight, strong and to the point. He says: 'You know my view, that the Dardanelles passage must be forced, and that if large military operations on the Gallipoli Peninsula by your troops are necessary to clear the way, those operations must be undertaken, after careful consideration of the local defences, and must be carried through.'—Very well; all hinges on the Admiral."

On 21st March Sir Ian quotes from a letter he received from the Admiral: "We are all getting ready for another 'go,' and not in the least beaten or downhearted." And continues:

> "Although the confidence of the sailors seems quite unshaken by the events of the 18th, Birdie* seems to have made up his mind that the Navy have shot their bolt for the time being, and we have no time to lose in getting ready for a landing. But then he did not see the battle, and cannot therefore gauge the extent to which the Turkish forts were beaten.

* Major-General Sir William Birdwood.

> On the 22nd March at 10 a.m. we had another conference on board the *Queen Elizabeth*. . . . The moment we sat down de Robeck told us that he was now quite clear *he could not get through without the help of all my troops*. [Sir Ian's italics.] Before ever we went on board, Braithwaite, Birdwood and I agreed that, whatever we landsmen might think, we must leave the seamen to settle their own job, saying nothing for or against the land operations or amphibious operations until the sailors themselves turned to us and said that they abandoned the idea of forcing the Straits by naval operations alone. They have done so. The fat (that is us) is fairly in the fire. . . . During the battle I had cabled that the chances of the Navy pushing through on their own were hardly fair fighting chances, but since then de Robeck, the man who should know, had said twice that he *did* think there was a fighting chance—had he stuck to that opinion at the conference. . . . But once the Admiral had said that his battleships could not fight through without help, there was no foothold left for the view of a landsman."

I seem to have had misgivings I could not hide. Sir Ian says on 24th March:

> "Roger Keyes from the flagship came shortly afterwards. He is sick as a she bear robbed of her cubs, that his pets—battleships, T.B.'s, destroyers, submarines, etc.—should have to wait for the Army. Well, we are not to blame! Keyes has been shown my cables to K. and is pleased with them. . . . He said one illuminating and encouraging thing to Braithwaite, viz., that he never felt so possessed of the power of the Navy to force a passage through the Narrows as in the small hours of the 19th, when he got back to the flagship after trying in vain to salve the *Ocean* and *Irresistible*."*

I have only recently read Admiral Wemyss' book and was astonished to find the following account of his share in those fateful decisions:

> "On the following day (the 19th) I again visited de Robeck at Tenedos and found him naturally enough

* "Gallipoli Diary," Vol. I, pages 33-51.

somewhat depressed at the turn of events. He spoke of disaster, a term I begged him not to use, and after conferring with him on the steps necessary to take as a consequence of the battle of the day before, I left him more cheerful than I had found him.

The experience that we had undergone pointed to the following argument: the battleships could not force the Straits until the minefields had been cleared—the minefields could not be cleared until the concealed guns which defended them were destroyed—they could not be destroyed until the Peninsula was in our hands, hence we should have to seize it with the Army. Any main operations must therefore be postponed until such time as preparations for a combined attack could be made."

Commenting on the meeting of Generals and Admirals on the 22nd March, Wemyss says:

"The decision of the conference confirmed the conclusion de Robeck and I had come to on the 19th, viz. that combined action must be postponed until plans had been developed and perfected. In the meantime the Vice-Admiral would keep the enemy busy with constant bombardments."*

It is difficult to reconcile this account with Admiral de Robeck's telegrams of 20th and 21st; nevertheless, I still think that if the Army had decided to land at Bulair, de Robeck would have renewed the naval attack, as his telegrams to the General and the Admiralty so definitely stated.

The First Lord tells us in "The World Crisis" that he read the Admiral's telegram 256 with consternation, and endeavoured to persuade Lord Fisher to concur in sending the following telegram to Admiral de Robeck:

"In view of the dangers of delay through submarine attack and of heavy cost of Army operation, and possibility that it will fail or be only partly effective in opening the Straits, and that the danger of mines will not be relieved by it, we consider that you ought to persevere methodically but resolutely with the plan contained in your instructions

* "The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign," by Wester Wemyss, pages 41-43.

and in Admiralty telegram 109, and that you should make all preparations to renew the attack begun on 18th at the first favourable opportunity. You should dominate the forts at the Narrows and sweep the minefield and then batter the forts at close range, taking your time, using your aeroplanes and all your improved methods of guarding against mines. The destruction of the forts at the Narrows may open the way for a further advance. The entry into the Marmora of a Fleet strong enough to beat the Turkish Fleet would produce decisive results on the whole situation, and you need not be anxious about your subsequent line of communications. We know the forts are short of ammunition and supply of mines is limited. We do not think the time has yet come to give up the plan of forcing Dardanelles by a purely Naval operation."

This was painfully prophetic and admirably sums up the situation which came to pass. If it had been sent and acted upon courageously, who can doubt the result in the light of our knowledge today?

Mr. Churchill gave the following evidence before the Dardanelles Commission:

"I proposed that we should direct the Admiral to renew the Naval attack, according to his previous intention. The First Sea Lord, however, did not agree; nor did Sir Arthur Wilson; nor did Sir Henry Jackson. Lord Fisher took the line that hitherto he had been willing to carry the enterprise forward, because it was supported and recommended by the Commander on the spot. But now that Admiral de Robeck and Sir Ian Hamilton had decided upon a joint operation, we were bound to accept their view. I do not at all blame Lord Fisher for this decision. The arguments for it were very strong indeed. But so were the arguments against it. Both the Prime Minister and Mr. Balfour, with whom I discussed the matter, were inclined to my view, but as our professional advisers and the Admiral on the spot were against it, it was impossible to go further, and I bowed to their decision. But with regret and anxiety."*

* "Dardanelles Commission," First Report, page 38.

Instead of the First Lord's fighting instructions, which were entirely in accord with my instincts and towards which we had all been working for the last few days, the Admiral received the following telegram on the 25th March:

140. "Your 256. It is clear that the Army should at once prepare for attack on Kilid Bahr Plateau at earliest opportunity, and Lord Kitchener hopes April 14th can be antedated. This is a matter for the War Office. But the question now to be decided by the Admiralty is whether time has come to abandon the naval plans of forcing Dardanelles without the aid of a large army. It may be necessary to accept check of the 18th instant as decisive, and to admit that it is beyond our power, and if you think this you should not fail to say so. But, before deciding, certain facts must be weighed: 1st. The delay and consequent danger of submarines coming and ruining all; 2nd, the heavy losses, at least 5,000, which the Army would suffer; 3rd, the possibility of a check in the land operations far more serious than the loss of a few old surplus ships; 4th, the fact that even when Kilid Bahr Plateau has been taken by the Army and the Kilid Bahr group of forts rendered untenable, the Asiatic forts will still be effective, and most of the mine danger which is now your principal difficulty will menace you in the long reach above the Narrows.

These must be balanced against risks and hopes of purely naval undertakings. You must not under-rate supreme moral effect of a British Fleet with sufficient fuel and ammunition entering the Marmora, provided it is strong enough to destroy Turco-German vessels. Gallipoli Peninsula would be completely cut off if our ships were on both sides of Bulair Isthmus. It seems very probable that as soon as it is apparent that forts at the Narrows are not going to stop the Fleet, a general evacuation of the Peninsula will take place; but anyhow, all troops remaining upon it would be doomed to starvation or surrender. Besides this there is the political effect of the arrival of the Fleet before Constantinople, which is incalculable, and may well be absolutely decisive.

Assuming only the minimum good results follow the successful passage of the Fleet into the Marmora, viz., that the Turkish Army on Gallipoli continues to hold out, and with forts and field guns close up the Straits, and that no revolution occurs at Constantinople, then perhaps in the last resort the Army would have to storm Kilid Bahr Plateau, and secure a permanent reopening of the Straits. It would be possible with the ships left behind at the entrance, and with those in Egypt, to give the necessary support to the military operations, so that at the worst the Army would only have to do, after you had got through, what they will have to do anyhow if your telegram is accepted; while, on the other hand, the probability is that your getting through would decide everything in our favour. Further, once through the Dardanelles the current would be with you in any return attack on the forts, and the mining danger would be practically over. Therefore, danger to your line of communications is not serious or incurable.

What has happened since the 21st to make you alter your intentions of renewing the attack as soon as the weather is favourable? We have never contemplated a reckless rush over minefields and past undamaged primary guns. But the original Admiralty instructions and telegram No. 109 prescribe a careful and deliberate method of advance, and I should like to know what are the reasons which, in your opinion, render this no longer possible, in spite of your new aircraft and improved methods of minesweeping. We know the forts are short of ammunition. It is probable that they have not got many mines. You should be able to feel your way while at the same time pressing hard.

I cannot understand why, as a preliminary step, forts like 7 and 8 should not be demolished by heavy gunfire, first at long range, afterwards at short range, now that you have good aeroplane observation.

I wish to hear further from you before any official reply is sent. You may discuss this telegram with General Hamilton if he is with you, and then telegraph fully. Admiralty will then give you their decision.

You must of course understand that this telegram is not an executive order, but is sent because it is most important that there should be no misunderstanding."

With the exception of the First Lord's suggestion to attack "forts like 7 and 8" as a preliminary step—the objection to which I have already stated—I think his telegram is a very fair and far-seeing appreciation of the situation, and in the light of our experience in the next few weeks, and our knowledge today, it seems almost incredible that his reasoned appeal should have fallen on deaf ears.

Winston Churchill's enquiring, adventurous spirit had taken him into the front line trenches in France and Flanders, and he had already seen more of the conditions under which men fought in modern war than many senior soldiers. Although his suggestion that the Army would lose at least 5,000 in its attack on the Kilid Bahr Plateau greatly underestimated the losses it was soon to suffer, his telegrams clearly show that he visualised the formidable nature of the Army's task, and feared the risks it would run, in an attack on a now fully prepared enemy. On the other hand, the Fleet had proved its ability to master the forts with trifling loss, and was rapidly developing a sweeping force to clear the minefields.

However, the Admiral was unmoved in his determination to wait for the Army to land, before attempting to force the Straits, and on 26th he replied:

278. "Your 140. I do not hold check on 18th decisive, but, having met General Hamilton on 22nd and heard his proposals, I now consider a combined operation essential to obtain great results and object of campaign. Therefore my considered opinion is that Fleet should prepare way and act as indicated in my 268. To attack Narrows now with Fleet would be a mistake, as it would jeopardise the execution of a better and bigger scheme. A full appreciation of the situation in the Dardanelles is being prepared and will be wired."

During these last anxious days I was much engaged at Mudros, and saw a great deal of Sir Ian and Braithwaite, until they sailed for Egypt on 24th. On that date Rear-Admiral C. Thursby

arrived in the *Queen*, accompanied by the *Implacable*. He was actually senior to de Robeck, but subordinate to him in view of the latter's acting rank. I had served with Thursby when I commanded a destroyer flotilla in 1903, and knew him to be a seaman, possessed of great energy, so I suggested to my Admiral that he should superintend the training of the sweeping force at Tenedos. He approved, and the *Queen* went there; this was a great relief to me, as Mudros and Tenedos are 40 miles apart, and the preparation for a great combined operation overwhelmed the Admiral's small staff with work.

On the 25th the Admiral telegraphed to the Admiralty asking if it would be possible to spare one or two "E" class submarines, *AE2*, our only modern submarine, being under repair at Malta. He also pointed out that it was essential to use the "Beagle" class destroyers as fleet sweepers during our advance through the Dardanelles, the minesweepers proper being too slow to precede the Fleet. The losses might well be heavy, and he submitted that more destroyers should be sent out at once.

On 26th March the Admiral and I went to Tenedos for the day in the *Doris*. I was very anxious to see how the sweepers were getting on. We also inspected the aerodrome, which we had been making for some days with the assistance of Greek refugees, in preparation for the aeroplanes which the First Lord had hurried out, on receipt of our complaints as to the inefficiency of our seaplanes. An excellent aerodrome had been made by the removal of vineyards and crops, stones and rocks, and rolling out a flat surface with oil drums filled with cement.

On 27th the Admiral sent off his full appreciation of the situation:

282. "I do not consider the check on the 18th was decisive, and I am still of the opinion that a portion of the Fleet would succeed in entering the Marmora. Nothing has occurred since the 21st to alter my intention to press the enemy hard until I am in a position to deliver a decisive attack.

On 21st I was prepared to go forward irrespective of the Army, as I fully realised that this matter must be carried through to a successful issue regardless of cost, and also

because, in view of the military opinion expressed in your 70* and which, if persisted in, would in no wise assist the Navy in their task. I did not anticipate the possibility of military co-operation in the forcing of the Straits, though I have always been of opinion that decisive results would be best obtained by a combined operation rather than by either a naval or military force acting alone.

On 22nd, having conferred with General Hamilton and heard his proposals, I learnt that the co-operation of the Army and Navy was considered by him a sound operation of war, and that he was fully prepared to work with the Navy in the forcing of the Dardanelles, but that he could not act before the 14th April. The plan discussed with General Hamilton, and now in course of preparation pending your approval of my 256, will effect, in my opinion, decisive and overwhelming results.

The original approved plan for forcing the Dardanelles by ships was drawn up on the assumption that gunfire alone was capable of destroying forts."

After a lengthy reiteration of his previous statements, as to the impossibility of destroying guns by gunfire, and landing demolition parties to destroy forts within the Straits, an opinion shared by General Hamilton; and a reference to the great menace of mines and torpedo tubes, the Admiral continued:

"The results of Naval action alone might, in my opinion, be brilliantly successful or quite indecisive. Success depends largely on the effect that the appearance of the Fleet off Constantinople would produce on the Turkish Army, which appears to control the situation in Turkey at present, and which is itself dominated by the Germans. But if the Turkish Army is undismayed by the advent of the Fleet in the Marmora, and the Straits are closed behind it, the length of time which ships can operate, as indicated in your 86 and 88,† and maintain themselves in that sea, depends almost entirely on the number of colliers and ammunition ships which can accompany the Fleet and,

* Admiralty telegram of 26th February. See page 199.

† These telegrams gave instructions as to the conduct of the Fleet in the Marmora and the reduction of the forts in the Bosphorus respectively.

as the passage will be contested, the percentage of large unprotected ships which can be expected to get through is small. The passage of supply ships to the Fleet through the Dardanelles with the Forts still intact is a problem to which I can find no practical solution.

In such a case it would be vital for the Army to occupy the Peninsula, which would open the Straits, as guns on the Asiatic side can be dominated from the European shore sufficiently to permit ships to pass through. The landing of an army of the size contemplated in the face of strenuous opposition is, in my opinion, an operation requiring the assistance of all the naval forces available. A landing at Bulair would not of necessity cause the Turks to abandon the Peninsula, and there can be no two opinions that a fleet intact outside the Dardanelles can do this better than the remains of a fleet inside with little ammunition. With the Gallipoli Peninsula held by our Army, and a Squadron through Dardanelles, our success would be assured. The delay, possibly of a fortnight, will allow of co-operation, which should really prove factor that will reduce length of time necessary to complete the campaign in Marmora and occupy Constantinople."

While waiting for the Admiralty's reply, I went back to Tenedos to see our splendid new sweeping force at work. The difficulty of handling the heavy wires in the destroyers had been overcome by fitting, as winches, some of the ammunition hoists for supplying the secondary armament of the old battleships. I spent that night on board the *Queen*, as Admiral Thursby's guest, and after a long forenoon with the sweepers I met Admiral de Robeck, who had come over for the day, on the aerodrome. We watched the gallant Samson, who had just arrived in charge of the new aeroplanes, pull his machine out of its packing cases, get it put together in an incredibly short time, and fly off to reconnoitre the Dardanelles.

The Admiral showed me the First Lord's reply to his appreciation:

148. "With reference to your telegram number 282. I had hoped it would have been possible to achieve the result according to original plan without involving the

Army, but the reasons you give make it clear a combined operation is now indispensable. Time also has passed and thus date is not distant. All your proposals will therefore be approved by Admiralty telegram. I intend you to retain the command irrespective of Admiral Carden's recovery.

H.M.S. *Goliath* has been ordered to join you and the three cruisers in Egypt will come to Lemnos on the eve of the attack. Eight more "Beagles" and three of our best submarines have started."

We returned to Mudros in the *Minerva* that evening, and found another telegram from the First Lord:

151. "With reference to your telegram number 282 and my telegram number 148. What will Fleet do if Army is checked? Suppose, for instance, that the Army is brought to a standstill against the Kilid Bahr Plateau; do you intend to push through separately, leaving only sufficient ships supporting the Army, or do you consider your decisive attack can only be delivered if the Army has already succeeded. Secondly my desire is to sustain you in all action necessary for our success, and therefore it is important I shall know exactly what you have in mind. Do not be vexed at these enquiries. The only thing is to win."

The Admiral replied:

292. "Thanks for your telegrams numbers 148 and 151, which I much appreciate. There is only one idea here, and that is to win.

The additional reinforcements will place us in a strong position for attack and co-operation with the Army and should prove adequate. Directly the Army is landed in the Gallipoli Peninsula the Fleet will commence its attack on the Narrows. To make this attack decisive the co-operation of the Army is necessary in order to utterly destroy the forts at Kilid Bahr. No matter where the Army effects its landing the first objective of both Services must be the above forts, and the intention is to attack them simultaneously with all our forces. Until the passage through the Narrows is secured it would be militarily unsound to operate with the Fleet in the Marmora.

If the Army is checked in its advance on Kilid Bahr, the question as to whether the Navy should or should not force the Narrows, leaving the forts intact, would depend entirely on whether the Fleet could assist the Army in their advance to the Narrows best from below Chanak, with communications intact, or from above cut off from its base. So many military considerations enter into the question that it is impossible to lay down anything definite, but, if the forcing of the Narrows by ships alone is found to be expedient, the Fleet would do so.

There has really been no delay; the training of the personnel of minesweepers and mine-netting craft was necessary, and has proceeded during recent bad weather under lee of Tenedos, and is still proceeding.

As the Fleet will be engaged, besides being occupied in minesweeping—covering the landing of the Army, few officers can be spared from the ships to assist in these important duties, I am therefore asking officially for certain officers whom I know are well qualified for these services, and, if approved, I request they may be sent at once via Marseilles or Toulon with all dispatch."

Then followed an exchange of telegrams with the Admiralty, with reference to the provision of more officers for the numerous duties in connection with the transport and landing of the Army. I had taken part in a big Naval and Military Staff ride which worked out a combined landing operation on a far smaller scale, and I knew that after we had taken every officer and man of the sunken battleships, and those who could be spared from the *Inflexible* and the vessels which would not take part in the forcing of the Straits, we would still be far short of the number required. The Admiral and I looked through the Navy List and suggested a number of officers who we thought might possibly be spared. This was not at all well received, and the Admiral was curtly told that none could be sent. Although there was opposition at the Admiralty, it was obvious to us that the First Lord was making every effort in his power to help us; the Admiral had only to express a wish and he

complied with it, or went one better, at once, so the following telegram was sent to him personally :

> "I am making further representations to Admiralty regarding the necessity for more officers—the matter is urgent and time passes."

We heard later that on receipt of this the First Lord personally scoured the Admiralty, raked up every suitable officer, and sent a number off at a few hours' notice by the fastest possible route. I was delighted to find included among these my brother Adrian (retired Lieut.-Commander), who had just returned from Canada, and had begged for a sea-going appointment, but had been told that none was available.

CHAPTER XV

THE CHANGE OF PLAN

Change of Plan accepted ; Enemy reports.

It will be seen that the evidence I have quoted in the previous chapter is conflicting as to who was really responsible for initiating the change from a naval to a military attack. I have related the chain of circumstances which led to this unhappy decision, and I will leave it at that.

As the Admiral has been severely criticised for his change of plan, I think I cannot do better than quote from the evidence I gave before the Dardanelles Commission in 1917, in order to make his point of view clear :

> "When the Admiral was faced with the alternative of landing an army—as we thought—sufficiently strong to occupy Gallipoli and keep our communications open, or of embarking on what he regarded as a hazardous enterprise, with a doubtful issue—doubtful since success was dependent on the collapse of the Turkish opposition after his arrival in the Marmora—how could he, having the responsibility, decide otherwise than as he did? If, for instance, he had rejected the offer of the General to co-operate in a combined operation, and our second attack had failed, what would have been the verdict on the action of an Admiral who had listened to the urgent appeal of the First Lord against his considered judgment?"

Admiral de Robeck has also been criticised for not renewing his attack on the day following our check on the 18th March. It was so difficult to make the Admiralty understand then—and others even today—that in order to clear the minefields, our only real obstacle, it was necessary to master the forts at the Narrows, and continue to master them, until our task was

accomplished. In fact, nothing short of another major engagement, on the lines of the 18th March, could have served any military purpose. But of our 16 battleships, six were sunk or out of action, and our sweeping force was useless. It would have been folly to have gone on without an efficient sweeping force, and the reinforcements which were about to join us, if we were to achieve decisive results, and avoid useless expenditure of ammunition. By 4th April, however, the minesweeping net-laying force was in all respects ready, and the *Prince of Wales* and *London* had joined Thursby's Squadron, which, with the *Queen* and *Implacable*, made a powerful reinforcement to the Fleet, which was now strong enough to master the forts at the Narrows, as it had done on 18th March.

Godfrey and I were very unhappy at the delay which the change of plan entailed, because we both felt, after our experience on the 18th March, that the enemy was beaten, that the Fleet could enter the Marmora without serious loss, and that we ought to go there as soon as possible. The political issues and what happened after we arrived in the Marmora were the Government's concern—and if the Government were wrong, we did not regard the withdrawal from the Marmora as a very dangerous operation, as the minefields would have been swept, the ships would have a strong favourable current, and would be able to attack the forts in reverse at short range. We felt, therefore, that a naval attack alone was worth the risk to win so great a prize.

It is easy, however, for Staff officers, without direct responsibility, to recommend great undertakings, particularly if, as in the Navy, they share in all the bodily risks that attend their execution. Had de Robeck still been Second in Command, I am sure he would have led the van in an attack on the Narrows as gallantly as he did that on the Outer Forts in February, but when he had the responsibility of the Supreme Command, he never really wished to risk his ships again in another naval attack, after the losses of the 18th March, and he welcomed the opportunity of combining with the Army in an operation which promised success without hazard to the Fleet.

Winston Churchill has been almost universally condemned for the miscarriage of the Dardanelles Campaign. The following appears in the Australian official history, and is typical: "So, through a Churchill's excess of imagination, a layman's ignorance of artillery, and the fatal power of a young enthusiasm to convince older and slower brains, the tragedy of Gallipoli was born."

An American Staff Officer concludes his account of the Dardanelles Campaign: "It is doubtful if even Great Britain could survive another World War and another Churchill."

Personally I think Winston Churchill's name will always be honoured in history for his great strategic effort, long after his critics are forgotten, and I believe that this view is accepted now, by all who know the facts I have recorded.

At a moment when, in the opinion of the Secretary of State for War, no troops were available to make war on Turkey, Churchill saw the possibility of winning Allies, and removing a formidable foe, by accepting the plan of the Admiral on the spot and making use of a number of old ships, of no value in the main theatre, to force a passage through the Straits into the Marmora. In the face of considerable opposition he carried his policy into action. Encouraged by the ease with which the Fleet overwhelmed the Outer Forts, the Secretary of State for War then found troops to exploit the success of the naval operations, which seemed assured. But the Fleet was checked by the inefficiency of its minesweepers. Then when the losses were about to be made good by a powerful reinforcement, and a splendid sweeping force was nearly ready, the Admiral decided to wait until the Army had captured Gallipoli, because he thought the Government was optimistic in its estimate of the effect that a fleet in the Marmora would have on Turkey, and feared for his communications.

Churchill, alive to the menace of submarines, and having the vision to foresee the tremendous risks and immense liabilities involved in the new plan, after the enemy had had time to organise his defences, made every conceivable effort to spare the Army the ordeal it was to suffer—first by trying to insist on a renewal of the naval attack, and when he could get no support from his naval advisers, by pleading with the Admiral to adhere to the original plan.

That Churchill was right, in the light of our knowledge today, can surely no longer be contested. If he had been given the

power to insist, de Robeck, relieved of his responsibility, would have renewed his attack, and, without a doubt, would have forced a passage into the Marmora.

But the opportunity was allowed to pass, and once again we were to learn—only this time on an infinitely larger scale—the folly of procrastination in war.

Before passing on to watch the Army's glorious effort and tragic failure, I will turn to the Official Military History for the evidence, which is overwhelming, that the Fleet's arrival off Constantinople would have been decisive.

> "It is now known that Sir Edward Grey's anticipations of the effect of the British Fleet's arrival at the capital were justified. Liman von Sanders and the American Ambassador at Constantinople, as also the latter's special agent at his Embassy, have placed on record that the fall of the Outer Forts caused consternation in Turkey. Everyone in Constantinople believed that the success of the Allied Fleets was inevitable. The Germans were apprehensive that a revolution would follow the Fleet's arrival at the Golden Horn, and that Turkey would sign a separate peace. The credit of the Turkish Government was at its lowest ebb. Their military plans had everywhere ended in failure; their treasury was empty; their country was on the brink of ruin; and another reverse was expected to change the prevailing dissatisfaction to open revolt. Liman von Sanders has stated that at the end of February the Turkish Headquarters firmly believed that the Straits would be forced. Everything had been prepared for the departure of the Sultan and his court, as well as civil and military authorities, to the interior of Asia Minor. These precautions, he significantly adds, were justified.*

It is important to realise that had Constantinople been abandoned, the Turks would have been unable to continue the war. Their only arms and munition factories were at the capital and would have been destroyed by the Fleet, and the supply of material from Germany would have been impossible.

According to the German Official Account, written by

* "Fünf Jahre Turkei," page 72.

Mühlman, a staff officer of Liman von Sanders, in 'Der Kampf um die Dardanellen, 1915,' page 74:

> 'Most of the Turkish ammunition had been expended. The medium howitzers and minefield batteries had fired half of their supply . . . for the five 35.5 cm. guns there were only 271 rounds, say 50 each; for the eleven 23 cm. between 30 to 50 rounds per gun. . . . Particularly serious was the fact that the long range H.E. shells, which alone were effective against armour, were nearly used up. Fort Hamidieh had only 17 of them, Kilid Bahr but 10. Also there was no reserve of mines. What, then, was to happen if the battle was renewed on the 19th and following days with undiminished violence?" *

We now had to prepare the stage, as we thought, for a combined naval and military attack on the Narrows. We had broken off the naval attack at a moment when success seemed assured, in order not to "jeopardise the execution of a better and bigger scheme," i.e. the landing of an army to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula, in order to safeguard the Fleet's communications after it had entered the Marmora.

The combined attack was not delivered. The Fleet was never allowed to attack again. Yet if every ship in de Robeck's Squadron had been sunk with all hands in the Dardanelles, the naval losses would still have been less than half those about to be suffered, in killed alone, by the Army in Gallipoli, in its effort to help the Navy through.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, pages 104, 105 and footnote. See also further quotations on pages 246-7 *ante*.

CHAPTER XVI

PREPARATION FOR COMBINED ATTACK

Naval and Military plans and orders; *E*15 attempting passage of Straits runs ashore; Finally torpedoed to prevent capture; *AE*2 enters Marmora; Expedition sails.

I THINK it would be almost impossible for anyone who was not at Mudros during the next few crowded weeks, or with Sir Ian Hamilton completing his plans in Alexandria, to conceive the immensity of the undertaking, and the amount of staff work entailed, in preparing for the disembarkation on open hostile beaches, of an army, 60 miles from its base—a wind-swept harbour, possessing no facilities whatever in the way of piers and jetties.

The magnitude of the task before us was never appreciated by the Admiralty, nor indeed by ourselves, until we commenced to work out the plan, but it soon became evident that with an improvised and very inadequate transport the landing would monopolise the whole resources of the Fleet, and that every ship, officer, man and boat would be required to cover, land, support and supply the Army, until a good reserve of ammunition and stores had been built up on shore.

This strengthened the Admiral's contention that we must first establish the Army on shore, before we passed on to carry out the naval part of the programme. Nevertheless, the ships which were to force the Straits were maintained, at that time, in a state of readiness to renew the naval attack at a few hours' notice, directly the Army was securely established on shore.

On 2nd April the Admiral issued a memorandum to the Flag and Senior officers giving a general outline of the plan of campaign, pending the receipt of the Army's definite requirements. In this he stated that he would fly his flag in the *Queen Elizabeth* during the disembarkation of the Army, and transfer it to the *Lord Nelson* on the Fleet proceeding through the Narrows, when he would take command of the Squadron in

the Marmora. The *Queen Elizabeth*, with some of the cruisers and torpedo boats, under the orders of Rear-Admiral Wemyss, would remain outside to support and supply the Army.

Admiral Guépratte would follow the Admiral into the Marmora with two of his battleships and the Russian cruiser *Askold*, which had just arrived to join the Allied Fleet. She was abroad when war broke out and so was unable to return to a Russian port. One or two French battleships would remain outside, under the command of Admiral Wemyss.

The maintenance, training and leadership of the minesweepers being of the greatest importance, Captain Algernon Heneage, of the *Albion*, was placed in charge of all minesweepers (including destroyers), minesweeping operations, and mine defence preparations. His ship, acting as parent to all minesweepers, was berthed close inshore, either north or south of Tenedos according to the wind, and was relieved of all other duties until operations commenced in the Dardanelles. The light cruiser *Sapphire* was also placed under Heneage's orders for duty with the minesweepers.

Among others appointed to assist Captain Heneage was Lieutenant Francis Sandford, who was Torpedo Lieutenant of the *Irresistible* and had commanded the demolition party of that ship in the two successful enterprises which destroyed the guns at Sedd el Bahr. He was also a volunteer in the attack on the minefields on the 13th March, and led the pair of minesweepers which alone succeeded in sweeping the whole length of the minefield. (See pages 198, 202 and 215 *ante*.) I saw him on the morning of 19th March, almost in rags, with clothes and skin discoloured by the fumes of a high explosive shell, and was immensely impressed by his gallant, light-hearted bearing.

Sir Ian and his Staff returned from Egypt on the 10th April, which was a great relief to us, as there was so much to be arranged between the two staffs. By this time it was evident that the landing could not take place until several days later than 14th April, the date we had hoped for; which was very disappointing, and in view of the enemy's active preparations to receive us, a matter for serious concern. As it turned out, however, the weather was unsettled between the 14th and 25th, and the latter, the actual day of the landing, was the first really favourable day for the undertaking.

On the 12th the General and about 40 officers, including the Brigadiers, Colonels and Adjutants of the Battalions, embarked in the *Queen Elizabeth* and were taken down the coast to examine the selected landing places through their glasses. Parties of naval and military officers were also sent round the coast in patrolling destroyers to study the possible landing places.

On the 12th April the Admiral issued his "Orders for the Combined Operations," and these were added to from time to time. Part 1 dealt with the disembarkation of the Army; the preamble ran thus:

> "To ensure destruction of the forts at the Narrows, and secure the command of the Dardanelles, a combined attack by the Navy and Army will be delivered on the Gallipoli Peninsula at an early date.
>
> The efforts of the Navy will primarily be directed to landing the Army and supporting it until its position is secure: after which the Navy will attack the fortifications of the Narrows, assisted by the Army."

Then followed the composition of the Squadrons.

There were to be two main landings, one conducted by the 1st Squadron under Rear-Admiral Wemyss, flying his flag in the *Euryalus*, who would also have under his orders a subsidiary landing conducted by the 4th Squadron, the other by the 2nd Squadron under Rear-Admiral Thursby, flying his flag in the *Queen*.

The 3rd Squadron, under Captain H. Grant in the *Canopus*, was to make a feint to land troops elsewhere.

The 5th Squadron, under Captain Fyler in the *Agamemnon*, was to cover the minesweeping operations under Captain Heneage, which were to clear the area inside the Straits, in which ships would manœuvre in support of the Army.

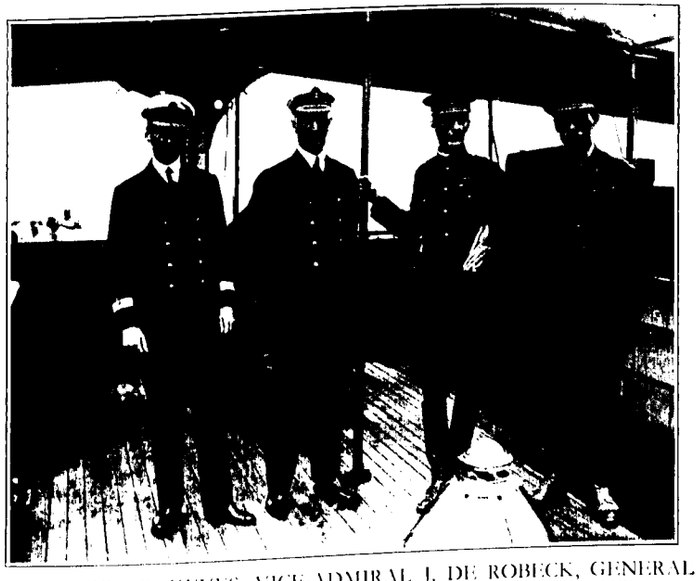
The 6th Squadron, under Contre-Amiral Guépratte, was to convoy and cover the French Army.

The 7th Squadron, stationed in the Gulf of Smyrna, was to watch that port and contain the enemy torpedo vessels which had been located in the harbour by our aircraft.

Aeroplanes under Samson were to spot for the covering ships of the 1st Squadron, which were under Rear-Admiral Nicholson, flying his flag in the *Swiftsure*, and to carry out reconnaissance



ADMIRAL J. DE ROBECK AND STAFF, DARDANELLES



COMMODORE R. KEYES, VICE-ADMIRAL J. DE ROBECK, GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL W. BRAITHWAITE, DARDANELLES

for the General commanding the troops in the landing operations conducted by the 1st Squadron.

The *Ark Royal's* seaplanes and the *Manica's* kite balloon were to work with the 2nd Squadron under Rear-Admiral Thursby.

The *Queen Elizabeth*, flying the Admiral's flag, with Sir Ian and his General Staff on board, was to be left free to move about as required.

Although the actual landing places were not made public until the last moment, the naval officers who would be in charge of transport and beach work were given precise and clearly defined information as to what would be expected of them. As the transports arrived from Egypt, the naval officers concerned at once got into touch with the units they were to work with, and training in rapid and silent disembarkation, handling boats quietly under oars, landing on the beach, etc., etc., was energetically proceeded with night and day.

The Admiral's orders prior to the landing covered 30 pages of printed foolscap, and gave information or instruction on every conceivable subject, such as control of gunfire in support of the Army; minesweeping; conduct of the various units if submarines appeared in the neighbourhood; the nature of the enemy's gun, torpedo and mine defences; signal arrangements, visual and wireless; etc., etc. The control of wireless was a very important matter, since it provided inter-communication between the Army and the Navy and between a couple of hundred vessels, including men-of-war of three, and transports of two nationalities, all sorts of auxiliary vessels, aircraft and shore stations.

James Somerville, the young Lieut.-Commander attached to the Staff for wireless duties, by tact, blarney and force of character, simply ruled the ether and brought its many conflicting waves into regular channels.

The Admiral was a great believer in decentralisation, and having given his instructions and made his wishes clear, he left the conduct of the operations to the individual to whom he had confided it, who knew that he would be supported loyally and not be interfered with if he did his job properly.

On the 13th April the "Military Force Order No. 1" was issued. After giving the strength of the enemy, as estimated,

at 34,000, and stating that information pointed to a landing being opposed, it went on to say that:

> "The object of the expedition is to assist the Fleet to force the Dardanelles by capturing the Kilid Bahr Plateau and dominating the forts at the Narrows. The general plan to achieve this object is:
>
> 1. A bombardment of the Bulair Lines at daybreak, followed by a feint of landing on the mainland north of Xeros Islands, by the transport fleet of the Royal Naval Division.
>
> 2. Simultaneously with the above a bombardment of the heights commanding the beach Gaba Tepe-Nibrunesi Point; accompanied by a landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.
>
> 3. Simultaneously with the above, a bombardment of the southern end of the Peninsula; accompanied by a landing of the 29th Division, in the neighbourhood of Cape Helles.
>
> 4. Simultaneously with the foregoing, the French will make a demonstration in Besika Bay, in combination with which a landing will be effected by a portion of the French expeditionary force near Kum Kale."

During the next few days details of the landings were worked out. The covering forces allocated to the various beaches, and the first reinforcements, were to be transferred from the transports to battleships, cruisers, destroyers or fleet sweepers on the afternoon, or during the night preceding the landing; and carried in them to the vicinity of their objectives. Thence in boats towed by steamboats or trawlers, manned by naval ratings, to the beaches.

The landing arrangements of the 1st Squadron at Helles included the use of the *River Clyde*, a collier, which was to run herself ashore on the beach to the westward of Sedd el Bahr. With a thought of the wooden horse of Troy in his mind, Captain Unwin of the *Hussar* had suggested using the *River Clyde* as a means of rapidly reinforcing the first flight of boats, and had begged to be given command of the ship, which was most ingeniously prepared under his direction for the speedy disembarkation of troops.

It was found impossible to provide enough bluejackets for all the beach parties without drawing too many from the ships, which we hoped would themselves be heavily engaged in a day or two, so the Anson battalion of the Naval Division reinforced the naval beach parties at Helles.

The main landings at Helles were to take place at "X," "W" and "V," with a subsidiary landing at "S" in Morto Bay. (See plan, page 293.) The diagram, which was issued with the operation orders, shows the allocation of the troops forming the covering force, with which it was hoped to seize a sufficiently advanced position to cover the disembarkation of the main force, whose immediate objective would be Achi Baba, and ultimate, the Kilid Bahr Plateau.

The first flight of 72 boats, towed by 18 picket boats to "X," "W" and "V" Beaches, was to carry 2,150 men, the maximum number which could be disembarked simultaneously on the limited beach space. "X," "W" and "V" Beaches were to be reinforced, as shown on the diagram, by 2,100 troops carried in the *River Clyde* and 1,200 in the fleet sweepers.

Twenty-four boats were to land 750 men at "S" Beach, but as there were no more picket boats available they were to be transferred outside the Straits from the *Cornwallis* to four trawlers, which would tow the boats close to the beach; the troops, with the assistance of a few bluejackets, would then pull themselves on shore.

There was to be another subsidiary landing on the western flank of the Peninsula at "Y" Beach by the Scottish Borderers, the Plymouth Division of Royal Marines—borrowed from the Naval Division—and a company of the South Wales Borderers —for whom there was not sufficient room on "S" Beach— 2,000 in all. These troops were to be carried in the *Sapphire* and *Amethyst* and the Marines' transport to within four miles of the coast, and then transferred to eight trawlers, each towing six boats, in which they were to land themselves. This landing was to be conducted by my brother Adrian, who had trained the troops to a high state of efficiency in boat work and speedy, silent landing.

The "Y" Beach landing was to start at dawn, simultaneously with the bombardment of the Helles area, and those at "S," "V," "W" and "X" half an hour later.

In the northern area an advanced force of 1,500 of the Australian Division carried in the *Queen*, *Prince of Wales* and *London*, was to be landed in 36 boats, towed by 12 picket boats, followed immediately by eight destroyers carrying 2,500 men and towing a number of transports' lifeboats. All the boats were to assist to land troops from the destroyers directly they had discharged their first load. In this way it was hoped to land a covering force of 4,000 men rapidly, and to seize the Sari Bahr Ridge overlooking the beach.

The objective of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was to be "the ridge over which the Gallipoli-Maidos and Boghali-Kojadere roads run, and especially Mal Tepe."

Sir Ian informed General d'Amade that in order to assist the preliminary operations of the troops landing in the Gallipoli Peninsula, he had assigned to the force under his command, the task of effecting a landing near Kum Kale, with the object of engaging the attention of any hostile troops, which might be near the entrance to the Dardanelles on the Asiatic shore.

The landing near Kum Kale was intended to be in the nature of a diversion, and he considered that it would only be necessary to employ one infantry regiment (three battalions) and one battery of artillery. He did not wish to land any larger number of troops on the Asiatic side, as he intended, as soon as a secure footing was gained in Gallipoli, to re-embark the landing party and land the whole French army on the European side of the Straits, preparatory to the general advance of the Allied Forces against the enemy's army in the Gallipoli Peninsula.

By the 22nd April the whole Expeditionary Force, embarked in 106 transports, was ready for action, but owing to the congestion in Mudros, 12 transports of the Naval Division and 18 of the French transports were berthed at Trebuki in the Island of Skyros.

On the 23rd April the Admiral issued the following memorandum to the Fleet:

> This memorandum is issued as a guide to the operations of the Fleet in the near future.
>
> Nothing definite can be laid down for each day, everything being dependent on the progress of the Army and the

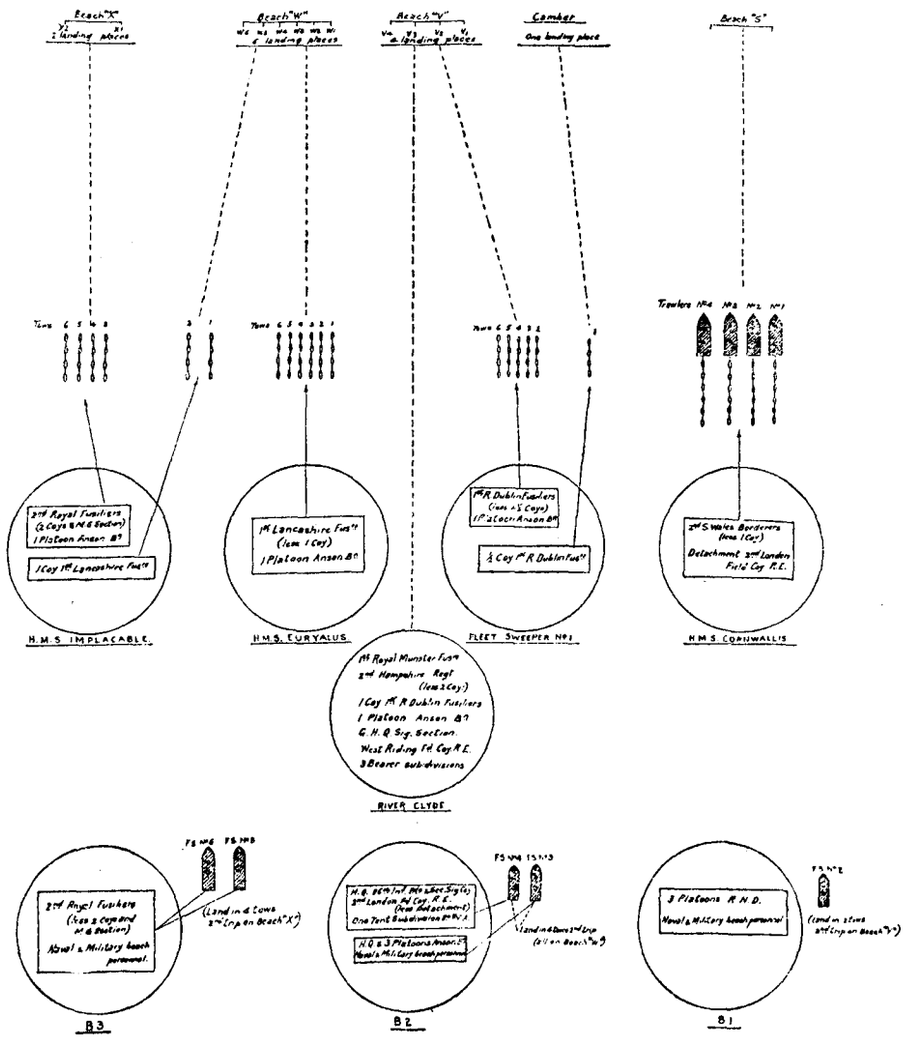


DIAGRAM ISSUED WITH INSTRUCTIONS FOR HELLES COVERING FORCE

amount of support it will require from the gunfire of the Fleet.

The preliminary attack on the Narrows will be carried out as indicated herein and detailed orders will be issued to ships in due course.

It is expected that once the Army is established on land, the cruisers, with the addition of one or two battleships, will be sufficient for its support in the advance on Kilid Bahr.

During the attack on the Narrows the Vice-Admiral, Rear-Admiral 2nd Division and Rear-Admiral 3rd Division will direct operations inside the Straits. Rear-Admiral 1st Squadron will be in command of the covering ships outside the Straits and superintend the landing of the remainder of the Army.

II. 1ST DAY

Ships will cover the landing of the Army and support its advance.

During the night minesweeping trawlers supported by destroyers will make a feint attack on the Kephez minefield.

The objects of this attack are:

(*a*) To compel the enemy to retain the guns protecting the minefields in position and thus prevent him placing them to oppose the advance of the Army.

(*b*) To prevent the enemy's destroyers issuing from the Straits to attack the transports.

Lord Nelson and *Agamemnon* will complete with ammunition at Rabbit Island.

III. 2ND DAY

The anti-floating mine net will be laid off Soghon Dere as directed by Captain (S)*, either at dawn or at such other time as may be ordered.

Queen Elizabeth will bombard the defences at the Narrows by indirect fire from Gaba Tepe, aeroplanes and kite balloon spotting.

* Captain A. Heneage.

In the morning *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon*, supported by two ships of the 3rd Division, are to be ready to bombard Forts 7, 8 and 19 and cover sweeping operations. Forts 8 and 19 are specially important, as from their position they can seriously interfere with the advance of the Army towards the Soghon Dere.

The second phase of the minesweeping will be commenced as laid down by Captain (S), an area being swept up to the line of the anti-floating mine net.

In the afternoon, if the position of the Army has permitted, Rear-Admiral 2nd Division to assemble his ships, the 2nd Division will bombard certain specified forts and the field guns protecting Kephez minefield.

Ships operating inside the Straits will remain under weigh in rear of the net off Soghon Dere.

At night picket boats and sweepers, supported by destroyers, will remove obstacles in the minefield below the Narrows.

IV. 3RD DAY

It is hoped to commence the general bombardment of the forts at the Narrows on this day.

The general lines on which the bombardment is to be carried out will be similar to the plan employed on 18th March, except that H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth* will continue the attack on the Narrows by indirect fire from Gaba Tepe, the supporting ships inside the Straits being in consequence reduced to *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon*.

The 3rd Division ships will assist in this bombardment.

Directly the forts are silenced the sweeping of the Kephez minefield will be commenced, covered by the fire of the battleships.

This provides good evidence that the Fleet's intentions were definitely belligerent, prior to the Army's landing.

While preparations for combined operations were proceeding, *E*15, the first of the "E" class submarines from England, arrived at Mudros. After I had discussed the prospects of success with her Captain, Lieut.-Commander T. S. Brodie,

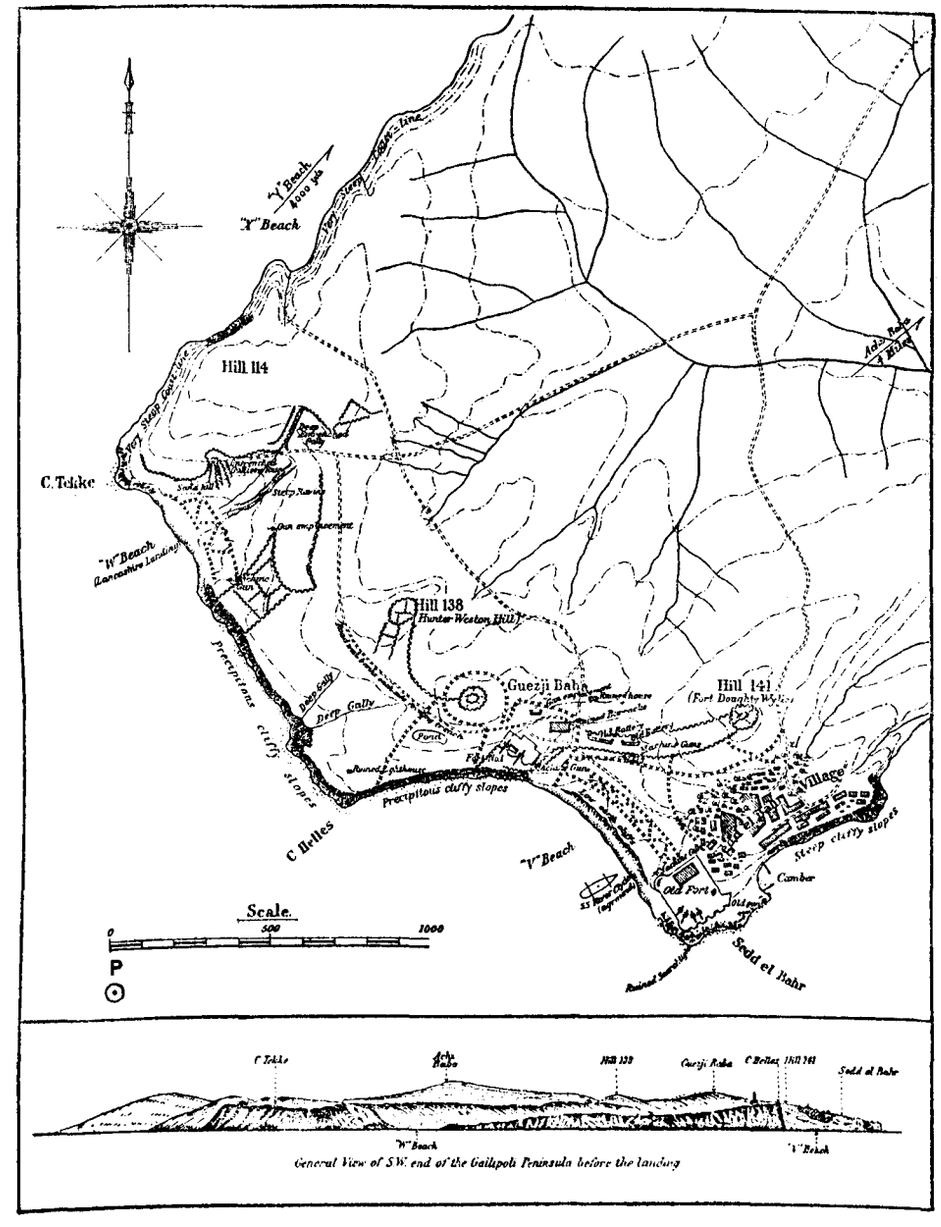
The whole covering force of 4,000 men was landed by 5 a.m., in spite of the fact that they were vigorously opposed.

By 5.30 a.m. the firing had died down to a great extent, and the General was informed that the covering force had landed without serious opposition and was a mile inland. By 6 a.m. the landing of the main force of Australians and New Zealanders was in full swing, and the *Queen Elizabeth* steamed down the coast towards Helles. We all felt much relieved at the success we had witnessed, and when we passed close to "Y" Beach, and saw a large body of troops sitting about on the cliffs, smoking and quite unconcerned, our good fortune seemed almost incredible. This landing had proceeded exactly as arranged. The trawlers in line abreast, with their boats alongside, the *Sapphire* and *Amethyst* on either flank, supported by the *Dublin* and *Goliath*, steamed in until the stems of the trawlers grounded; the troops rapidly transferred to the boats, and by 5.15 a.m. the Scottish Borderers and South Wales Borderers, having clambered up the steep hill paths, were in possession of the high cliffs overlooking the beach. The Marines followed within an hour, and at the time we passed, the 2,000 men of the landing had secured their first objective without loss.

We then steamed on towards Helles, where, judging by the sound, there was a tremendous battle in progress.

Admiral de Robeck suggested to the General that he should recall the Naval Division from Xeros and land it at the unopposed "Y" Beach. We undertook to improvise transport and land the Division before nightfall. The General, however, said that the Naval Division was his only reserve, they were inexperienced and not fully trained, and anyhow he must keep them in reserve for the present, until he saw how the main battle developed.

At Helles, in view of the preparation the enemy had made, the attack was preceded by a heavy bombardment, commencing at 5 a.m., and, somewhat delayed by various causes, the landing took place an hour later in broad daylight. As we approached Tekke Burnu we learnt from Captain H. E. Lockyer, of the *Implacable*, that the landing at "X" Beach was also unopposed. He had approached the coast with his anchor veered to one and a half shackles, in case of shallow water being met with, and slowly steamed in, with the troops in boats abreast of the



P⊙ *Approximate view point.* Surveyed and drawn by Commander H. P. Douglas, R.N.

TURKISH DEFENCES ON "V" AND "W" BEACHES, 25TH APRIL, 1915.

and his twin brother, Lieut.-Commander C. G. Brodie, on the Admiral's Staff—two submarine officers of great merit—and other officers with local experience in submarines, the Admiral consented to *E*15 attempting a passage into the Marmora, with the object of operating on the enemy's seaborne communications. The late Vice-Consul at Chanak, Mr. Palmer, who was attached to the Admiral's Staff as Intelligence Officer with the rank of Lieutenant R.N.V.R., begged to be allowed to serve in that capacity with Brodie in the submarine. It was arranged that *E*15 should be watched by aeroplanes, which would try to distract attention from her, if opportunity offered. T. Brodie left at daylight on 17th, his brother flying with Samson, to follow *E*15's progress. Samson and Brodie returned at 10 a.m. and reported that *E*15 was ashore on Kephez Point, with a Turkish torpedo boat lying alongside her.

Submarine *B*6 was sent at once to try and torpedo *E*15 to prevent her being salved by the enemy. *B*6 fired a torpedo which missed, according to the report of her commanding officer, a fact which was verified later by the torpedo being picked up floating out of the Straits. Curiously enough the *Vengeance*, which was in the Straits, reported that *B*6 had torpedoed a tug, which was seen to capsize and sink alongside *E*15. I have never heard any explanation of the *Vengeance's* report, *B*6 knew nothing about it.

That night the destroyers *Scorpion* and *Grampus* attempted to attack *E*15, but the enemy managed to screen her with searchlights, and the destroyers being themselves brilliantly illuminated and unable to locate her, withdrew under a heavy fire.

The following morning *B*11 tried to torpedo *E*15, but it was foggy and she was unable to find her. When the fog lifted, the *Majestic* and *Triumph* attempted to destroy her by gunfire without success. A number of attacks were made by aeroplanes with bombs; they did not succeed in hitting *E*15, but they prevented tugs working alongside her.

It was essential to destroy her, and on the night of the 18th volunteers were called for to man two picket boats, each fitted with two 14-inch torpedoes in dropping gear. The *Majestic* and *Triumph* were on duty inside the Straits, and claimed the right to provide the picket boats, for which great numbers had volunteered. The Admiral consented but directed that

Lieut.-Commander E. Robinson—who had so greatly distinguished himself in the first landing at Kum Kale and on 13th March—should lead the cutting-out expedition, and he embarked in the *Triumph's* boat. The picket boats did not succeed in effecting a surprise as was hoped; they were lit up by searchlights at a considerable distance, and were greeted by a heavy fire. A searchlight was also worked, as on the previous night, to screen *E*15, and the *Triumph's* boat, which led, was unable to get a clear view of her and the first torpedo missed. She was running in to fire another at very close range, when *E*15 was lit up for a few seconds, at a moment when the *Majestic's* boat was in a favourable position to fire, at a range of about 200 yards. Lieut. Claude Godson, who commanded her, promptly fired both torpedoes, one of which struck her with a great explosion. A few minutes later the *Majestic's* boat was hit by a shell, her crew being saved by the *Triumph's* boat before she sank. Fortunately the enemy concentrated their fire on the sinking boat, and the *Triumph's* boat escaped without damage. The only casualty was an armourer in the *Majestic's* boat who died of wounds.

During the whole of this very gallant enterprise—akin to the cutting-out expeditions of old—the boats were lit up by brilliant searchlights, and were under heavy fire from the six-inch guns in Battery 8, and from field guns which had evidently been brought down to cover *E*15. Robinson was promoted to Commander and later received the V.C. for his earlier exploit, and the young officers and men who manned the boats were decorated for their cool gallantry.

It was necessary to make sure that *E*15 was really destroyed, so Brodie embarked as a passenger in *B*6 the following morning to examine her at close range, aeroplanes being unable to fly low enough to do so satisfactorily without great risk. *B*6 narrowly escaped *E*15's fate, and her experience provided an explanation for the loss of the latter. *B*6 was caught in a violent eddy off Kephez Point and was driven ashore within 100 yards of *E*15; her conning tower and superstructure broke surface and she came under a heavy fire. Had she lightened herself by blowing water ballast she would certainly have been driven further up the beach by the current, but her captain gave her negative buoyancy, and working his engines at full

ship, to within 450 yards of the beach, before the anchor brought her to. The enemy had not made any preparation for a landing at that spot, and under cover of every gun in the *Implacable* the Royal Fusiliers had dashed in and landed without opposition. By 7 a.m. the whole battalion was on shore without a casualty. The nature of this beach was certainly favourable for covering fire from ships, but the conduct of the landing was admirable.

When the Royal Fusiliers advanced over the tops of the cliffs they met with stiff opposition, and their progress was watched with intense admiration and cheers of encouragement by the men of the *Implacable*, which was sufficiently close to the fighting to suffer a few casualties, including her Fleet Surgeon, who was killed by a rifle bullet on the quarter deck.

At Tekke Burnu we saw some boats landing men on the rocks right under the cliff. These were carrying the Lancashire Fusiliers, who had embarked in the *Implacable* and were making for "W" Beach. We learnt later that Brigadier-General Hare, the indomitable commander of the covering force, who had also taken passage in the *Implacable* and was following the first flight, seeing that the Lancashire Fusiliers from the *Euryalus* were being met by a heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from the trenches defending "W" Beach, had diverted the *Implacable's* boats in the hope of being able to effect a landing on the rocks and outflank the enemy. As a matter of fact the possibility of landing there, if the sea was sufficiently calm, was suggested by us two days earlier, but the information never reached General Hare, who acted on his own initiative.

This manœuvre was entirely successful, and enfiladed the enemy's trenches, which were carried with the bayonet by the frontal attack of the Lancashire Fusiliers, who would not be denied their objective, despite wire entanglements, obstructions and land mines, which inflicted devastating losses.

As we steamed slowly past "W" Beach, we could see that the Lancashire Fusiliers were in possession, but it was difficult to make out what was happening in the haze of smoke and the glare of the rising sun.

At "V" Beach we could see that the *River Clyde* was approximately in her assigned position, and that a fierce fight was in progress, but it was impossible in the trying conditions of visibility to see what was occurring on shore.

The *Queen Elizabeth* ran past Sedd el Bahr in order to get a clear view of the landing in Morto Bay. We could see that the South Wales Borderers had captured the old de Tott's Battery, which we learned they had stormed with great dash, suffering comparatively trifling losses.

The *Cornwallis* was still lying off Morto Bay and was ordered by the Admiral to go at once to her proper station off "V" Beach, as she had discharged her mission, and the Morto Bay area was covered by the *Lord Nelson*. There was considerable delay on the part of the *Cornwallis* in obeying the Admiral's signal, but the Admiral and I did not learn the reason until some time later, fortunately perhaps for her captain, who, in his ardent but misguided zeal, had landed in his galley to see, so he said, that the naval arrangements were satisfactory. He had, in fact, on his own initiative, landed a party of bluejackets and the marines of his ship, and with them had taken part in the assault on de Tott's. His commander did not like to leave without him, hence the delay, which at the time seemed inexplicable.

Meanwhile the *Queen Elizabeth* had returned to "V" Beach, which seemed to be the storm centre. While passing Sedd el Bahr, where two platoons of the Dublin Fusiliers had landed in the Camber, we picked up a boat drifting out of the Straits, containing wounded from "S" Beach. The *Lord Nelson* reported that our men could be seen in Sedd el Bahr village and it seemed that the Camber landing was proceeding satisfactorily.

As the visibility improved we could clearly see that the attack on "V" Beach was being most bloodily held up. It was a ghastly sight to watch from a position of absolute safety. The foreshore was strewn with dead bodies and wreckage of stranded boats. The sea was whipped up by bullets. Between the *River Clyde* and the shore we could see men struggling up to their shoulders in the sea; others lying under the shelter of a ridge in the sand, to move from which meant certain death from machine guns, which could not be located from the covering ships. As soon as we learnt from the *River Clyde* that there had been no advance, we simply blasted the village, fort and whole hillside commanding the beach with high explosive shell. When the clouds of dust and smoke drifted away, and the men

speed, managed to drive her bumping along the bottom into deep water. During their hairbreadth escape Brodie and MacArthur (the captain of *B6*) satisfied themselves through the periscope that *E15* was on her beam ends and a total wreck—and so ended our first unsuccessful effort to attack the enemy's sea communications by submarines.

We know now that when *E15* broke surface a shell penetrated her conning tower and killed Brodie and six men. Palmer and the remainder of the crew were taken prisoners.

The Australian submarine *AE2*, which had been refitting at Malta for some weeks, arrived at Mudros, and was the next to attempt the passage into the Marmora. She left on the morning of the 24th, but had to return the same day owing to a slight temporary defect. However, she sailed again the following day, and her report that she had arrived safely in the Marmora could not have been received at a more opportune moment.

It had been intended to deliver the attack on Gallipoli on the 23rd April—St. George's Day—but the preceding days were very unsettled and a postponement was necessary. On 23rd the weather looked promising, and the preliminary movements were started. On 24th, Sir Ian and 12 officers of his Staff joined the *Queen Elizabeth*. Sir William Birdwood and his Staff embarked in the *Queen* with Admiral Thursby, and Major-General A. Hunter-Weston, commanding the 29th Division, joined Admiral Wemyss in the *Euryalus*.

By nightfall on the 24th April the great armada of over 200 vessels was under way.

CHAPTER XVII

CAPTURE OF THE BEACHES

The Storming and Capture of the Beaches: 25th and 26th April.

AFTER calling at Tenedos to drop her boats and their crews, who were to take part in the Helles landing, the *Queen Elizabeth* anchored off Imbros until 4 a.m.; when she weighed and stood in towards Gaba Tepe to watch the Australian landing, which was to take place at the first streak of dawn. General Birdwood had wished to land the covering force in darkness, but the actual time was governed by the moon, which, on the 25th April, would have silhouetted the vessels, had they approached the coast at an earlier hour.

As the *Queen Elizabeth* steamed in, heavy gunfire broke out off Helles, and we could hear rifle and machine-gun fire to the northward of Gaba Tepe. When it was sufficiently light, we could see boatloads of men landing on the beach, which the first flight of the covering force had secured. We learnt later that in the pitch darkness which preceded dawn, the boats were carried by the northerly current a mile or so to the northward of the selected beach. This at the time was thought very unfortunate, as the initial fighting took place in very difficult country, and was different to that which the troops had been led to expect. It is a fact, however, that the actual landing place was "the only spot on that part of the coast, in any way suitable as a permanent landing place,"* otherwise everything went according to plan.

The 48 boats of the first flight reached the beach at 4.20 a.m. and were not observed until they were within 50 yards. They were quickly followed by the destroyers, which ran close in to the shore and landed their troops in two trips very speedily.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 175 f.n.

rose from the shelter of the ridge of sand to attack, that dreadful tat-tat-tat of machine-gun fire burst out afresh, and dead and wounded continued to pile up on the threshold of the position they were striving so bravely to storm.

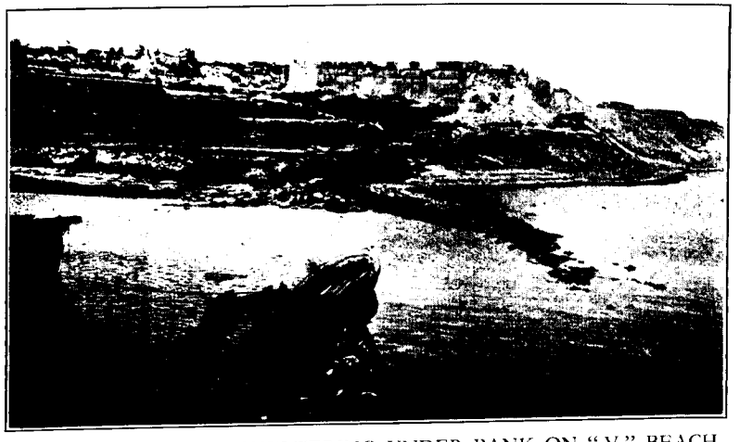
De Robeck remarked to me : " Gallant fellows, these soldiers ; they always go for the thickest place in the fence."

It was almost more than I could bear and I begged him to insist on diverting the reinforcements to one of the beaches we had secured. He said he could not interfere, this was a military affair. However, I felt justified in having a signal made to hold up the boats carrying the reinforcements—which were standing in to certain destruction—until " V " Beach was secured ; this was a naval matter.

It had been hoped that an hour's heavy bombardment would make the defences of the beach untenable, and that a frontal attack, assisted by a flanking movement from the troops landed at the Camber, would be able to carry the position. When the fire lifted and the *River Clyde* ran in, and the boats were only a few yards from the shore, a terrific rifle and machine-gun fire opened ; the latter included two small pom-poms. The Dublin Fusiliers and the boats' crews suffered heavily ; very few boats were able to get off again to fetch the second flight, as was intended ; the majority were destroyed on the beach and their crews perished ; one sank with all hands in deep water. The Dublins, who escaped, were the people we could see lying under cover of the sandbank.

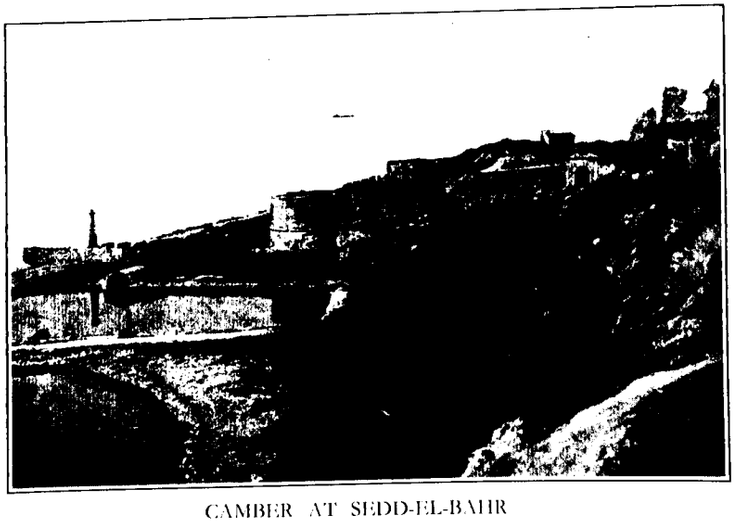
It was intended, directly the *River Clyde* grounded, that the Munster Fusiliers should disembark through large sally ports cut in her sides, on to staging, and thence along a hopper which was to go ahead and form a bridge to the shore, reinforced if necessary by three lighters, which were towed alongside the *River Clyde* in case of accidents. Unfortunately the hopper went adrift, grounded out of reach, and was useless.

Commander Unwin, determined that his scheme should not fail, proceeded, assisted by Able-Seaman Williams, to make a bridge of the lighters to connect the ship with the shore. Swimming ashore, and working up to their waists in the sea, under a very hot fire, after superhuman efforts they succeeded in getting two lighters into place and held them there. Unwin then shouted for the disembarkation to commence. The



LIGHTER AND MEN SHELTERING UNDER BANK ON " V " BEACH AND SEDD-EL-BAHR FORT

Taken from *River Clyde*, 8 a.m., 25th April, 1915



CAMBER AT SEDD-EL-BAHR

Naval demolition party landed here on 26th February, 1915, and Dublin Fusiliers 25th April, 1915

Munster Fusiliers rushed across the floating bridge, but very few survived to reach the shore and the shelter of the sandbank beyond it. Williams was killed shortly afterwards and Unwin was unable to hold the bridge in place single-handed, with the result that the lighters, crowded with dead and wounded, swung round into deep water. The few survivors of Dublin and Munster Fusiliers on shore, thus cut off from reinforcement, were in a precarious position, and but for the machine guns on the bridge of the *River Clyde*, which pinned the enemy to their trenches, they might have been overwhelmed.

Unwin was quite undefeated, and assisted by Lieut. Morse, Sub-Lieut. Tisdall, Midshipmen Drewry and Malleson, and Able-Seaman Samson, all of whom seemed, to the onlookers in the *River Clyde*, to bear charmed lives, worked incessantly under a murderous fire to restore communication with the shore; the midshipmen swimming to and fro with lines to connect the lighters and haul them into position. After an hour or so Unwin collapsed, suffering from the effects of cold and immersion. After a short rest he went overboard again and continued to direct the proceedings until about 9 a.m., when the bridge was completed.* A company of Munsters then charged along it, but their losses were so heavy that the senior officer on shore sent a message to the *River Clyde* suggesting that no more troops should be landed until dark. The senior officer in the *River Clyde*, Lieut.-Colonel Carrington Smith, commanding the Hampshire Regiment, agreed.

Shortly afterwards Brigadier-General Napier, commanding the 88th Brigade, arrived with the first flight of the reinforcements, which had been delayed owing to the destruction of the boats on "V" Beach, which should have returned to land them; "seeing the lighters choked with men, and not realising that they were dead, he sprang on board the nearest lighter, meaning to lead them ashore. A warning voice from the collier [*River Clyde*] shouted, 'You can't possibly land!' but Napier shouted back, 'I'll have a damned good try!'

* Unwin was awarded a Victoria Cross, the recommendation for which must be unique in the annals of the decoration. The General told me that at least half a dozen dirty scraps of paper reached him from comparatively junior officers which bore testimony to Unwin's devoted heroism, some written in the heat of action by officers who did not survive it. Drewry, Malleson, Samson and Williams also received Victoria Crosses, the latter posthumously.

At once there was a renewed burst of Turkish fire. General Napier and his Staff reached the hopper, but could get no further, and there a quarter of an hour later he and his Brigade-Major were killed. Thus died the very man who by his rank, his nerve and his knowledge, would have been of priceless value to the troops in the southern area during the rest of that vital day."*

Similarly, at an early hour, the troops of the Covering Force were deprived of their Brigadier, General Hare having been severely wounded in the forefront of the action between "W" and "X" Beaches, and his Brigade-Major was killed a couple of hours later.

Meanwhile the landing at the Camber (where the *Irresistible's* demolition party landed in February) had failed in its object; all the officers were killed, but a few men managed to join their comrades taking cover under the walls of the fort later in the day; and others, mostly wounded, succeeded in returning to the Camber, where they found a sheltered position from which they signalled to the *Queen Elizabeth* for help. They were rescued, under a heavy fire, by volunteers in boats towed by the *Queen Elizabeth's* picket boat.

The whole attack on "V" Beach was thus definitely held up soon after 9 a.m., and an hour later Sir Ian signalled to General Hunter-Weston that it was inadvisable to send more men to "V" Beach, where 200 men were on shore unable to progress. Later the remaining infantry were then diverted to "W" Beach to reinforce the troops from "W" and "X" who were held up not far from their beaches.

In Sir Ian's Gallipoli Diary he says (pages 132–134):

> "Roger Keyes started the notion that these troops might well be diverted to "Y" where they could land unopposed and whence they might be able to help their advance guard at "V" more effectively than by direct reinforcement if they threatened to cut the Turkish line of retreat from Sedd el Bahr. Braithwaite was rather dubious from the orthodox General Staff point of view as to whether it was sound for G.H.Q. to barge into Hunter-Weston's plans, seeing he was executive commander of the whole

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, pages 239 and 240.

> of this southern invasion. But to me the idea seemed simple common sense. If it did not suit Hunter-Weston's book, he had only to say so. Certainly Hunter-Weston was in closer touch with all these landings than we were; it was not for me to force his hands; there was no question of that, so at 9.15 I wirelessed as follows:
>
> 'Would you like to get some more men ashore on "Y" Beach? If so, trawlers are available.'
>
> Three-quarters of an hour passed; the state of affairs at Sedd el Bahr was no better, and in an attack if you don't get better you get worse; the supports were not being landed; no answer had come to hand. So repeated my signal to Hunter-Weston, making it this time personal from me to him and ordering him to acknowledge receipt.
>
> 'Do you want any more men landed at "Y"? There are trawlers available. Acknowledge the signal.'
>
> At 11 a.m. I got this answer:
>
> 'Admiral Wemyss and Principal Naval Transport Officer state that to interfere with present arrangements and try to land men at "Y" Beach would delay disembarkation.'"

I did not see Hunter-Weston's reply at the time and only knew that he had rejected the suggestion, and for years I cursed his blindness, in my thoughts. It was not until I read Sir Ian's Diary that I learnt that his refusal was made on the advice of two sailors, and this is confirmed by Wemyss in "The Navy in the Dardanelles." Nevertheless, had Hunter-Weston expressed any definite wish I am sure all difficulties would have been overcome by these two officers.

It is difficult for a sailor to understand the self-imposed limitations which a military commander-in-chief places on his interference in the conduct of an operation he has confided to a subordinate. Sir Ian had had the advantage of seeing for himself that both flank landings were secured, but that the frontal attack was being held up. Sea power gave us freedom to transport reinforcements rapidly from one point to another;

it seemed to me folly not to make use of this priceless possession to exploit a local success.

General Aspinall-Oglander, the Military Historian, commenting on Hunter-Weston's reply to Sir Ian's suggestions, remarks that:

> "A golden opportunity was allowed to escape. Had the suggestion been acted upon, the whole story of the Gallipoli Campaign might well have been different. But it is fair to remember that at this moment General Hunter-Weston still expected that the enemy's opposition in the south would shortly be broken down, and that the Commander-in-Chief did not know enough about the situation on shore to justify him in interfering with his subordinate's battle."

But surely it was an occasion for intervention on the part of the General and the Admiral, who had had the unique opportunity of viewing the whole battle area, and bore the supreme responsibility for the plan, its execution, its success, or its failure; and yet so vital a decision was left to two subordinates lying off "W" Beach, who were obviously completely out of touch with the proceedings elsewhere.

This was clear to us at the time from signals which passed between the *Euryalus* and the *River Clyde*, and is confirmed by by the Military Historian: "General Hunter-Weston, in the *Euryalus*, was still unaware of the desperate situation at "V," and about 9 a.m. he had signalled to the *River Clyde*, urging the troops to move left-handed to join up with the Lancashire Fusiliers."

About noon Morse came on board the *Queen Elizabeth* for more ammunition for the naval machine guns of the *River Clyde*, which had been provided and manned by the Royal Naval Division; and we learnt from him of the desperate nature of the fighting round the *River Clyde* and the severity of the losses.

He told us that the naval casualties included among the killed Lieut.-Commander Pownall, the commander of the Malta submarine flotilla and Depot ship, who had begged me to get him a billet on one of the beaches. We were all much struck by the bearing of Morse during the recital of his tale, and when he left us to return to the inferno round the *River Clyde* I must

confess I never expected to see him again, but I am glad to record that he survived to win a D.S.O.

We stayed off "V" Beach for the rest of the day—quite the unhappiest day of my life—until then. The *Queen Elizabeth*, *Albion*, and *Cornwallis* smothered the enemy's defences with high-explosive shells at intervals, from varying ranges, but were never able to silence the few well sited machine guns and the rifle fire from the deep trenches, which broke out again and again directly our fire was lifted to allow of an advance—and so it went on all day.

General Hunter-Weston, not realising how impossible it was for any further movement to take place from "V" Beach, continued to urge the capture of the western defences of the beach, in order to assist the troops from "W" Beach in their advance on Hill 138. At 2.30 Colonel Carrington Smith sent Morse on board the *Euryalus* with a message which must have made the situation clear, and definitely stated that unless the high ground to the north-westward was taken by other troops, he intended to wait until dark and then attack Hill 141. Half an hour later Carrington Smith was killed on the bridge of the *River Clyde*.*

An advance was then made from "W" Beach, and we watched the gallant effort of the Worcestershire Regiment to fight a way past the redoubt which divided "W" from "V" Beach. Much of the fighting was in full view of the ship; we watched men walk deliberately up to the high maze of wire entanglements which ran from the redoubt to the cliff, and hack and cut until they fell, their places being filled by others with an equal contempt of death. Eventually they got through and entrenched in the vicinity of Fort 1.

Behind us there was a battle going on at Kum Kale. Here, with the experience we had gained on the 25th February and 3rd March, the *Prince George* and the French ships were able to make the villages of Kum Kale and Yeni Shehr untenable, and at 6 a.m. Admiral Guépratte ordered the disembarkation to commence, but, owing to various causes, mainly the inability of the French steamboats to tow the heavily laden boats against the strong current, the troops did not reach the beach until four hours later. This delay was probably an advantage, as

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 247.

it enabled the ships to bombard the villages and low land to such an extent that the enemy fled to the opposite side of the Mendere River, and the Senegalese troops, forming the covering force, met with little resistance and established themselves securely at Kum Kale before nightfall.

Just before dark the three ships off "V" Beach opened a savage bombardment on the Turkish defences. The enemy's position was obliterated in sheets of flame and clouds of yellow smoke and dust from our high explosive, and under its cover we could see men rise from behind the sandbank and take shelter under the seaward face of the fort. It seemed incredible that anyone could be left alive in the enemy's position, but when the fire was lifted that ghastly tat-tat-tat of machine-gun fire broke out again, and took toll of anyone who moved.

When night fell on the 25th, the Australians and New Zealanders held a position on the sea front of nearly two miles, extending inland a mile at its greatest depth.

At "Y" Beach, the troops who had been left undisturbed for nearly 12 hours, were being attacked.

"W" and "X" had joined forces, and the remnants of five battalions, two of which had suffered very heavily, held a defensive line from "X" Beach to the shore, a little to the westward of Fort 1.

At "V" Beach the Hampshire Regiment was still in the *River Clyde*, but the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers, who had lost nearly all their officers—including the Colonel of the Dublins—and 70 per cent. of their men, were clinging to the shelter of the sandy bank, and under cover of the seaward face of Sedd el Bahr Fort.

At "S" Beach the South Wales Borderers had consolidated the position at de Tott's and were firmly entrenched. They had been shelled from the Asiatic shore, but this did little damage.

This was the actual situation when General Hunter-Weston came on board the *Queen Elizabeth* at about 8 p.m. to confer with Sir Ian—"cheery and stouthearted," to quote the latter's diary. At that time he thought Hill 141 had been captured, and when asked about our troops at "Y" Beach, the only landing within his command with which we had not been able to keep touch in the *Queen Elizabeth*, he replied that he thought

they were now in touch with our troops at "X," but they had been through some hard fighting to get there; which, as it turned out later was not the case. But he was always an optimist.

After Hunter-Weston had left we steamed up to Gaba Tepe, and a few minutes after midnight Admiral Thursby came on board, with two Brigadier-Generals of the Anzac Corps, bringing a letter he had just received from General Birdwood. The General, Braithwaite, the two Brigadier-Generals, Admirals de Robeck and Thursby and I gathered in the fore cabin round the table. Sir Ian read Birdwood's letter to Thursby aloud, as follows:

> "Both my Divisional Generals and Brigadiers have represented to me that they fear their men are thoroughly demoralised by shrapnel fire, to which they have been subjected all day after exhaustion and gallant work in morning. Numbers have dribbled back from firing line and cannot be collected in this difficult country. Even New Zealand Brigade, which has been only recently engaged, lost heavily and is to some extent demoralised. If troops are subjected to shell fire again tomorrow morning there is likely to be a fiasco, as I have no fresh troops with which to replace those in firing line. I know my representation is most serious, but if we are to re-embark it must be at once."

It was difficult to believe that those splendid people we had watched training for their ordeal, who had justified all that had been expected of them in the assault of the morning, could have been reduced to such a state. Sir Ian asked Thursby for his opinion, and he replied that under the existing conditions it would take two to three days to re-embark the whole force, which amounted to over 15,000 men. There were over 2,000 casualties, only a small proportion of whom had been evacuated. Many of the boats were smashed, others stranded in exposed positions in full view of the enemy. He used some very strong language about evacuation, and said that if it was put to them they would stick it; an opinion I warmly supported. At that moment a signal was handed to me from Lieut.-Commander Stoker, commanding *AE2*, reporting that she was in the Marmora and had torpedoed a gun vessel off Chanak. I read it aloud, and added: "Tell them this. It is an omen—an

Australian submarine has done the finest feat in submarine history and is going to torpedo all the ships bringing reinforcements, supplies and ammunition into Gallipoli." It is true that *AE2* was commanded and officered by our submarine officers, and only about half her crew were Australians, but she belonged to the Australian Government.

Sir Ian, who had started to write directly Thursby had given his opinion, looked up, nodded and went on writing, and a few minutes later read his reply to Birdwood, which the resolute Thursby at once took ashore. The reply ran:

> "Your news is indeed serious. But there is nothing for it but to dig yourselves right in and stick it out. It would take at least two days to re-embark you, as Admiral Thursby will explain to you. Meanwhile the Australian submarine has got up through the Narrows and has torpedoed a gunboat off Chanak. Hunter-Weston, despite his heavy losses, will be advancing to-morrow, which should divert pressure from you. Make a personal appeal to your men and Godley's to make a supreme effort to hold their ground. P.S.—You have got through the difficult business; now you have only to dig, dig, dig until you are safe."

Sir Ian concluded his record of that midnight meeting: "de Robeck and Keyes were aghast; they pat me on the back; I hope they will go on doing so if things go horribly wrong." I was certainly not aghast, but I do remember thinking Sir Ian a stouthearted fellow with the warrior spirit, a priceless possession in war; and I could never understand why he could not have taken control of the battle in the southern area. I have no doubt he would have done so had Hunter-Weston faltered, but the latter was always confident and optimistic, and I suppose Sir Ian credited him with a knowledge of the situation which he certainly did not possess, when he came on board the *Queen Elizabeth* on the evening of the 25th April.

There was much for me to do that night, as of course the Admiral was determined to be prepared in every way for the worst, in the event of a debacle on shore. Two of the three ships and the destroyers of the Naval Division off Bulair, were ordered to come south at once; trawlers and boats were collected and ships were given instructions for covering fire at daylight.

There was, however, no need to worry; the Military Historian tells us:

> "The effect of this resolute and definite order, quickly taken ashore by Admiral Thursby, was electrical. All the vague doubts which had spread round the beach were settled. From that moment there was no further talk of evacuation at Anzac, and all ranks were soon filled with the same determination as the men in the front line, none of whom had had any idea that a retirement was under discussion."*

Like a certain British Regiment in one of Rudyard Kipling's stories, the Anzacs had something to wipe off the slate, and most thoroughly they did it, to the great discomfort of the enemy for the rest of the campaign.

At daylight, under difficult conditions of light, we started to plaster the hillside with high-explosive and shrapnel shell of all calibres, at any point indicated by our observation officers ashore, and watched the Australians and New Zealanders making magnificent progress, retaking all the positions they were driven out of the night before.

Comment on the ineffectiveness of naval gunfire to assist land operations, which was painfully evident to us off "V" Beach on the 25th, is still so general that it is satisfactory to learn from Turkish sources:

> "Two Turkish guns were in one instance knocked out by one of the *Queen Elizabeth's* 15-inch H.E. shells.
>
> The material damage inflicted by the naval artillery during the landing certainly fell short of expectations, but Turkish official documents all agree as to its shattering moral effect during the first days. 'The effect of ship's guns,' writes Liman von Sanders, 'was to give a support to their land forces which was quite out of the ordinary.' "†

Soon after 9 a.m., it being clear that the position at Anzac was satisfactorily re-established, Sir Ian was anxious to go back to Helles, where, according to the latest information from

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 270.

† "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 272.

Hunter-Weston, the situation was unchanged, and to call at "Y" Beach, from which rather an ominous message had been intercepted. As we approached the latter, we saw to our dismay a great many men on the beach, men being embarked, others coming down the cliff paths, and a few on the ridge, presumably covering an evacuation, though there was no sign of fighting. It seemed to us that we were giving up a wonderful flanking position without a fight, but the General did not feel justified in taking a hand, as he had no information on which to base a decision.

When we arrived off Helles, General d'Amade came on board and told us of the gallant capture of Kum Kale, of desperate counter-attacks during the night, repulsed with great loss to the enemy, and of prisoners taken—a brave story.

In view of Lord Kitchener's very definite orders to Sir Ian, on no account to embark on a campaign in Asia, the occupation of Kum Kale was only intended to be a temporary diversion, to prevent interference from there with the landing at Sedd el Bahr; and d'Amade was very anxious to clear out, as he said he could not remain at Kum Kale without capturing Yeni Shehr, and that would need a whole division. Sir Ian, being anxious to land as many French troops as possible in Gallipoli, concurred in the evacuation.

Without waiting to see General Hunter-Weston, who confirmed by signal that the situation at Helles was unchanged, or hearing the cause of the apparent debacle at "Y," we steamed north again to Gaba Tepe. Passing "Y" we could see the withdrawal proceeding. I felt very sorry for Sir Ian, who was terribly disappointed, but it did not seem to me too late, even then, for him to interfere; however, he did not do so. Godfrey and I felt too sick for words; in his account of the proceedings on the 25th, opposite his record of de Robeck's suggestion to land the Naval Division at "Y," and Sir Ian's refusal, he had made a note which was cruelly prophetic.

We arrived off Gaba Tepe in time to watch the greatly feared Turkish counter-attack, and to assist in repulsing it. We listened to the rattle of rifle fire and the tat-tat-tat of machine guns in the intervals between the roar of our guns. It was all very thrilling; we could often see friend and foe, and saw two battalions of New Zealanders charge with bayonets fixed.



GALLIPOLI COAST SHOWING "Y" BEACH

"Y" Beach, the Scottish Borderer cried,
While panting up the steep hillside.
"Y" Beach!
To call this thing a beach is stiff,
It's nothing but a bloody cliff.
Why beach?

From "The Dardanelles Military Times."

One could sense that our splendid people were on top and confident. They were certainly appreciative of our efforts, and an Australian morsing with a flag signalled " The boys won't forget the *Queen Elizabeth*."

Meanwhile, at about 2 p.m. we heard to our immense relief that the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers and Hampshire Regiment had captured Sedd el Bahr village and fort and the old castle that dominated " V " Beach, which was now in our possession. At 4.30 we went south again, feeling confident that Anzac had made good, and much happier about Helles.

When we passed " Y " we heard from the *Goliath* that the evacuation of that beach was completed by 4 p.m. Not quite, for a little later a boat was seen to land on the beach and, leaving his crew in the boat, a naval officer was seen to climb the cliff and spend an hour or so on the scene of the action. It was my brother Adrian, miserably unhappy, making sure that no wounded had been left behind.

We heard later that so peaceful was that area during the first day that the commanding officer, attended only by his adjutant, had walked to within 500 yards of Krithia without sighting an enemy, and it was not until 3 p.m. that any steps were taken to entrench. At about 4 p.m. the enemy brought a gun to bear on them, and at 5.40 p.m. the first attack was delivered, which was broken up by the fire of the ships. When the ships could no longer see where to fire, the attacks were renewed and continued at intervals all night. The Turks displayed the utmost bravery, and our troops, resisting most stubbornly, were subjected to fierce attacks with bomb and bayonet and rifle and machine-gun fire, during which the casualties they suffered, protected only by shallow trenches, amounted to just under 700, including among the killed the colonel and 11 officers of the Scottish Borderers, and the commanding officer of the South Wales Borderers detachment. The ships opened fire at daylight, when they could see anything to fire at; the line was intact and the enemy had withdrawn, much to the relief of our sorely tried troops, which included among the Marines a large proportion of young recruits. The enemy, however, attacked again about 7 a.m. and succeeded in penetrating our line, but " the position was restored with the bayonet. The Turks fled in disorder and from that moment not another shot was fired

at "Y" Beach troops; the landing had been made good!"* By 8 o'clock our withdrawal had commenced.

We know now that the total strength of the enemy was one and a half battalions, that their casualties amounted to 50 per cent. of the numbers engaged—a higher percentage than our own—and that they were thoroughly demoralised and in full retreat.

The Military Historian, commenting on this heartbreaking tale, remarks: "Cleverly conceived, happily opened, hesitatingly conducted, miserably ended—such is the story of the landing at 'Y' Beach."

It is only fair, however, to the harassed Commander to record that he was not given any instructions as to his conduct in the event of the advance from the south not materialising; and a request for instructions signalled about noon, remained unanswered. "Throughout the 29 hours' tenure of his position no word of any kind had reached him from Divisional Headquarters. No reply had been sent to his urgent appeals for reinforcements. Though 'Y' Beach was only twenty minutes' distance in a destroyer from Divisional Headquarters, no officer of the Divisional Staff had been sent to gain a personal knowledge of his position. Not even a situation report had been dispatched, to tell him what was happening at the southern end of the Peninsula. To all intents and purposes he had been forgotten."†

When we arrived off Helles we found that our line was established from "X" Beach to the southern end of Morto Bay. The troops had spent a sleepless, anxious night, but although small parties of Turks occasionally approached our line, the enemy, greatly inferior in numbers and equally distressed and worn out, did not attempt to counter-attack.

"During the night, when every available fighting man had been sent into the line, midshipmen and even captains R.N. were carrying boxes of ammunition up to the troops."‡ One of the latter was Phillimore, the principal Beachmaster, who, true to the fighting traditions of the battle cruisers, had volunteered with all his officers who could be spared, for service on the beach, while the *Inflexible* was being repaired.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 209.

† "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 211.

‡ "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 250.

The troops who had been held up on board the *River Clyde* throughout the 25th were disembarked during the night, and at daylight the attack was renewed under cover of the ship's fire; but, worn out by their trying ordeal and shaken by their heavy losses, the tired troops made no progress throughout the forenoon.

Colonel C. Doughty-Wyllie, principal Intelligence Officer on Sir Ian's Staff, who with two other Staff officers had taken passage in the *River Clyde*, then organised an attack with the object of clearing Sedd el Bahr village and capturing Hill 141, which was the key of the enemy's defensive position. After desperate house-to-house fighting and fierce resistance the village was captured by the Hampshire Regiment, and the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers carried the old castle on Hill 141 by assault. Doughty-Wyllie, gallantly leading the charge, fell mortally wounded on the summit.* By 3 p.m. the whole of "V" Beach was in our possession.

At 7 p.m. Admiral Guépratte came on board and told us that some hundreds of Turks who had been cut off from retreat by the fire of the ships and the French 75s, had surrendered. As the situation of Kum Kale was so favourable, and that at Helles still somewhat precarious, Sir Ian, with Admiral Guépratte's concurrence, asked General d'Amade to defer the withdrawal, which was to take place that night, for one more day. But it was too late, and the evacuation of the whole French force with 450 prisoners was completed before daybreak.

The total French casualties at Kum Kale were 778. The Turkish account admits to the loss of 1,730 officers and men, including 500 missing.

By nightfall on the 26th the Army was established on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and though we went through some very anxious moments during the next few days, the Turks were never again in a position to drive us out.

Before passing to the next phase it would be as well to review the operations, in company with the Military Historian, who, as an officer on Sir Ian Hamilton's Staff, watched the battles, as I did, from the bridge of the *Queen Elizabeth*, and has since had

* Colonel C. Doughty-Wyllie and Captain G. N. Walford, also on Sir Ian's Staff, received posthumous Victoria Crosses for their devoted bravery.

"It was mainly due to the initiative, skill and great gallantry of these two officers that the attack was a complete success. Both were killed in the moment of victory."—*London Gazette*, 23rd June, 1915.

the opportunity of closely studying the Peninsula and examining every conceivable document, British, Allied and enemy, on the subject.

General Aspinall-Oglander affirms that a careful study of events leads to the conclusion that the plan of capturing Achi Baba on 25th April had a reasonable prospect of success. He places the abnormal number of casualties among the senior officers on shore, and the consequent lack of leadership at critical moments, in some of the units, as the first among the causes of failure.

The only failure he mentions which concerns the Navy, was that of the arrangements for inter-communication, and the great difficulty experienced by the 29th Divisional Headquarters in exercising adequate control over the operations, from the deck of a man-of-war. However, wireless and visual signals between the ships lying off the scattered fighting areas, provided some means of communication between units and the Divisional and General Headquarters, otherwise cut off from one another; there being no communication by land wire during the first two days' fighting.

As he states, it certainly was a great disadvantage—not anticipated beforehand—for General and Divisional Headquarters to be located on board ships which, by force of circumstances, had to use their armaments in order to assist the hard-pressed troops.

With regard to the failure to exploit the success at "Y" and "S," he establishes the fact that the troops of those two landings, who found themselves unmolested all day, were alone stronger than all the Turks at the southern end of the Peninsula; and shows that throughout the 25th, the Turks had been unable to array more than two battalions, against twelve and a half British battalions on shore by 1 p.m. As at "Y" Beach, the Colonel commanding at "S" Beach had no instructions as to his conduct if the landing at Helles was held up. His task was to seize de Tott's and await the advance from the south. The troops here were opposed by two platoons (50 men), one of which was killed or taken prisoners at the outset and the other overwhelmed and put to flight.

The Turkish force which held up the three battalions at "V" Beach consisted of one company, reinforced later in the day by two more companies. There can be no doubt that the

dogged defence of this small detachment, despite the ordeal they suffered from the tremendous explosions of heavy shells, was the main cause of the collapse of the British plan.

The Turkish machine guns which took such toll of our troops were four old maxims, two of which were destroyed by the naval bombardment, and two pom-poms at "V" Beach; and at "W" Beach two maxims enfilading the main wire entrenchment.

No Turkish artillery was brought to bear on the Helles landings, except at "V" Beach, from the batteries on the Asiatic shore. This was desultory and negligible, thanks to the fire of the covering ships.

Although 4,000 men were landed at Anzac by 5 a.m., 8,000 by 8 a.m. and 15,000 by the late afternoon; and against these the Turks could only oppose 500 troops up to 9.30 a.m. and from that hour until dusk a gradually increasing number, which at no time exceeded 5,000 men; yet so strong is the power of the defence against maritime invasion that the enemy held their ground.

Studied in the light of knowledge after the event, the situation at Anzac on the night of the 25th was far from unsatisfactory. Despite the extraordinary panic in the vicinity of the beaches, the troops in the front line, though tired out with the strain of the day, were still in good heart and knew they held the measure of the Turks. In fact, though we did not know it, the Turks were thoroughly disorganised and had suffered 2,000 casualties, a much higher percentage of loss than that of the Anzac Corps.

He concludes his review thus:

> "Fortunate indeed must it be considered that Sir Ian Hamilton had decided against the landing near Bulair. If the 29th Division, using five landing places, three of which were practically unprepared for defence, could effect so little against a total force of two battalions, an attempt to land at the northern isthmus, where only one small beach was available, where an attack was confidently expected, and where two divisions were waiting to oppose it, must surely have ended in failure."*

An opinion I most fully share.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, pages 255 and 256.

CHAPTER XVIII

BATTLES FOR KRITHIA

French land at "V" Beach; *Queen Elizabeth's* effective fire; Inspection of Helles and Anzac; Heavy Turkish attacks repulsed; Raids from Anzac; Second Battle of Krithia.

DURING the night of the 26th-27th the *Queen Elizabeth* remained at anchor off Helles. In the western area the troops seemed to be having a fairly peaceful night, but to the eastward we could hear tremendous outbursts of firing from time to time. The Turks had withdrawn, as a matter of fact, but our weary troops did not know this, and fearing a counter-attack, were firing heavily at anything they saw moving in front of them. De Tott's was still isolated, but was supplied with all its wants through "S" Beach, and was left severely alone by the enemy. During the night, two French battalions landed at "V" Beach, and French troops continued to land there throughout the day.

At 4 p.m. on the 27th, the 29th Division, reinforced by two French battalions on the right, advanced with the object of taking up a line extending from the high ground above "S" Beach to the neighbourhood of Gully Ravine. A couple of Turkish Field Batteries, which had been brought south and were in action on the afternoon of the 26th, had evidently been withdrawn out of range, and the advance proceeded without any opposition.

The French joined the South Wales Borderers at de Tott's, which became the right flank, and by 5.30 p.m. the new line had been taken up, the left flank resting on the coast about 500 yards short of Gully Ravine. Our troops dug themselves in during the night; Turkish patrols were active, but no attack was delivered, and by daybreak the new line was securely established. Meanwhile artillery, ammunition, stores, mules and horses, were landed at "V" and "W" Beaches incessantly, night and day.

After completing with ammunition on the morning of the 27th, the *Queen Elizabeth* steamed up the coast to Anzac, where she arrived about 8 a.m. Anzac beach was being severely shelled, but thanks to the conformation of the hills, it could not be brought under direct fire. The shrapnel bursting overhead was annoying, but very few of the projectiles fell anywhere but in the sea, through which our boats and lighters plied to and fro, day and night, landing mules, guns, ammunition, etc., and water—the latter a vital necessity, since practically none appeared to exist within the positions we held. At about 10 a.m. a Turkish ship commenced to drop heavy shells over the Peninsula, into the water occupied by the covering battleships and transports, some fell close to the *Queen Elizabeth*. Our seaplanes reported that both the *Turgoid Reis** and the *Goeben* were firing. The former had fired into the anchorage on the 25th, but was forced to move by the *Triumph* which drove her off by indirect fire, spotted for by the *Manica's* kite balloon. The balloon at once went up, and gave the *Queen Elizabeth* the spot on a squared chart, in which the *Goeben* was lying. The first 15-inch shell, fired at a range of 15,000 yards, fell close to her, and she promptly moved off out of sight under cover of the cliffs. The observer then reported the position of some transports, and gave the position on the squared chart of the largest one, a vessel of about 8,000 tons. The *Queen Elizabeth* opened fire again, the first shot was signalled over, the second 20 yards short, and the third "O.K."; a few minutes later the observer reported that the vessel had sunk stern first. After that, directly the balloon went up, enemy ships hurriedly moved under shelter of the cliff.

During the afternoon the Turks advanced in considerable force over Battleship Hill, clearly visible to the ships, which opened a devastating fire, under which they fled in confusion. The historian records that: "For over three months the Turks made no further attempt at Anzac to attack by daylight over ground that was in direct view of the supporting ships."†

At nightfall we returned to Helles, having heard in the meantime of the successful advance of our troops in the southern area.

General Hunter-Weston came on board that evening, and it

* The old German battleship *Weissenberg*, which had been sold to the Turks before the war.

† "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 297.

was decided to attack on the morrow, with the object of capturing Krithia and Achi Baba before Turkish reinforcements arrived. Although the attack on Kum Kale and the feints at Bulair and in Besika Bay, had undoubtedly had the effect of holding a considerable force of the enemy in those areas, the arrival of strong reinforcements could not be long delayed.

General Hunter-Weston took command of a corps, consisting of the French Division and the 29th Division, and Brigadier-General Marshall was placed in command of the latter; the three brigades being given to the three senior colonels. It was hoped to land three or four fresh French battalions in time for the advance. The 29th Division had suffered grievous losses, the four battalions of the 86th Brigade had lost half their officers and a third of their men, and the other Brigades had lost heavily; the majority of the troops had been fighting for three days and four nights, with very little sleep; as yet both the British and French were very short of artillery, and we had a very small allowance of ammunition. It was not an encouraging outlook for our weary troops, with no reinforcements behind them, and in front a brave determined foe with the whole Turkish Army behind them.

The advance on the 27th had been in the nature of a wheel pivoting on the left flank. The attack on the 28th had as its first object an advance of the left flank and centre, pivoting on the French line above "S" Beach. The Allied line at its starting point was only two miles; the frontage of the final objective was five and a half miles. It would be impossible to imagine a more difficult manœuvre in the broken country, against an enemy whose strength, and the position of whose defences, were unknown.

On the morning of the 28th April, General d'Amade, and General Paris—commanding the Naval Division—came on board the *Queen Elizabeth*; the former to tell Sir Ian about the evacuation of Kum Kale, and to express his regret at being unable to stop the withdrawal as requested; the latter to report details of his feint off Bulair. These interviews were cut short by the distant roar of battle, which broke out from shore to shore at about 10 a.m.

Before relating what we saw from the *Queen Elizabeth*, I will turn to the official history for a brief account of what actually

took place on shore as the reports we received at the time were confusing and indefinite.

The action opened at 8 a.m. by a naval bombardment of Krithia and the Achi Baba slopes. "At the same time the 29th Division climbed wearily out of their trenches, and plodded forward in the direction of Krithia. . . . At first all went well on the 29th Division front, no opposition was encountered, there was little or no Turkish shelling, and by 9 a.m. the capture of Krithia seemed imminent. According to Turkish accounts, some of their forward troops began to give ground directly the British advanced, and one battalion bolted." As the line advanced through the difficult broken country, units lost touch, and before long our line was in considerable confusion, practically every Company Commander fighting an independent battle. The Turkish official account admits that their centre broke, and an order was issued for a general retirement to Achi Baba, but at 11 a.m. reinforcements restored their line.

Thus the battle ebbed and flowed all day, at one time to within a few hundred yards of Krithia, but when night fell the Allied troops were practically back in their original trenches. The 29th Division started the day with between 8,000 and 9,000 men, and had 2,000 casualties, including a high proportion of officers; the French had 5,000 engaged, and had lost 27 officers and 974 men.

The whole of another sleepless night was spent in re-sorting units, and filling gaps in the line. The Turks made no attempt to counter-attack during the night. It is now known that their losses were as heavy as ours, and that throughout the day the situation was regarded by them as critical. The historian concludes: "But though the 29th Division was badly bent, it was to prove that night, as on countless future occasions, that its spirit could not be broken."

To this testimony, I would like to add the unbounded admiration I recorded at the time, for the heroic, unbeaten bearing, of that worn-out but most glorious Division.

When it was apparent that our troops were heavily engaged, the *Queen Elizabeth* weighed at once, and proceeded up the west coast, and was manœuvred to cover, as far as possible, the troops working along the left flank. Some of her guns were reserved for shrapnel, in the event of the enemy giving opportunities,

similar to those at Anzac, where shrapnel was used with deadly effect. About 1 o'clock, we saw a large body of men, estimated at about 2,000 by Sir Ian, alongside whom I was standing. I felt sure they were Turks, their heavy bullock-like jog-trot seemed so unlike the double of our infantry, moreover they were moving south in formation, which seemed too regular for troops in retreat. However, no one could be absolutely certain of their identity, and they were only in sight of the ship for a few minutes before they disappeared behind a slope. By that time we were agreed that they were Turks, and we were ready for them with six-inch and 15-inch shrapnel, timed to burst just short of them, if they appeared again. We saw them a few minutes later, now advancing in loose formation; our six-inch shrapnel burst well amongst them, and caused a number of casualties, but they pressed on unchecked and disappeared again. Then a company of about 200 appeared, extended in a line at right angles to the ship, led by an officer waving his sword, charging with bayonets fixed towards a party of our men, who were marching forward on the other side of a slope, apparently quite unaware of their approach. It was a moment of tense excitement. I fixed my powerful telescope on the Turks, and it brought them close enough to distinguish whether a man had a moustache or a beard. I heard George Hope (Captain of *Queen Elizabeth*) give an order—ages later so it seemed to me—and one of the 15-inch guns in one of the after turrets fired. The discharge of a heavy gun in a battleship causes the smoke to belch out of the funnels. At that time, the top of the foremost funnel of the *Queen Elizabeth* was level with the fore bridge and almost touching it, and a cloud of oily smoke shot across my view, but I saw through the smoke, shining bayonets flung up in all directions, and when the smoke cleared away, the whole Turkish line was obliterated. I do not think one man was left alive. A 15-inch shrapnel contains 15,000 bullets and the timing of the shell must have been perfect. It certainly saved a party of the Border Regiment from annihilation.

The main body of Turks who had narrowly escaped the *Queen Elizabeth's* shrapnel when they were in massed formation, undoubtedly exercised a considerable influence on the situation, for it was evident to us that our troops were falling back, and to our dismay, a little later, we saw a party on the left flank in full

retreat. Aspinall,* a young major on Sir Ian's Staff, who was on the bridge, begged to be allowed to go on shore, to report on the situation, and check the withdrawal of men, who were retiring along the beach at the foot of the cliffs. He had made a similar request on the morning of the 26th April when we were off "Y" Beach, but was refused. This time his request was granted, and I watched him through my telescope, rally the party, which included a young officer, and lead them over the cliff into the thick of the action again. Aspinall told me later how well they had behaved—they too had something to wipe off the slate, and most gallantly they did it.

We spent that night off Helles. Living in safety and comfort on board the *Queen Elizabeth*, it was hateful to think of the sufferings our people were enduring on shore, and I was anxious to land at the earliest possible moment, to see if there was anything we could do, or anything the Army lacked, that the Navy could provide.

On the morning of the 29th, Sir Ian and some of his Staff, Godfrey, Ramsay and I embarked in the destroyer *Kennet*, attached to the *Queen Elizabeth*, and landed at "W" Beach.

The naval and military beach parties were working with feverish energy and landing animals, guns, ammunition and stores; a considerable swell, which had risen during the night, did not lighten their labours. Crowds of wounded were limping down to the beach, or being carried in stretchers to await transhipment to the transports for passage to Egypt or Malta, or to fleet sweepers, to be carried to the field hospitals at Mudros. The hospital ships had already sailed, crowded far beyond their normal capacity. The patience, fortitude and endurance of the wounded, under conditions of incredible hardship and suffering, is a lasting memory

The following extract from my diary gives some idea of my impressions at the time: "We were amazed at the strength of the defences which our troops had stormed. In addition to the deep concealed trenches, two caves had been dug into the cliffs, and it was from these that their maxims had enfiladed the main wire entanglement. We were told that the first rush of four officers and 75 men fell against it in a straight line.

"Our boats' crews had had a good many casualties when the

* Now Brigadier-General Aspinall-Oglander, the Military Historian.

boats were beached, but without exception they had succeeded in getting off and pulling back for reinforcements, in some cases with only two or three survivors, in a boat full of killed and wounded. Directly the latter had been removed, and the casualties made good, they started back again. When the flank was turned, and the main defences were captured, the situation was, of course, much improved, but casualties were suffered all day from the fire of snipers, until the advance on the 26th freed the beach from rifle fire.

" From ' W ' Beach we walked over the hill to Sedd el Bahr, only a mile away, but a bloody mile if ever there was one, intersected by trenches and wired redoubts, the latter like the maze at Hampton Court. We went to the place where we had watched the men of the Worcestershire Regiment cutting wire, and found that they had been working within a few yards of the Turkish trenches. Then down to ' V ' Beach, it was here the Dublins lost most of their people. We were told that after the action of the previous day they were reduced to one officer and about 300 men, and had joined up with the remnant of the Munster Fusiliers and called themselves the ' Dubsters.' We came across one grave with 350 in it, and many others. Of the naval party employed here 63 were killed or wounded out of the 80 engaged. The position is aptly described in our official telegram as an amphitheatre with the beach as a stage. The whole circumference of the beach had been honeycombed like a rabbit warren with trenches, tunnels and caves, converging on the landing place, and protected by the most appalling barbed wire, far more formidable than ours at that date, and practically uncutable by our wire cutters. ' V ' Beach was impregnable to frontal attack, and there is nothing else to be said about it."

After three hours on shore, we returned to the *Queen Elizabeth* with much to reflect on. The appalling nature of military operations under modern conditions, and the magnitude of the Army's task was now only too apparent, and I felt that the sooner we took a hand the better, an opinion most fully shared by Godfrey. We felt that a naval attack could not fail to turn the position for the Army, and signals were prepared for dispatch to the commanding officers of units, directing them to complete with fuel, stores, and ammunition to the full capacity of their ships.

" The *Queen Elizabeth* then steamed up the coast to Anzac. The firing was incessant, but no one seemed to be paying much attention to it, and work was proceeding on the beaches without check. I was very anxious to go on shore, and see if anything was wanted, and Sir Ian whispered to me, ' Don't you think we might land and look at it.' A good deal of cold water was thrown on the suggestion. It seems that in modern war, the Staff consider that the Commander-in-Chief should not be subjected to any risk; they may be right, though I think otherwise myself. In any case the idea can be overdone, as there must be occasions when the personal touch and leadership are nine-tenths of the battle.

" We embarked in the *Colne* and steamed in towards Anzac Cove, transferring to a picket boat when about a mile from the beach. The enemy burst shrapnel over Anzac all day, but the position we hold is now wonderfully protected by tunnels, trenches, dug-outs, etc. The only direct fire one meets is in the front line trenches and at sea, otherwise the fire is all indirect and not very dangerous. But for the firing, we might have been landing on Margate beach on a warm sunny day; 2,000 to 3,000 men were about, many bathing, others all over the hillsides and in the gullies in small parties making tea. They have made wonderful roads and galleries, have got guns up into apparently inaccessible positions, and seem very happy and contented. The bathing and picnic parties occasionally have casualties, but no one seems to mind. General Birdwood took us up to the front line trenches; most of the way we were under cover, every now and then we were told to keep our heads down, and the bullets zipped overhead; we seemed to draw a lot of fire, and they attributed this to our white cap covers, so after that I wore khaki when I landed.

" The Anzacs were full of appreciation of the fleet's gunnery practice, the *Queen Elizabeth's* shrapnel taking the palm, with the result that Brady (my coxswain) who wore a *Queen Elizabeth* cap ribbon, was an object of particularly friendly interest. An Australian Colonel declared that one of our 15-inch shrapnel ' had wiped out a whole Turkish Regiment.' I think the *Bacchante* came a good second. On the morning of the 25th April, when Anzac was having a particularly bad time from shrapnel, fired from concealed guns near Gaba Tepe, Captain Boyle stood in

to the shore until the *Bacchante's* stem grounded, and with her broadside of 9.2-inch and six-inch, she simply blasted the whole area, and effectively kept the fire under. Subsequently the guns seem to have been moved to a position in which they could not be reached from seaward.

"We were told a good deal about the extraordinary situation during the first two or three days. There was a great deal of sniping from within our lines, but one by one the snipers were caught; one man was found dug in, in a bush, with 15 days' provisions, a large can of water, and 1,000 rounds of ammunition. Five Turks were caught amongst our men, in uniform taken off our dead—they died. One dead man had a flashing lamp, and a card giving all our morse signals on it, with the equivalents in Turkish, many false signals no doubt were made by him; wireless signals such as 'Cease firing' were often made, the procedure of our wireless shore stations being closely copied.

"We left before nightfall, having enjoyed our outing very much, the whole atmosphere was exhilarating, one inhaled confidence and optimism, and I am sure it did the Anzacs a lot of good to see Sir Ian in their trenches. Admiral Thursby joined us for our walk. The Anzacs owe a good deal to him, for his confidence in them on the night of the 25th. It would have been an awful tragedy if Sir Ian had acted on the message Birdwood sent on board that night."

During my absence ashore, Godfrey, who had not accompanied me, submitted the signal we had prepared to the Admiral, and asked permission to make it to Admiral Thursby; but the Admiral tore up the signal, replying that the Army was not yet firmly established on shore, and until it was, he would not attack.

The captain of the destroyer *Wolverine* was killed on the morning of the 28th; she was a sister ship to the *Basilisk*, which my brother Adrian had commanded just before he retired, so the Admiral gave him the vacancy. Adrian could not be found until the following day, as after his "Y" Beach had been given up, he attached himself to the troops which were to assault Achi Baba, where he was to establish a naval observation station directly it was captured. He came on board to report himself on the 29th. I think his feelings were mixed; he said he could hardly bear to tear himself away from the Army. We could get very little out of him, except his intense admiration for the



CAPTURED TURKISH SNIPER
Anzac, 26th April, 1915

29th Division and his sorrow at seeing most of the officers of the Scottish Borderers, with whom he had made great friends, killed alongside him. We gathered from him that Brigadier-General Marshall, who was wounded on the 25th, but remained in action, like the other two Brigadiers of the Division, was always in the thick of every action. I think my brother's condition was typical of that of the 29th Division—dead dog-tired. He had been fighting incessantly since the 25th, and had hardly slept since the night of the 23rd. His new ship was undergoing repairs, half her bridge having been shot away, when her captain was killed, so I made him lie on my bed, where he lay like a log for several hours.*

AE2's cruise in the Marmora was shortlived. We knew from her signals that she was being severely hunted by the enemy patrol craft, and on the night of 30th April, the German cruiser *Breslau* signalled in English that *AE2* had been sunk and her entire crew captured.

In the meantime Lieut.-Commander E. C. Boyle in *E14* had succeeded in entering the Marmora on the 27th, and reported that night that he had sunk a torpedo gunboat off Chanak. Boyle managed to signal most nights ; like *AE2*, *E14* was incessantly hunted, but it was clear from Boyle's signals that he was not in the least perturbed, which did not surprise me, as in the whole of my long submarine experience, I never came across anyone more completely oblivious of danger. We soon learnt, from enemy sources, that *E14*'s presence in the Marmora was causing intense concern, but it was some time before we knew the extent of the losses she inflicted on the enemy.

On 30th April and 1st May, the Allied troops dug, wired, improved and consolidated their position, and by nightfall on the 1st May, they were entrenched in a practically continuous line, extending from a quarter of a mile south of "Y" Beach to Hill 236 on the Dardanelles side of the Peninsula.

Meanwhile half the effective troops were employed in helping

* Commander Adrian Keyes was awarded a D.S.O. for his work with the Army. Three different senior military officers, writing to congratulate him, each remarked that they were glad to have been able to get the decoration for him.

the beach parties to build up a reserve of stores and ammunition, and in carrying a supply of the latter, and water, to the vicinity of the front line. Five battalions of the Naval Division, the whole of the French Division, and all the British and French artillery were on shore, and an Indian Brigade, consisting of one Gurkha, one Sikh, and two Punjabi battalions had arrived from Egypt.

Sir Ian had intended to renew his attack on Achi Baba, as soon as the latter and the French were ready, and the preliminary moves were to take place during the night of 1st-2nd May.

While we were preparing to renew our attack, such success as we had achieved to date, appears to have caused intense alarm in Constantinople. We know now that: "On the 30th April, Marshal Liman von Sanders received a peremptory order from Enver Pasha 'to drive the invaders into the sea.' The British fleet was sweeping the southern end of the Peninsula from three sides . . . and the Turks had only field guns to oppose this fire, and a very limited supply of ammunition."* The Marshal then ordered Colonel Sodenstern, who commanded the Turkish troops in the southern area, to assault the Allied line with every available man on the night of the 1st-2nd May. The Turkish force consisted of 21 battalions of infantry with 56 guns. Orders were given that rifles were not to be loaded; the order ran: "Attack the enemy with the bayonet and utterly destroy him. We shall not retire one step; for if we do, our religion, our country, and our nation will perish."† Special parties were told off to carry inflammable material to burn our boats on the beaches.

My diary records that on the night of 1st May the Turks attacked desperately all night; it was hateful to listen to—a roar of rifle and gunfire. I went to bed at 12.30 as there was nothing one could do. About 4 a.m. Bowlby woke me to say that there were rather desperate signals from the ships on the right flank. Apparently the French had broken badly and boats were wanted. It did not sound at all nice, so I went on board the *Kennet* (Lt.-Commander F. Russel) at once and steamed full speed to the right flank, taking Brodie with me. Day was breaking when I arrived and found four trawlers with a number of boats in Morto Bay, under a heavy shrapnel

* "Fünf Jahre Türkei," page 93.

† "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, pages 317 and 318.

fire, and the *Vengeance* off the flank firing towards the Gallipoli shore. At first it was impossible to distinguish between French and Turks, the fighting seemed very confused, so I ordered the *Kennet* to go as close to the shore as possible, to try and assist the French with her fire; but we could only see some French on one hill top firing in front of them, and on the next hill behind them a lot of French soldiers running from Turks who appeared to have got between the two detachments. The situation was all too confused for the *Kennet* to engage in the action, and as we were under considerable shrapnel fire from Gallipoli, and a gun was firing at us from the Asiatic shore, I ordered all the men under cover, only Brodie, the Captain, two men and I remaining on the bridge. This was fortunate as a six-inch shell fired from the Asiatic gun, burst against the pedestal of the gun on the forecastle just below where we were standing. If the crew had been round the gun, as they were a few minutes earlier, they must have all been killed or wounded. The shell threw about a number of lyddite projectiles that were in the ready racks, without exploding them. Soon after this we saw the French advance, make a gallant counter-attack, retake the trenches from which they had retired, and advance about 1,000 yards. I had ordered the four trawlers out of Morto Bay, on my arrival, as they were running unnecessary risks from the enemy fire, and could not possibly help the situation. As I was withdrawing, all being now well on the French front, Lieut.-Commander Hardy, in charge of the four trawlers, begged to be allowed to return to Morto Bay to embark the French wounded, who were being brought down in great numbers to "S" Beach. So I sent him Brodie and four men in the *Kennet's* whaler, to assist his boats to bring the wounded off to the trawlers. I learnt later that the trawlers had transported about 1,000 wounded in the course of two days. Millot, our French liaison officer, told me that on one occasion, when a number of Senegalese had retired hastily to the beach, Hardy, finding a trumpeter among them, had rallied them and led them back to their battalion in the trenches.*

We heard later in the day that our line had withstood a tremendous onslaught; the Turks in dense masses had crept close up to our trenches and with shouts of Allah, had tried to

* Hardy was awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French General for his services in Morto Bay.

rush them with the bayonet. They broke through once or twice, but were speedily ejected, and hundreds were mown down by our fire. The Turks' principal effort seems to have been directed against the French front, and on their left a battalion of Senegalese broke, leaving a British battery which was supporting them uncovered; a party of gunners and a company of the Worcestershire Regiment, however, occupied their trench. The French were so hard pressed that at 2 a.m. they asked for help, and in the course of the morning two battalions of the Naval Division were sent to assist them. By 8 a.m. the Allied line was intact everywhere, and at 10 a.m. it advanced to counter-attack, and a number of prisoners were taken, but it was held up by a cross fire from concealed machine guns, which could not be located, and by 11 a.m. it fell back again to its defensive position.

The French losses amounted to 58 officers and 2,064 other ranks, ours to 37 officers and 641 men. The Turkish official account admits to very heavy losses—nevertheless the Turks delivered another determined attack against the French sector during the night of 3rd-4th, which after some anxious moments, was repulsed again with great loss to the indomitable enemy.

These attacks by the Turks held up Sir Ian's projected advance, but he was determined to start it as soon as possible, before the Turks had had time to reorganise after the heavy repulse they had suffered. The date for our attack was fixed for the 6th May, by which time the Indian Brigade would be ready to take part in the battle. General Birdwood, having declared himself satisfied with the position at Anzac, Sir Ian decided to withdraw an Australian and New Zealand brigade from there, and employ them and all the artillery, for which room had not yet been found at Anzac, in his battle for Krithia and Achi Baba.

The British losses to date, in killed and wounded, amounted to 432 officers and 9,386 other ranks; and the French losses were 3,902. The Allied Army had a secure foothold on the Peninsula, and had repulsed with great slaughter, every effort of the enemy to drive it into the sea. Surely the moment had arrived to deliver the combined attack, for which we had broken off the naval attack, on the very threshold of victory; after suffering losses considerably less than those sustained at "V" Beach by the naval boats' crews alone.

The Admiral, however, now decided that we must wait until

Achi Baba had been captured by the Army, in order to give us an observation station for our attack on the Narrows; akin to 203 Metre Hill, which was considered essential for the capture of Port Arthur; and Prince Henry Hill for that of Tsingtau; but by the 1st May we had kite balloon and aeroplane observation of far greater value to us for fire control, than the possession of an observation station on Achi Baba; an opinion I definitely confirmed some years later, when I visited the latter in company with Sir Ian and Aspinall. It was an unpleasant shock to us to find that the forts we had hoped to destroy, with the assistance of observation from Achi Baba, were not even visible from that gigantic fraud. Nevertheless, the obsession that Achi Baba was necessary to the Navy persisted to the end, and even finds a place in the official naval history.

The Naval Historian remarks, in the course of a somewhat irrelevant reference to the use made by the Japanese of these two hills:

> "As is well known, the fate of Port Arthur turned on the capture of 203 Metre Hill. From the first Admiral Togo had pointed out that this indispensable observing station was the decisive primary objective for the army, but the army, ignoring the exigencies of naval gunners, tried every other means before its chiefs were convinced. Yet in our service the cardinal lesson appears to have been missed. The experience of the Japanese was taken as showing the great difficulty of destroying modern forts by ship fire, but the only means of overcoming the difficulty was ignored."*

The study of history is invaluable to soldiers and sailors, if its lessons can only be read aright. There are lessons to be learnt from the capture of Port Arthur from the Russians, and Tsingtau from the Germans, but they do not lie in the possession of this or that hill, but rather in the pursuit of an objective with steady and ruthless determination, whatever the cost, in declining to accept defeat, or being diverted by side issues. A lesson in Japanese history which might well have been taken to heart by those who faltered, and failed to carry the Dardanelles Campaign

* "Naval Operations," Vol. II, page 175.

to victory. (Also I would add, by those who rule our destinies now.)

A very successful raid was carried out on the 2nd May by the destroyer *Colne* (Commander Claude Seymour) and a landing party of about 50 New Zealanders; who raided Nibrunesi Point, where the enemy had an observation post, which was believed to control the indirect fire on Anzac beach. Two days earlier a few men had landed there from a destroyer, and had found a telephone connection in a trench, but the Turks had taken alarm and escaped. On this occasion, piloted by Commander the Hon. Lionel Lambart, the raiders had landed in Suvla Bay under Lala Baba, and creeping up in rear of the Turkish trench, had found 17 men asleep in it. Two were killed, two escaped, and one officer and 13 men were taken prisoners. After thoroughly examining the place and finding a good spring of water, these enterprising raiders retired unmolested by the enemy.

This encouraged the Australians to try their hand on the other flank against Gaba Tepe, which was a constant thorn in their side, and evidently controlled the indirect fire in that area. On 4th May a hundred Australians in four cutters, towed by the *Colne*, *Chelmer*, *Usk* and *Ribble* to within 500 yards of Gaba Tepe, were covered by the *Bacchante* and *Dartmouth*. At daybreak they dashed in to the beach under a sandy cliff on the northern side of the bluff headland. The Turks held their fire until they were within 40 yards and then opened on them with rifle, machine guns, and a pom-pom. Several men were wounded in the boats, but the whole party were able to land and get under cover of the cliff. They had intended to return to Anzac along the beach, after they had raided the post, but this was now out of the question, and the situation was a deadlock. My diary records: "It seemed to us in the *Queen Elizabeth*, that the raiders would be wiped out if they emerged from the cover of the cliff, for despite the fire from the ships, which was smothering the bluff above them, some of those infernal machine guns came into action, when anyone moved.

Then for the next hour or so, we were spectators of most gallant rescue work by our boats, which covered by the destroyers, went ashore to bring off the wounded, regardless of the fire

whipping up the sea all round them. The Turks were most chivalrous, for when they saw wounded being carried down in stretchers, they held their fire until they had been embarked. The first attempt was made by a destroyer's whaler, towed by her little steam cutter, then a dinghy went in. The whaler had evidently been severely holed on the way in, and we watched her sinking lower and lower in the water, and men baling, as she was towed off. Then there was a long pause, and it seemed that the commanding officer was wondering how to extricate his men. He evidently decided that it would be less costly to try and re-embark them, than expose them to the long walk back to Anzac under fire of the machine guns, which the ships were unable to silence; so he signalled for boats, and two picket boats each towing two cutters, dashed in under a heavy fire, and brought off the whole party. To us onlookers it seemed incredible that the total losses amounted to no more than six soldiers and one bluejacket killed, and 18 soldiers and five bluejackets wounded."

The *Queen Elizabeth* and kite balloon were, I think, a very unpopular combination with the enemy.

On one occasion, while lying off Anzac, some big shells fell among the transports. The *Manica's* balloon went up at once, but no ship was to be seen in the Straits; the aggressor had evidently run into Kilia Lima Bay and was concealed by the cliffs. The *Queen Elizabeth* then dropped a 15-inch shell into the hidden water, and the *Turgoid Reis* bolted out of it like a rabbit, and went up the Straits out of range, pursued by two shells which narrowly missed her. On 5th May the *Queen Elizabeth* engaged Fort 13 over the Peninsula with an aeroplane spotting, and secured some hits.

Meanwhile the preparations for our limited co-operation in the Army's attack on the morrow were completed. Naval observation stations were established on the flanks of the Army, and at General Hunter-Weston's headquarters on Hill 138. The *Swiftsure*, *Cornwallis*, *Implacable* and *Lord Nelson* were directed to comply with General Hunter-Weston's requirements. The *Agamemnon*, with an aeroplane to spot for her, was to keep down the fire of the batteries on the Asiatic side. On the right flank the *Albion*, *Vengeance* and *Prince George* were to take it in turns to support the French. The cruisers *Dublin*, *Sapphire*, *Talbot*, and *Minerva*

were to support the left flank. The *Queen Elizabeth* had a roving commission to use her great power where it was most needed.

The G.H.Q. was located on board the *S.S. Arcadian*, to which Sir Ian, with the whole of his Staff, had transferred from the *Queen Elizabeth* on 30th April. The *Arcadian* was lying off "W" Beach, connected by telegraph cable with the Divisional H.Q. at Helles and Anzac, and from her Sir Ian was to control the battle. But—as the military historian points out—he would be able to exercise little or no influence. "His last remaining reserve had been handed over in advance to his subordinate commander on shore, and all that was left to him of the high office of Commander-in-Chief was its load of responsibility."

His appeal for reinforcements had resulted in the hasty dispatch of the 42nd Lancashire Territorial Division from Egypt; its 125th Brigade arrived off Helles on the 5th and landed on that night and the following day. The two brigades from Anzac were landed on the night of the 5th-6th, and five Anzac field batteries had joined the artillery of the 29th Division.

The Order of Battle consisted of three Divisions:

On the left the 29th Division, augmented by the 125th Brigade, and the Indian Brigade—under General Hunter-Weston.

In the centre the 1st French Division, and the Hood, Howe, and Anson battalions of the Naval Division—under General d'Amade.

On the right a Composite Division—under General Paris, consisting of the Australian and New Zealand Brigades, the Plymouth R.M.L.I., and Drake battalions of the Naval Division. The Composite Division was placed under the orders of General Hunter-Weston for the battle.

The British artillery consisted of 72 guns, 56 of which were 18-pounder field guns.

The French had 21 of the famous 75 m.m. field guns and 12 other guns. They appeared to have almost unlimited high explosive ammunition for the 75s, but our batteries had been supplied with a very meagre allowance of ammunition, of which more than half had already been expended, and our field guns could only fire shrapnel.

The expenditure of naval ammunition had been unexpectedly high, and was causing Ramsay deep concern, for we had to bear

in mind our needs for the further operations in the Dardanelles and Marmora.

On the 6th May, the Army's great attack, officially known as the second battle of Krithia, opened at 10.30 a.m. when the supporting ships fired on such batteries as had been located. At 11 a.m. the whole line advanced very slowly, but was soon held up.

The *Queen Elizabeth* anchored off the left flank of the 29th Division and remained there all day. There was too much wind for the balloon, and her fire was directed against batteries and trenches indicated by the observation posts on shore. The enemy had learnt a lesson from their experience on 28th April, and never appeared in the open, so we felt very ineffective.

The result of the day's action was an advance of about 400 yards. The French were reinforced during the day by two battalions of the 2nd French Division, and the 127th Brigade of the 42nd Division which was disembarking, was attached to the Composite Division.

After visiting the British and French Divisional H.Q.s, Sir Ian decided to renew the battle on the following day.

The action on the 7th was no more successful. The left was held up by a Turkish position near "Y" Beach. The *Swiftsure*, *Talbot* and *Queen Elizabeth* with *Manica's* balloon spotting, literally blew the top of the cliff off with high explosive, but the observer in the balloon could find no trace of the Turkish position, which with its infernal machine guns remained undetected. When night fell the British line was practically back where it started from.

It was galling to reflect that the possession of "Y" Beach, which was in our hands for 24 hours on the 25th-26th April, should now be of such vital importance.

On 8th May, Sir Ian moved his headquarters to Hill 114, where he was in telephonic communication with his generals. At 10.15 a.m. the battle broke out afresh, but all day long the troops could make no headway. The *Queen Elizabeth* was again on the left flank and expended a great deal of ammunition on the gully and redoubt, which were holding up all progress there—but to no purpose. With the *Manica's* balloon spotting, she also fired at a number of batteries, whenever they disclosed their position by firing. At 5.30 p.m. after a bombardment lasting 15 minutes

from every available naval and military gun, the Allied troops were called upon for a final effort, and we watched the whole line surge forward with fixed bayonets, an unforgettable scene of heroism and tragedy. We could see our men mown down by rifle and machine-gun fire. We watched the Australians and New Zealanders, who had come up on the left, advance with the greatest gallantry and suffer cruel losses. (Out of 2,000 engaged the Australian Brigade had 1,000 casualties.) At this juncture the ships could do nothing to help, as friend and foe were in such close proximity.

Our Army in France had just learnt that it was futile and hopeless to advance against trenches and machine-gun positions, until they had been pulverised by high explosive shell. The Army in Gallipoli, supported only by the shrapnel of its field artillery, and a few howitzers and guns, with a very limited supply of H.E. shell, had now been taught the same lesson.

Watching from the *Queen Elizabeth*, the value of H.E. shell was vividly brought home to us, when we saw the French 75s put down a terrific barrage in front of their advancing troops, who marched steadily forward, as if they had no enemy in front of them, until they occupied the trenches out of which the Turks had been driven. However, when their barrage was lifted, the Turkish artillery retaliated and smothered them with H.E. shell, forcing the survivors back to their own lines.

Thus ended the second battle of Krithia. After three days' fighting, the Allied line had nowhere advanced more than 600 yards, at a cost of 6,500 casualties. The Turkish main position remained intact.

CHAPTER XIX

A POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

Turkish account; The Army checked; Waiting for reinforcements and ammunition; The Admiral's appreciation of the situation; Churchill's effort to renew the Naval Offensive; Fleet condemned to inaction; Lord Fisher's resignation; Fall of the Government; Lord Fisher's ultimatum; Coalition Government formed; Mr. Balfour becomes First Lord.

By the 5th May, the Allied Army had a secure footing on the Peninsula, having repulsed with great slaughter every effort of the enemy to drive them into the sea; and on the morning of the 6th, our Army Headquarters was full of confident hope that the second battle of Krithia would result in the occupation of Achi Baba by that evening. On the eve of that battle the military situation from the enemy's point of view, as given in the official Turkish account, and Liman von Sanders' Memoirs, is of great interest, and shows once again how near we were to success:

> "After the failure of the Turkish night attacks, Colonel von Sodenstern was removed from the command of the Southern Group, and was replaced by Weber Pasha, another German hitherto in command of the troops on the Asiatic shore. The position on Weber Pasha's arrival on the 5th May is reported to have been very unsatisfactory. Owing to the constant fighting and to the lack of entrenching tools, little progress had been made in the construction of a defensive line, and casualties had been so heavy that, according to one account, the 31 battalions in the Southern Group amounted to only some 15,000 rifles. Losses amongst senior officers had been particularly severe, and the continual shelling by the fleet had caused so much demoralisation that the new commander was strongly urged to order a general retirement behind the Achi Baba Ridge,

where better cover could be obtained. Impressed by these arguments, Weber Pasha recommended a retirement to Fifth Army Headquarters, but such a step was firmly vetoed by Liman von Sanders, who replied that every foot of the ground must be stubbornly contested, and that there must be no thought of voluntary retirement, which would only result in doubling the length of the Turkish front line. He added that the best way to get cover from the British ships was to advance rather than to retire, and to establish a line as close as possible to the Allied trenches."*

This was a wise and momentous decision, and but for the resolution of Liman von Sanders, Achi Baba would have been in our hands by the evening of the 6th. Then the entry of the Fleet into the battle could no longer have been delayed.

In the course of the three days' fighting, it soon became evident that the enemy had no intention of exposing their troops to the direct fire of the ships, as they had done in the first few days; and that the ships could take no part in the great infantry battle which was raging, with friend and foe at close grips—as Liman von Sanders had foreseen.

I can think of nothing more detestable than to watch our troops being destroyed by rifle and machine-gun fire, which, in spite of our great armament, we were powerless to silence: and to hear desperate fighting going on all day in the ravines and gullies, hidden from view by the conformation of the land.

Those three days were a dreadful experience, and after the first day Godfrey and I agreed that our cruisers would have been well able to provide all the support the Army required; the *Queen Elizabeth* would have been much better employed dropping her heavy shells into the forts across the Peninsula, and the old battleships in hammering the forts from inside the Straits and covering our minesweepers, while they swept a way through the minefields. As it was the Fleet looked on, terribly unhappy, while the Army was brought to a standstill.

It is not surprising that the enemy have never been able to understand why we did not renew the naval attack. Had we done so on the 6th May, who can doubt that the Turkish defence would have cracked? Their High Command knew that their

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. I, page 337.

forts could not withstand another attack such as that of 18th March; they knew that their minefields were inefficient—far more so than we ever thought. They knew that once through the Narrows, our ships could bombard their ammunition and store dumps, and the rest camps in Gallipoli, which could not be reached by ships from seaward. They knew that their communications, which were beginning to suffer from the activities of one or two submarines in the Marmora, would be utterly destroyed by our fleet. They knew, moreover, that they were very short of ammunition, and, with Roumania and Bulgaria neutral, the Zeitun Burnu factory on the shore of the Marmora—their sole source of supply—would be at the mercy of the guns of our ships. Not a very hopeful outlook for the enemy, and they were indeed fortunate that we failed to take advantage of our wonderful opportunity.

On the evening of the 8th, we learned from Sir Ian that the Army was at a complete deadlock, and could do nothing further without large reinforcements and a liberal supply of ammunition, neither of which could arrive for three or four weeks. On the other hand, the power of defence had proved so greatly superior to that of attack, that his Generals were confident of their ability to withstand any onslaught which the enemy might deliver.

That evening I discussed the whole situation with the Admiral, and reminded him of his telegrams with regard to the renewal of the naval attack—they certainly could not be reconciled with the policy of naval inaction now. With the Army firmly established on shore, and an efficient and dauntless minesweeping force, we were far better off, from a naval point of view, than we were on the 19th March; when he had declared that the forts at the Narrows, and the batteries guarding the minefields, could be dominated, after a few hours' engagement, sufficiently to enable minesweepers to clear the Kephez minefield.

Moreover, it was very important to get on as soon as possible, for according to Admiralty reports, German submarines were approaching the Eastern Mediterranean, and would probably soon be with us, which would greatly add to our difficulties. The Admiral would not believe it was possible for submarines to operate so far afield as the Dardanelles, and had expressed this view in the preamble of a memorandum he issued on the 5th May. "It is improbable that enemy submarines are in, or

approaching, this theatre of war. As a precaution, however, the following patrols will be established, and should a submarine be reported, squadrons and transports are to act in the manner herein laid down." Nevertheless the memorandum ordered aerial and surface patrols to be put into force at once and covered every contingency.

Before we parted company that night the Admiral said he would summon the Rear-Admirals in the morning, and hear their views before coming to a decision. I have recorded that I sat up with Godfrey till 3 a.m. preparing for the morrow.

On the morning of the 9th May, Admirals Wemyss, Thursby and Stuart Nicholson came on board the *Queen Elizabeth*, and the Admiral allowed me to put the case to them, as I had to him on the previous night. I gave them an outline of the events to date, and a précis of the telegrams which had passed between the Admiral and the Admiralty, and I left them in no doubt as to my own views, and my passionate belief in them, based on my experience in the Straits, which they lacked.

There was one question to which they demanded an answer, a question which I have been repeatedly asked ever since. What would happen if the Fleet got into the Marmora, and the Turkish defence did not collapse, and the political situation did not develop as the Government expected? I replied that that was the Government's concern—presumably they had good grounds for their belief (we know now that they had)—but if they were wrong and we had to withdraw, we could do so without any great hazard, a channel would have been swept through the minefield, which could not be renewed; and the forts would be taken in reverse and silenced before the passage was undertaken.

Admiral de Robeck questioned the correctness of the Government's opinion as to the effect of an Allied Fleet in the Marmora. He admitted, however, that a naval attack might be successful, and, if so, that it would be of vital importance to the Army, but he feared for the Army's fate if it failed, and said he was not prepared to take the responsibility of running the risk of failure. All the Admirals supported him in this decision. As a last resort, I then suggested that he should place the responsibility on the Government, but begged that he would make it clear that the Fleet was ready to force the Narrows if ordered to do so. The Admiral finally agreed to telegraph an appreciation

of the situation to the Admiralty; Godfrey and I at once set to work on it, and the resulting telegram, as eventually passed by the Admiral, was dispatched the same evening.

Here it should be pointed out that there really was no need for Admiral de Robeck to ask permission to continue the naval attack. On 19th March the War Council had authorised "The First Lord of the Admiralty to inform Vice-Admiral de Robeck that he could continue the naval operations against the Dardanelles if he thought fit." He had been urged on 24th March to renew the attack, irrespective of the landing of the Army, and had declared on 29th March that directly the Army had landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, the Fleet would commence its attack; the first objective of both Services would be the forts at the Narrows, and it was the intention to attack these simultaneously with all our forces. This decision had never been questioned by the Admiralty. Admiral de Robeck's telegram of 9th May, which precipitated the crisis at the Admiralty, was really an explanation of his reasons for not doing so, and an invitation to them to relieve him of any responsibility in the event of failure, if they gave him an order to attack.

"9th May, 1915. No. 490.

The position in the Gallipoli Peninsula. General Hamilton informs me that the Army is checked, its advance on Achi Baba can only be carried out a few yards at a time, and a condition of affairs approximating to that in Northern France is threatened.

The situation therefore arises, as indicated in my telegram 292 quote 'If the Army is checked in its advance on Kilid Bahr, the question as to whether the Navy should or should not force the Narrows, leaving the forts intact, would depend entirely on whether the Fleet could assist the Army in their advance to the Narrows best from below Chanak, with communications intact, or from above cut off from its base' cease quoting.

The help which the Navy has been able to give the Army in its advance has not been as great as was anticipated—though effective in keeping down the fire of the enemy's batteries—when it is a question of trenches and machine

guns, the Navy is of small assistance—it is these latter which have checked the Army.

From the vigour of the enemy's resistance, it is improbable that the passage of the Fleet into the Marmora will be decisive, and therefore it is equally probable that the Straits will be closed behind the Fleet.

This would be of small importance if the resistance of the enemy could be overcome in time to prevent the enforced withdrawal of the Fleet owing to the lack of supplies.

The support of the Army, should the Fleet penetrate to the Marmora, would be entrusted to the cruisers and certain older battleships, including some of the French, whose ships are not fit for a serious bombardment of the Narrows. This support would obviously be much less than is now given by the whole Fleet.

The temper of the Turkish Army in the Peninsula indicates that the forcing of the Dardanelles and subsequent appearance of the Fleet off Constantinople would not of itself prove decisive.

Points for decision appear to be firstly, can the Navy by forcing the Dardanelles ensure the success of the operations? Secondly, if the Navy were to suffer a reverse, which of necessity could only be a severe one, would the position of the Army be so critical as to jeopardise the whole operations?"

It was the best I could get the Admiral to agree to. He was quite determined not to convey the impression that he was in favour of another attack until the Army had captured the forts at the Narrows. Nevertheless, I thought that the telegram would be sufficient to enable the First Lord to carry the matter through, as did the Admiral, who was certain that he would be ordered to deliver a naval attack, and called on Admiral Guépratte to tell him so. Guépratte had not been summoned to the meeting, but I knew that he was of the same mind as I was, and ardently longed to renew the naval offensive, in fact, when I told him of my hopes, he said, "Ah, Commodore, that would be *immortalité*." He was elated, and at once telegraphed to the Minister of Marine as follows:

"A fin d'assister l'Armée dans son action énergique et rude, nous méditons vive action flotte dans détroite avec attaque des forts. Dans ces conditions il me faut mes cuirassés, *Suffren*, *Charlemagne*, *Gaulois* dans le plus bref délai possible."*

The *Suffren* and *Gaulois* had been temporarily replaced by the *Henri IV* and *Jauréguiberry*, two old battleships, which were quite unfit for close action with the forts; they could, however, be usefully employed with the battleships *Triumph* and *Swiftsure*, nine British, one Russian and three French cruisers, to support the Army; a formidable force, quite sufficient to carry out all the Army's requirements.

While we were waiting anxiously for the reply, the Admiralty telegraphed to the Admiral that two more infantry divisions were being sent out with other reinforcements, leaving about the 17th and 30th of the month. (So at least a month must pass before the Army could deliver another attack—meanwhile, what would the enemy be doing?) The arrival of German submarines in Turkish waters necessitated the recall of the *Queen Elizabeth*, which would be replaced by two old battleships—the *Exmouth* and *Venerable*—and two new monitors carrying two 14-inch guns apiece. Italy was about to enter the war, and owing to an Anglo-Italian Naval Convention, the *Queen*, *London*, *Implacable* and *Prince of Wales*, and four cruisers, would have to go to the Adriatic to join the Italian Fleet. Two of the cruisers would be replaced by the *Cornwall* and *Chatham*.

This telegram was followed by a personal one from the First Lord, saying he hoped the Admiral would not be discouraged by the recall of the *Queen Elizabeth* and the unavoidable changes in the fleet, consequent on the Italian Convention. He assured the Admiral of his determination to support him and the Army in every way to the end of their task.

These telegrams were received on the 13th May; early that morning the *Goliath*, which was supporting the French on the right flank, was torpedoed and sunk with the loss of 570 lives, by a Turkish destroyer commanded by an enterprising German officer, who, taking advantage of a misty night, crept down the Asiatic shore and slipped past our destroyer screen.

* "La Guerre Navale aux Dardanelles," page 147.

On the 14th May the following reply was received to the Admiral's telegram of 9th May:

> "343. 13th May, 1915. Your 490. We think the moment for an independent naval attempt to force the Narrows has passed, and will not arise again under present conditions. The Army is now landed, large reinforcements are being sent, and there can be no doubt that with time and patience, the Kilid Bahr Plateau will be taken. Your role is therefore to support the Army in its costly but sure advance, and to reserve your strength to deal with the situation which will arise later when the Army has succeeded with your aid in its task. We are going to send you the first six monitors as they are delivered, and you will find them far better adapted to this special work than the old battleships. You will later receive telegrams about increased provision of nets against submarines, about fitting special anti-mine protection to some of the battleships, and about landing heavy guns."

So all the great opportunities which had been open to the Fleet since 4th April were to be allowed to slip away, and the Allied Army, having suffered 26,000 casualties in its effort to secure the Gallipoli shore, was to continue the struggle, in order that the Fleet might steam by without any undue loss.

It seems that on receipt of de Robeck's telegram, the First Lord was prepared to give directions for a limited operation, the clearing of the Kephez minefield under cover of a bombardment of the forts at the Narrows; and in the course of a discussion with the First Sea Lord on the morning of the 11th, he endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to obtain the latter's concurrence.

Lord Fisher has repeatedly stated that after he had reluctantly acquiesced in the initial effort to force the Straits, he had supported it in every possible way; he had even suggested the employment of the *Queen Elizabeth*, he had added the two most powerful pre-dreadnoughts, the *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon*, to the Dardanelles Fleet, and had indeed entered into it *totus porcus*, to quote his evidence before the Dardanelles Commission. In fact, as long as the Admiral on the spot was in favour of the operation and believed in its success, he supported it; but

de Robeck's telegram now opened up quite a new situation; it was evident that grave decisions and heavy responsibilities would have to be faced, if the Fleet was to play its part in a combined naval and military attack on the Narrows. Our overwhelming superiority in the North Sea might be impaired. The great armada, which he declared he had built for operations in the Baltic, would be diverted to the Mediterranean, to the detriment of his great strategic project. Perhaps most important of all, heavy responsibilities which the Admiral on the spot was no longer prepared to carry, would fall on the First Lord's and his shoulders, and he had no intention of sharing the burden.

That afternoon Lord Fisher forwarded a memorandum, giving his views respecting the Dardanelles Campaign, in which he declared that he could not, "under any circumstances, be a party to any order to Admiral de Robeck to pass the Dardanelles until the shores had been effectively occupied."

The First Lord replied that evening that Lord Fisher would never receive from him any proposition to rush the Dardanelles, though it might be necessary for the Admiral to engage the forts and sweep the Kephez minefield, as an aid to the military operations. He concluded:

> "We are now in a very difficult position, whether it is my fault for trying, or my misfortune for not having the power to carry through, is immaterial. We are now committed to one of the greatest amphibious enterprises of history. You are absolutely committed. Comradeship, resource, firmness, patience, all in the highest degree, will be needed to carry the matter through to victory. A great army hanging on by its eyelids to a rocky beach and confronted by the armed power of the Turkish Empire under German military guidance: the whole *surplus* fleet of Britain—every scrap that can be spared—bound to that army and its fortunes as long as the struggle may drag out: the apparition of the long feared submarine: our many needs and obligations: the measureless advantages, probably decisive on the whole war, to be gained by success.
>
> Surely here is a combination and a situation which requires from us every conceivable exertion which we can think of.

I beg you to lend your whole aid and good will, and ultimately then success is certain."*

A great army hanging on by its eyelids to a rocky beach meant nothing to Lord Fisher, who replied on 12th May: "Until the military operations have effectively occupied the shores of the Narrows, etc., no naval attack on the minefield can take place, but your letter does not repudiate this."

The First Lord then dispatched, with Lord Fisher's concurrence, telegram 343 (quoted on page 338) and straightway set to work to expedite the transport and convoy of the two new divisions which Lord Kitchener had promised, and to speed the departure of the naval reinforcements he had persuaded Lord Fisher to agree to.

On the 15th May Lord Fisher left the Admiralty-and sent in his resignation, concluding his letter to the First Lord: "I find it increasingly difficult to adjust myself to the increasing daily requirements of the Dardanelles to meet your views—as you truly said yesterday, I am in the position of continually vetoeing your proposals. This is not fair to you, besides being extremely distasteful to me."

Mr. Churchill made every effort to persuade Lord Fisher to reconsider his resignation at this critical moment, but Lord Fisher was adamant and replied on the 16th:

"My dear Winston . . . YOU ARE BENT ON FORCING THE DARDANELLES AND NOTHING WILL TURN YOU FROM IT—NOTHING. I know you so well. . . . Yours, Fisher."

That is just the point, and he would have succeeded, if that wonderful old man had devoted all his fierce, ruthless energy towards supporting, instead of thwarting, the prosecution of an operation which he had described in January as, "Vital, imperative and very pressing."

The forts at the Narrows would have crumbled, and a way would have been torn through the minefields by the young blood of the Navy, had Lord Fisher worked with Winston Churchill to that end.

When Lord Fisher resigned, the First Lord invited Admiral of the Fleet Sir Arthur Wilson to succeed him, and Sir Arthur

* "The World Crisis," Vol. II, page 344.

accepted. Two days later Mr. Bonar Law, writing on behalf of Lord Lansdowne and the Conservative party, which up to that moment had loyally supported the Government, expressed their dismay at Lord Fisher's resignation and their opinion that some change in the constitution of the Government was desirable. Whereupon the Prime Minister asked the whole of his Government to place their resignations in his hands and proceeded to form a Coalition Government of all parties.

Mr. Asquith states in his memoirs that he had come to the conclusion, quite independently, that for the successful prosecution of the War it was essential that the Government should be reconstituted on a broad and non-party basis; and he attributed the necessity for immediate action to the importance of avoiding an acrimonious debate in the House of Commons, which Lord Fisher's resignation, and an alleged shortage of shells, would have undoubtedly evoked. Further, that great pressure was brought to bear on him to remove Mr. Churchill from the Admiralty, to which he acceded with great reluctance.

Having heard of the impending changes, Lord Fisher addressed the following ultimatum to the Prime Minister:

"If the following conditions are agreed to I can guarantee the successful termination of the War and the total abolition of the submarine menace. I also desire to add that since Lord Ripon wished in 1885 to make me a Lord of the Admiralty, but at my request made me Director of Naval Ordnance and Torpedoes instead, I have served under nine First Lords and 17 years at the Admiralty, so I ought to know something about it:

1. That Mr. Winston Churchill is not in the Cabinet to be always circumventing me, nor will I serve under Mr. Balfour.
2. That Sir A. K. Wilson leaves the Admiralty and the Committee of Imperial Defence and the War Council, as my time otherwise will be occupied in resisting the bombardment of Heligoland and other such wild projects; also his policy is totally opposed to mine and he has accepted position of First Sea Lord in succession to me, and thereby adopting a policy diametrically opposed to my views.

3. That there shall be an entire new Board of Admiralty, as regards the Sea Lords and the Financial Secretary (who is utterly useless). *New measures demand New Men!*
4. That I shall have complete professional charge of the War at sea, together with the absolute sole disposition of the Fleet, and the appointments of all officers of all rank whatsoever, and absolutely untrammelled sole command of the sea forces whatsoever.
5. That the First Lord of the Admiralty should be absolutely restricted to policy and parliamentary procedure and should occupy the same position towards me as Mr. Tennant, M.P., does to Lord Kitchener (and very well he does it).
6. That I should have the sole absolute authority for all new construction and all dockyard work of whatever sort whatsoever, and complete control of the whole Civil establishments of the Navy. The 60 per cent. of my time and energy which I have exhausted on nine First Lords in the past I wish in future to devote to the successful prosecution of the War. That is my sole reason for the six conditions. These six conditions must be published verbatim so that the Fleet may know my position."*

So certain was Lord Fisher of returning to the Admiralty, that he gave instructions to his Naval Secretary, who was still there, to prepare a number of orders for his signature on "der Tag," including, "All necessary telegrams for ordering home vessels from Dardanelles, except sufficient for Army protection."

Lord Fisher's biographer states:

> "It is impossible, after reading such papers as are available, more especially the draft he had prepared of the new Board of Admiralty and the other appointments he proposed to make, to avoid a feeling of relief that Lord Fisher did not remain under the conditions he had defined to the Prime Minister. The Board he proposed was a weak one, and he intended to part with everyone who would attempt to exercise any control over him—he saw himself an uncontrolled autocrat . . . under the arrangement he proposed, confusion and inefficiency were inevitable."*

* "Memories and Reflections," by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith, Vol. II, pages 93 and 94.

On the 22nd May Lord Fisher was informed that the King had accepted his resignation of the Office of First Sea Lord.

Mr. Balfour then succeeded Mr. Churchill as First Lord, and Admiral Sir Henry Jackson became First Sea Lord; Sir Arthur Wilson having informed the Prime Minister "that he was not prepared to undertake the duties under any First Lord but Mr. Churchill."

Thus ended a remarkable association with wonderful possibilities. The Navy lost in the course of a few days the services of an Admiral who was one of its outstanding figures of the last hundred years—and the greatest producer of material in its history—and of an Administrator to whom it owed, in a great measure, its readiness for war in August, 1914. Moreover, one who was responsible for placing a few old battleships on a stage on which they might have won imperishable glory for the Navy, in the achievement of a feat of arms which would have altered the whole course of the War.

* "The Life of Lord Fisher," by Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon, pages 271 and 272.

CHAPTER XX

SUBMARINE ACTIVITY

Admiral transfers flag to *Lord Nelson*; *Queen Elizabeth* returns to England; British submarines in the Marmora; Return of E14; Turks attack Anzac; Repulsed with great slaughter; *Albion* aground off Gaba Tepe; German submarine torpedoes the *Triumph* and *Majestic*; Third Battle of Krithia.

THE Admiralty's telegram withdrawing the *Queen Elizabeth*, four of our best old battleships, and four cruisers could only mean the abandonment of all idea of renewing the naval attack. The thought of the Army struggling on with its tremendous task, practically unaided by the Fleet was acutely distressing; it needed all the philosophy of "If" to face the future with confident courage.

I wrote that night:

> "Our last night in the *Queen Elizabeth*, we are all desperately sorry to leave her, we go to the *Lord Nelson* in the morning. The day started at about 2 a.m. with the loss of the *Goliath* and over 500 lives, and is the longest day I have ever spent in my life. I feel dead dog weary and rather disheartened—not really, because I am confident of final success—only our luck is dead out for the moment, and my dream of a great *coup de main*—which I ardently hoped to persuade the Admiral and the Admiralty to try—has faded away. I have faith, and for a stout heart I pray—one needs both, for fate is buffeting us heavily. The Admiral had a charming wire this morning, for which I thank Winston Churchill more than I can say. He really is very splendid in the way he is sticking to us and seeing us through. I am afraid he is having a bad time, and being told that his haste in starting the naval operations is costing us heavily now. But if he had not committed the Government to the enterprise, they would never have looked at it, and I am sure our success in the end—which

> is inevitable—will do more to finish the War than anything else. If only we had had an army on the 25th February, it would have been all over by now."

On the morning of the 14th the Admiral transferred his flag to the *Lord Nelson*, and later, with heavy hearts, we watched the *Queen Elizabeth* steaming out, playing "Auld Lang Syne." Her captain (George Hope) was a great loss to the Staff.

During the day the Admiralty telegram 343 (quoted on page 338) arrived and it confirmed all my worst fears. There was nothing to be done but start afresh, pray for the day when we might be allowed to play our part, and in the meantime see to it that the Army lacked nothing that devoted service and good comradeship could provide.

It was fortunate that at Mudros we had an Admiral so well fitted by his temperament, sense of humour, and tireless energy to deal with the hundred and one complicated questions which arose from hour to hour; in a base equipped with nothing but good will, and a determination to overcome all difficulties by improvising something to meet every demand upon it. There must be scores of soldiers and sailors, French and English, who hold Rosy Wemyss, with his immovable eyeglass, in affectionate memory.

From the moment the military attack was decided upon, the whole Mediterranean was scoured for tugs and lighters, and everything that could be usefully employed was purchased. Malta Dockyard sent every craft that could be spared, and the entire resources of the Fleet were absolutely at the service of the Army, for its maintenance and support; with the one reservation, that the military efficiency of the ships which were to take part in the attack on the Narrows and enter the Marmora was not to be impaired.

All restrictions were removed after 14th May, and we only had one thought and one aim—to lighten the Army's task.

The gunnery of the Fleet, and the training in our gunnery schools before the War, had one object—battle at sea; and training in the employment of ship's guns in support of military operations had been utterly neglected in the years preceding the War. There was obviously room for improvement, and it was now necessary to develop the fire of the Fleet by every

means in our power. Ramsay and the wireless and signal officers of the Staff, and the gunnery officers of the Fleet, worked incessantly to this end. They were greatly assisted by Commander H. P. Douglas of the Hydrographical Dept. and above all by Brigadier-General Street, the General Staff officer of the 8th Corps, who had been a most caustic critic, but became a fast friend, and to whom we owed a great debt for all he taught us.

Our beach parties and the crews of the picket boats, lighters and small craft, who worked incessantly on the beaches in all weathers, with an utter contempt for the fire of the enemy, were a source of never-diminishing satisfaction to me, as were the exploits of my friends the submariners, throughout those unhappy days.

After *B*11's exploit in Sari Siglar Bay, there were no targets within reach of the "B" class, as they had not the submerged endurance to work above the Narrows. Early in January the French submarine *Saphir* arrived off the Dardanelles with a new battery, which her captain declared would take her 140 miles at five knots without recharging. I believe he was forbidden by his Admiral to try to pass through the minefields without special permission, but on 15th January, while diving on patrol at the entrance of the Straits, he apparently could not resist the temptation of trying to eclipse *B*11's achievement. He succeeded in passing the Narrows, but the *Saphir* ran aground off Nagara Point and was lost.

*E*15 was the next submarine to attempt the passage, and she was lost, as I have related. Directly *AE*2 arrived from Malta, she proceeded up the Straits. It was some time before we learnt how she was lost.* While diving in the Marmora to escape the attentions of the enemy's patrol craft, *AE*2 suddenly got out of control, and alternated between breaking surface and descending to a great depth. Normally she would have gone to the surface, or to the bottom, to readjust her trim, but the presence of the enemy precluded the former, and the great depth of water made the latter impossible. When she broke surface a heavy fire was opened on her and her pressure hull being pierced she was no longer able to dive. Stoker then had

* Her captain (Lieut.-Commander Stoker) has written an interesting account of his brief cruise and experiences as a prisoner of war in "Straws in the Wind."

no choice but to surrender or sink his ship. He ordered his crew to jump overboard, went below alone to open the seacocks, and was just able to jump clear as *AE*2 sank in very deep water.

Other submarines subsequently had similar experiences, and there can be little doubt that *AE*2's loss of control was due to the same cause. In the Sea of Marmora our submarines frequently encountered stratas of fresh water, of much lighter density than that of the sea generally. A submarine diving from the lighter density strata near the surface, into the heavier one below, was liable to speedily lose control if the conditions were not fully appreciated. Eventually our submarines made great use of this peculiar phenomenon, and by carefully adjusting the buoyancy, used to spend the night lying at rest on the heavier strata, which was generally to be found about ten fathoms below the surface. This was a great advantage when the water was too deep for them to lie on the bottom, and it was unsafe to rest on the surface, owing to the presence of patrol craft.

The next submarine to attempt to operate in the Straits was the French *Bernoulli*, which had not sufficient endurance to reach the Marmora, but hoped to attack the enemy's ships which were operating above the Narrows, but she was caught in the strong current and swept out.

Lieut.-Commander E. C. Boyle in *E*14 was the next to try; he entered the Straits about 2 a.m. on 27th April, and reported that night that he was in the Marmora.

On 30th April Admiral Guépratte informed the Admiral that the submarine *Joule* would attempt the passage the following morning, and that her captain would report himself to me for instructions as to his co-operation with our submarines, and communication with a British destroyer, which was detailed to get into wireless touch with them each night. An obsolete compromised signal book was used for this purpose, with a day to day transposition table, it being undesirable to risk the current book in case of the submarine being sunk in sufficiently shallow water to be salved.

I was much impressed by the eager enthusiasm of the young captain of the *Joule*, du Petit-Thouars, the descendant of a very distinguished Royalist naval family. I gave him one of our signal books, and wished him the best of luck, but to our sorrow

the *Joule* was lost in the Kephez minefield a few hours later. Before the enemy jubilantly announced her destruction on the wireless we feared the worst, for one of her torpedoes, which were carried in frames on the upper deck, floated out of the Straits a few hours after the *Joule* entered them.

So of the five submarines, two French and three British, which had attempted to pass into the Marmora, only *E*14 had survived. We knew on 11th May that *E*14 had sunk two gun vessels, and two transports; on the 12th she had only one torpedo left, and it was defective; nevertheless, Boyle remained in the Marmora, making his presence known in widely separated areas, until actually ordered to withdraw by signal on 17th May; *E*11 being ready to take her place.

We anxiously waited for *E*14's return, and much to our relief, she rose outside the entrance of the Straits on the afternoon of 18th May, after a cruise of 21 days. The first ship to greet her was a French battleship, whose crew gave her a rousing cheer. She then joined the *Lord Nelson* at Imbros, where Nasmith in *E*11 was waiting to hear all that Boyle had to tell him.

The two submarine captains dined with the Admiral that evening. We were all thrilled by Boyle's simply-told tale; and Nasmith was eager to seize the torch. I felt so strongly that if we had only faced all that was ahead of us with the spirit of those two gallant submariners, the Marmora would not have been denied to us.

Boyle told us that he had steamed up the Straits on the surface until *E*14 was picked up by a searchlight off Suan Dere, and forced to dive by gunfire. He then went to 90 feet under the Kephez minefield; when he estimated that he was about a mile below Kilid Bahr, and that it would be sufficiently light to see, he came up to 22 feet in order to navigate through the Narrows by his periscope, disdaining mines and gunfire. As he had to proceed at a good speed to make way against the current, the periscope made a considerable wash, and this drew the fire of all the forts as *E*14 passed by. When off Chanak, Boyle fired at a torpedo gunboat; he said he could only keep his periscope up for a few seconds at a time, at the moment, as some men in a steamboat were trying to grab hold of it, but before he dipped to avoid them he saw a great column of

water shoot up as high as the gunboat's mast, so he presumed he had sunk her (this was confirmed later). After rounding Nagara Point, he proceeded at 90 feet, coming up to periscope depth from time to time to fix his position, and passed Gallipoli six hours after diving off Suan Dere. There were a number of small craft about which persistently hunted *E*14, and he had great difficulty in coming to the surface to charge his batteries.

Then followed three weeks without a dull moment. *E*14 met *AE*2 on the 29th, and Stoker told Boyle that he had grounded heavily twice when coming up the Straits; after sinking a Turkish gun vessel off Chanak his torpedoes had not run well, and he had only one left.

Of *E*14's eight torpedoes, one developed a defect and could not be fired, one was seen to strike a transport but did not explode, and two missed their targets. With the remaining four, Boyle hit two gunboats and two transports. He was rather apologetic for not keeping his periscope up, to make certain of having sunk the first transport, but he was being fired at by a destroyer and did not like to risk his one remaining periscope; the other had been smashed by a shot the day before! The second transport was a big vessel with two funnels, twice the size of any other ship he saw in the Marmora, he thought she must have carried quite 2,000 troops; there was a terrific explosion when the torpedo struck, and he saw men and débris thrown into the sea. We know now that all four vessels sank, and that the latter was an old White Star liner, carrying a battery of artillery and 6,000 troops, of whom not one soul was saved.

They were being hurried down to make good the casualties of the three days' battle of Krithia, and apart from the loss of 6,000 fresh troops at that critical time, the moral effect of such wholesale slaughter must have been tremendous.

Boyle found that the current did not exceed 1½ knots in the Straits during either passage, but said there was a strong set into all the bays. *E*14 did not touch a mine mooring or encounter any obstruction. I think his success was due to bravely facing the risk of mines, and coming to periscope depth when necessary, in order to navigate his vessel through the treacherous currents which wrecked the *Saphir* and *E*15, a fate which *AE*2 appears to have narrowly escaped.

Nasmith left after dinner, equipped with all Boyle's experience, his own exceptional professional ability, and a vivid imagination. Sixteen hours later he was resting on the bottom in the Sea of Marmora, where for the next 23 days he was a holy terror to the Turks.

That night we heard that Boyle had been given the Victoria Cross, and his officers and men decorations. The following day *E*14 went to Mudros to rest and refit, preparatory to renewing her attack on the enemy's communications in the Marmora. She received a tremendous ovation, and that dear gallant Guépratte embarked with his flagship's band, and steamed round her playing " Tipperary " and " God save the King." When she was berthed, he went on board *E*14, and much to Boyle's embarrassment embraced him, and speaking in English, called him a " beautiful boy," then turning to the ship's company he told them they were all " beautiful boys," and how much he admired their exploit. We were profoundly touched by the generous gesture of this *preux chevalier*.

While waiting for the promised reinforcements, our troops in both areas had consolidated and improved their positions by dint of local attacks, minor operations and strenuous digging. On the other hand, the enemy had been strongly reinforced, and was busily engaged in constructing a continuous system of trenches; any attempt, therefore, to advance from our existing positions was bound to be a very costly business.

We gathered from Sir Ian and his Staff that the forts at the Narrows would have to be approached otherwise than by continuing the main attack from the south. Nevertheless, in view of the great importance attached by the Admiral to the possession of Achi Baba, Sir Ian decided to make another attempt to capture it, before developing an attack elsewhere in the northern area.

In the southern area, our position had been greatly improved on the left flank, on 13th May, by the capture of the Turkish post which, it will be remembered, held up our troops in the battles of Krithia—despite the gunfire of the *Queen Elizabeth* and other ships. This important success, in which the *Talbot* and *Wolverine* co-operated, was made possible by a flanking movement of the 1/6th Gurkhas, who crept along the beach

during the night, scaled the cliff at the northern end of " Y " Beach, and dug themselves in on the flank of the enemy. Our line was thus advanced 500 yards, and the " Y " Beach position was once again in our possession.

The enemy were the first to attack on a large scale. According to Turkish official accounts, after a visit to the Peninsula, Enver Pasha gave orders for a general assault to be delivered on Anzac by four divisions. The plan was to attack a little before dawn, break the centre of the Anzac line, drive the troops from their trenches and destroy them on the beach. At 3 a.m. on 19th May the enemy advanced with bayonets fixed, in massed formation, to be literally mown down by the Anzacs. They only succeeded in penetrating our trenches at one place, and then only for a few moments; by 5 a.m. the attack had been decisively repulsed, with a loss—according to Turkish official accounts—of 10,000 men. More than 3,000 dead were counted in front of the Australian trenches alone. The Anzac casualties were about 600. For sanitary reasons, an armistice had eventually to be arranged, to bury the Turkish dead.

At 5 a.m. on 23rd May, I was awakened by a signal, reporting that the *Albion* was on shore off Gaba Tepe. We went there at once, and found the *Canopus* had anchored close to her, and was trying to tow her off, but apparently had made no impression. It did not look at all pleasant; shrapnel was bursting all round the *Albion*, and she was being repeatedly hit by high explosive shell. An enemy battleship in the Straits was also dropping heavy shells close to her; fortunately there was a seaplane available to direct the *Lord Nelson's* fire, which speedily drove her off. Some destroyers and small craft, which had been assisting to lay out anchors and hawsers, were still gathered round the *Albion* spoiling to help, regardless of the fire, but as they could do no more good, the Admiral ordered them to withdraw.

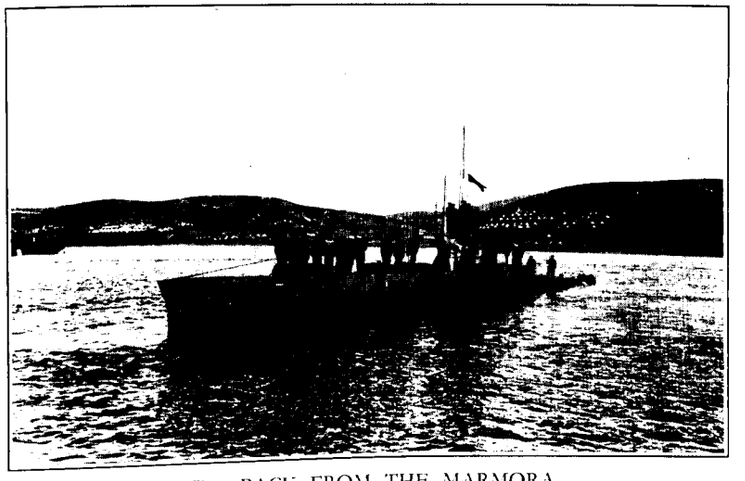
There was great delay in getting signals through, owing to the enemy's heavy fire, and the Admiral getting impatient, said that he would go to her in a destroyer, to see what could be done. That was, of course, out of the question, and I persuaded him to let me go instead. I then embarked in the *Chelmer* and told her captain (Lieut.-Commander England) to send everyone below under cover, except the helmsman, and go

full speed to the *Albion*. She had been on shore for some hours and was apparently immovable. I had an extraordinarily uncanny feeling (for the first and last time during the War) that if we went alongside the *Albion* I should be killed; but a few moments before we reached her, she suddenly slid off into deep water, and we all withdrew out of range! The *Albion* gave the *Canopus* a great ovation, which she thoroughly deserved.

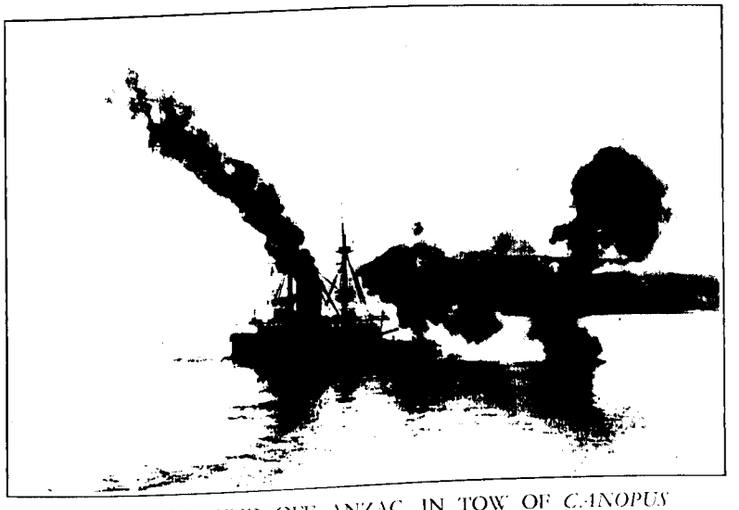
Rumours of the approach of an enemy submarine were persistent, false alarms were frequent; but after *B*11, which was watching Smyrna, had reported that she had sighted a large submarine entering that port, her arrival was obviously imminent. The Admiral then reduced the battleships and cruisers off Gallipoli from eleven to six, gave orders for all large transports to return to Mudros, and insisted on the *Arcadian*, which was lying off "W" Beach with Sir Ian and his Staff on board, withdrawing to Kephalo Bay at Imbros. He also decided to transfer his flag to the *Triad*, a large yacht, capable of berthing the whole Staff, in order not to risk the *Lord Nelson* unnecessarily.

Early in the morning on the 25th, the *Swiftsure* reported that she had seen a periscope close to her; and a little later the *Vengeance*, which was proceeding towards Anzac, signalled that a torpedo had narrowly missed her.

I embarked at once in the destroyer *Grampus* (Lieut.-Commander R. Bacchus), which was ready for sea, and went full speed towards Anzac, directing my brother in the *Wolverine*, which was raising steam, to follow as soon as possible. Before I left the *Lord Nelson*, the Admiral authorised me to give any orders I thought fit, if I satisfied myself that there really was a German submarine present, which he still doubted. The *Manica* was lying off Anzac with her balloon up, so I ordered her to go to Imbros at once, her great open balloon compartment making her very vulnerable to a torpedo. The *Triumph* was lying off Anzac with her torpedo nets out, and destroyers steaming round her for protection. The *Vengeance* had just relieved the *Canopus*, which was returning to Mudros at a good speed, and I was closing the *Vengeance* to enquire about the attack on her, when unfortunately the *Canopus* signalled that she had sighted a periscope, so I gave chase,



E.14 BACK FROM THE MARMORA
18TH MAY, 1915



ALBION AGROUND OFF ANZAC, IN TOW OF *CANOPUS*
23RD MAY, 1915

and the *Wolverine* coming up, joined in. Thus about half an hour was wasted before we came to the conclusion that the *Canopus* submarine was a porpoise, and we had been drawn away from the danger spot at a critical moment. We had just turned back towards Anzac and were about five miles away, when we saw the *Triumph* slowly heel over, and then suddenly capsize; she floated bottom up for half an hour before she sank. She was surrounded by small craft, which picked up all but three officers and 53 men. The Turks chivalrously refrained from firing at the rescuing boats. My brother, who was a pioneer submarine officer, and I, then hunted the submarine for some hours, and probably prevented her doing any more damage. The *Grampus* passed over her at least three times, but in those pre-depth charge days, there was no means of destroying a well-handled submerged submarine. Before the end of our hunt, the Admiral arrived to take part in the *Triad*, to which he had transferred during my absence.

The Admiral then decided that the battleships and cruisers must withdraw to Mudros or Kephalo Bay, with the exception of one battleship, which was to anchor off "W" Beach, with only a few feet under her keel, and keep touch with the 8th Corps, calling out other ships from Kephalo to support the Army if required. Rear-Admiral Nicholson, who was commanding the supporting squadron in the southern area, transferred his flag from the *Swiftsure* to the *Majestic*, and anchored the latter close in off "W" Beach, surrounded by small craft.

On 26th the submarine attempted to attack the *Jauréguiberry*, which was zig-zagging about off the entrance to the Straits; the latter reported that she had nearly succeeded in ramming the submarine, which withdrew without accomplishing anything.

Early next morning the submarine torpedoed the *Majestic*, which capsized within a few minutes. Had she sunk on an even keel, her upper works would have been awash, but the battleships of her day had an unfortunate propensity for capsizing directly they were holed, and her torpedo nets, which were quite ineffective in keeping out the torpedo, prevented a number of men getting clear of the ship when she capsized, and 43 lives were lost. Her stem served as a beacon for the remainder of the campaign.

After the sinking of the *Majestic* the Admiral gave orders

for all battleships to retire to Mudros except the *Exmouth*, fitted with specially powerful torpedo nets, which it was hoped would defeat the net cutters on the enemy's torpedoes. Rear-Admiral Nicholson, who had to swim away from his last flagship, hoisted his flag in the *Exmouth* and remained at Kephalo. The support of the Army was then confided to destroyers, which guarded its flanks, and won the admiration and affection of the troops for their devoted good comradeship and vigilant service.

The Admiralty had sent out netting to protect our anchorages, but it was some time before we had sufficient, and a number of buoys were anchored off the entrance of Kephalo Bay with tunny nets suspended, in order to mislead the enemy into thinking that we had some form of net defence—a ruse which proved quite effective—though there was nothing to prevent a submarine lying off and firing torpedoes into our crowded anchorage.

One could only have admiration for the captain of *U*21 (the submarine which we know now sank the *Triumph* and *Majestic*), for his determination and enterprise in bringing his vessel so far, but it was fortunate for us that he was not so skilful as the best of the German submarine captains, for, with a wealth of great targets off the Peninsula, those two motionless battleships were his only victims.

We suffered no more losses off the Dardanelles from enemy submarines, thanks to their lack of skill, and our anti-submarine measures; but these monopolised a great many small craft and required unflagging vigilance. *U*21 had, however, succeeded in driving our battleships, cruisers and transports into harbour, with a disheartening effect on our troops, and greatly to the relief of the enemy.

It would certainly have been folly to have kept valuable ships off the Peninsula to act as targets, but three weeks before the arrival of the enemy submarine we could safely have left the *Queen Elizabeth* with enough ships to support the Army, while we extricated it from its overwhelming difficulties, by forcing the Narrows and cutting the enemy's communications.

It is distressing to reflect that we lost three battleships in a fortnight to no purpose, while looking at our problem from outside; more probably, than we should have lost going through to the Sea of Marmora.

Meanwhile the Army was steadily improving its position and preparing to renew its attack. The Coalition Government seemed to be undecided as to the measure of its support of the Dardanelles operations, but by the beginning of June, ammunition and drafts to make good casualities, had arrived. Generals Hunter-Weston and Gouraud (the new French General who had succeeded General d'Amade), were now confident that they could capture Achi Baba with the forces at their disposal, and preparations were made to deliver an attack on 4th June.

Naval co-operation was to be provided by the *Exmouth* and *Swiftsure* manœuvring off "W" Beach, ready to fire on any target given to them by wireless from the shore. The *Wolverine* and *Scorpion* lying close inshore to support the left flank with their fire; the *Talbot*, manœuvring in advance of the left flank, to watch for the approach of Turkish reserves; and inside the Straits the French cruiser *Latouche Tréville* and two destroyers, to support the right flank of the French.

The destroyers were to disregard submarine risks, but the battleships and cruisers were to maintain a speed of 12 knots, their fire, therefore, was unlikely to be very effective. The French artillery were well provided with high explosive shells, and were to cover a good deal of our front, but the British artillery still had a very inadequate supply, and their shrapnel was of little value in trench warfare.

We watched the action, which was known as the "Third Battle of Krithia," from the *Triad*. It opened at 8 a.m. on the 4th June, with a bombardment which continued until noon, when the Allied troops advanced to the assault. On the French front the attack was repulsed with heavy loss. The Naval Division, having captured its objective most gallantly, greatly assisted by the fire of the French 75's, found itself enfiladed by the Turks, who had repulsed the French, and had to fall back suffering heavily. The Collingwood Battalion was completely wiped out. Thanks to the devastating effect of the French artillery's high explosive shells, the 42nd Lancashire Territorial Division carried all its objectives with great dash, and comparatively little loss—at that stage. The 29th Division, composed to a great extent of new drafts, found several of the enemy strong points quite untouched by the British bombardment, notably one manned by sailors from the *Goeben* and

Breslau; nevertheless, the Division upheld its tradition and despite terrible losses, carried most of its objectives. The Indian Brigade on its left greatly distinguished itself; here also our troops suffered heavily, owing to the lack of high explosive shell, and the advance was held up by undamaged strong points.

At the time we only knew that at nightfall the net result of the battle was a gain of 250-500 yards on a mile front; the losses of the 8th Corps amounted to 4,500 officers and men out of 16,000 engaged, and the French had about 2,000 casualties.

The third battle of Krithia had achieved no more than its predecessors, but there can be no doubt that in the light of our knowledge today, once again, the issue hung in the balance, and we narrowly missed capturing Achi Baba.

Early in the afternoon, although both flanks were held up, our centre had pierced the enemy's front to a considerable depth. The 29th Division and the Lancashire Territorials had taken about 500 prisoners, and the Territorials were on the slope of Achi Baba, with only about one trench between them and its summit. According to the military historian, at this critical moment there were 18 battalions in reserve; had these or some of them, been thrown into the gap made by the 42nd Division, decisive results might well have been achieved. But in those early days of trench warfare, "the broad principle of using reserves to exploit successes, rather than to redeem failures, had not been established," and the British and French Corps Commanders concentrated on attempting to capture the positions which had resisted the first assault, nothing being done to reinforce the centre. Eventually the Lancashire Territorials suffered cruel losses, withdrawing from the exposed position they had so gallantly won.

According to Turkish official accounts, their losses amounted to between 9,000 and 10,000, and the situation was regarded as highly critical on the night of 4th June. Turkish and German accounts definitely state that if the British had continued the attack the next day, the results would have been disastrous. "But neither the British nor the French had the power to renew the attack for many days to come, and the Turks were again given time to organise a new line."*

* "Military Operations," Vol. II, pages 51-53.

CHAPTER XXI

THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S RESOLVE

Indecision at Home; Naval and military reinforcements promised; Submarine successes in the Marmora; Offensive action in the southern area; French attack on right; Visits to Gallipoli; British attack on left; Desperate Turkish counter-attacks; British and French attack in centre; A visit to Anzac.

THE political upheaval had the effect of checking the dispatch of the reinforcements, which we had been led to expect from the Admiralty telegram of 13th May, and for three weeks we were left in ignorance of the Government's intentions.

On 28th May Lord Kitchener prepared a memorandum for the use of the Dardanelles Committee (twelve Cabinet Ministers under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister) in which he described the objects and progress of the operations to date, summarising his conclusions as follows:

"Three solutions offer themselves—

1. Withdrawal.
2. To seek, if possible, an immediate decision.
3. To continue to push on and make such progress as is possible."

Lord Kitchener favoured the third alternative, but Mr. Churchill, then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and a member of the Committee, replied on 1st June with a memorandum in which he urged a vigorous prosecution of the Gallipoli Campaign. Lord Kitchener had informed him before the 14th May, that he intended to send two divisions, and the Admiralty had provided transport for them, but Lord Kitchener had changed his mind and had only sent one division—the 52nd, which arrived in Gallipoli just after the third battle of Krithia. There was no time to lose; further delay in sending the necessary reinforcements, or sending them in driblets, would end in fighting the Turkish Army in relays.

Lord Kitchener then decided in favour of vigorous action, and recommended that ample reinforcements should be sent to carry the thing through. Whereupon the Dardanelles Committee, which met for the first time on 7th June decided:

1. To send out three divisions of the New Army.
2. To send out certain Naval units, which would be much less susceptible to submarine attack than those under Admiral de Robeck's command.*

On 8th June, the Admiral received a personal telegram from the new First Lord, saying that he could rely on the Cabinet's full support. By the beginning of July his force would be strengthened by the *Endymion* and *Theseus* (these two vessels had been fitted with anti-torpedo bulges), four monitors with 14-inch, six with 9.2-inch, and four with six-inch guns, four sloops, two "E" class and four "H" class submarines. By the same date General Hamilton would be strengthened by three divisions of the New Army. Mr. Balfour concluded by expressing his deep personal interest in the operations.

This was a great relief; further procrastination could only have ended in disaster. Nevertheless we sailors felt that since the Army was to do the business, and the Turks had such a vast reserve of man-power to draw upon, the military reinforcements were none too liberal. However, Mr. Churchill continued to press for a stronger force. He suggested that Sir Ian should be provided with two additional divisions (53rd and 54th Territorial) for his coming offensive, or a total of five reinforcing divisions in all, in addition to every other man who could be spared for a short time from England or Egypt. He pointed out that the British and French had lost over 300,000 men since April, 1915, on the Western Front, in futile offensives. All the troops in the Dardanelles would not have been sufficient to make a decisive change in the situation there. "Here is the prize," Mr. Churchill concluded, "and the only prize which lies within reach this year. It can certainly be won without unreasonable expense, and within a comparatively short time. But we must act now, and on a scale which makes speedy success certain." Fortunately Mr. Churchill had strong support from Mr. Balfour and other members of the Committee, which met

* "Dardanelles Commission, Final Report," page 25.

on the 17th June, and Lord Kitchener, by this time converted to the vital importance of the Dardanelles Campaign, agreed that if the transport problem could be solved, he would not limit the reinforcements to the two extra divisions Mr. Churchill had suggested. The *Mauretania*, *Olympic*, and *Aquitania*, each of which was capable of carrying six or seven battalions, were at once chartered, and by dint of tremendous exertions on the part of the Admiralty, five new divisions and many thousands of drafts were embarked within six weeks, for their 3,000 miles' voyage to the Dardanelles. This vast undertaking, despite the efforts of hostile submarines, in home waters and the Ægean, was completed without a casualty.*

In the meantime the Admiralty had responded most liberally to the Admiral's requests. As transports and store ships could no longer lie off the Peninsula with safety, it was necessary to have small craft to ply between Mudros, which was now proof against submarine attack, and the Gallipoli beaches. Small cargo steamers, fast little passenger steamers, tugs, trawlers, drifters (to work submarine indicator nets), motor lighters and other small craft arrived in great numbers. We never seemed to have enough, for casualties, due to gunfire and bad weather, were very heavy. We bought old ships, filled them with concrete, and sank them to make piers and breakwaters off "W" Beach and Anzac. The French sank the *Majenta*, an old battleship, and a large steamer, to complete the harbour off "V" Beach, of which the *River Clyde* formed one arm. The foreshore of the Peninsula behind the Army, thus protected by breakwaters, was transformed into quays and jetties, on which, though never free from shell fire, work proceeded continuously day and night.

I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that during this period, the Admiral's small Staff never worked less than 16 to 20 hours a day; but my duties often took me to Gallipoli, where the spirit of the troops made the atmosphere cheerful and invigorating. A visit to the front line trenches acted like a tonic, and after an hour or so spent in company with the wonderful people who occupied them, one went back refreshed and fortified, to deal with others with whom one was less in sympathy. It would be impossible to exaggerate the good

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, pages 60 and 61.

feeling which existed between the sailors and the fighting soldiers, and those who were intimately connected with the military operations; but we also had to deal with the different Supply Services, whose methods we were never able to understand, and they naturally found it difficult to adjust their ideas to the peculiar conditions of amphibious warfare. With our very limited tonnage, it was a hand to mouth existence, on the lines of communications, between an improvised base and the shell-swept beaches 60 miles distant. At first it was almost impossible to meet all their conflicting requirements, but later when we had sufficient vessels they were allocated to the various departments for their sole use, an extraordinarily uneconomical system, but one that was necessary to insure the smooth working of the machine.

When complaints were made, I usually invited the officer concerned to accompany me to the Peninsula. On one occasion, the director of a department complained bitterly, at a Naval and Military conference, that he was unable to build up his reserves at Anzac, as he had no lighters. Learning that he had never been to Anzac, I invited him to come over in a destroyer with me that afternoon. While disembarking from the destroyer we were saluted by shell fire in the usual way, and when we landed, we took shelter behind a stack of trussed hay until the bombardment, which generally greeted fresh arrivals, had lulled a bit. From our more or less sheltered position, I was able to point out to my companion several lighters full of his stores, lying waiting to be destroyed by shells, or unloaded by military fatigue parties, when the bombardment abated, or under cover of darkness. After that, a visit to the trenches completed the cure. He was most grateful to me for an enjoyable afternoon! We never had any more complaints from his department.

While we were suffering from the attentions of *U*21, we were receiving reports from Nasmith, which showed that *E*11 was giving the Turks a good deal to think about in the Marmora. On 7th June he came out to find Boyle waiting to relieve him in *E*14. The two captains again met at the Admiral's dinner table that evening, and Nasmith told us his tale, which was very refreshing; he had so thoroughly enjoyed himself, and was obviously looking forward to his next trip.

He said that after passing Chanak he sighted a battleship,

which, with several torpedo craft, opened fire on his periscope, and fled to the northward. No obstructions or mine moorings were encountered on the way up, and *E*11 passed Gallipoli less than six hours after she dived off Achi Baba. Nasmith was not able to communicate for four days, owing to a defect in his wireless, and we were very anxious about him. However, on the night of the 23rd, he reported that he had sunk a torpedo gunboat lying at anchor off Constantinople. He told us that as she was sinking, she opened fire and smashed the top of his periscope. The next day he chased a steamer on the surface, and brought her to with rifle fire. She carried about 60 soldiers, who were all wearing lifebelts; they proceeded to abandon ship in the greatest panic, lowering and capsizing two boats, whilst still under way. An American, who was taking matters quite calmly, leant over the side and introduced himself as Mr. Silas Q. Swing of the *Chicago Sun* and told Nasmith he was pleased to meet him. Under Nasmith's directions and with the help of two or three Turks, who alone remained on board, Mr. Swing safely hoisted out the remaining boat, which was lying on the deck, and with *E*11's assistance, they then proceeded to right the boats and pick up everybody. Nasmith told us that one Turk drifted past on an overturned boat, with his fingers crossed and looking absolutely terrified, much to the amusement of his crew. He then laid *E*11 alongside the steamer and finding a six-inch gun and its mounting, a great many six-inch shells, and several gun mountings of smaller calibre, he sank her with a demolition charge. The vessel blew up with a tremendous explosion, and was evidently full of ammunition. It would be interesting to read the *Chicago Sun* with Mr. Swing's account of his adventure, he must have been entertained by our light-hearted humane submariners.

After torpedoeing a ship heavily laden with packing cases, lying off Rodosto Pier, he chased another ship laden with barbed wire, which first tried to ram *E*11, and then ran herself ashore. He was standing in to destroy her, when a detachment of cavalry drove *E*11 off with rifle fire. The next day Nasmith dived unobserved into Constantinople, and fired a torpedo at a large vessel lying alongside the Arsenal; the torpedo ran in a circle, owing to a gyroscope failure, and nearly hit *E*11; he then fired another. Two heavy explosions occurred, so the first torpedo

must also have hit something. Nasmith was unable to watch the effect of his torpedoes, as *E*11 was caught in the swift current which races out of the Bosphorus, and was swept into shoal water, at one time she was driven on to the shoal under Leander Tower. From this perilous position he extricated her with great skill.

We know now that Nasmith's second torpedo blew a large hole in the *Stamboul*, which was about to leave for the Peninsula laden with troops. The German official Naval account states: "The activity of the enemy's submarines dislocated the conveyance of reinforcements very seriously and caused many disagreeable losses." It adds that after the sinking of the Turkish transport at the quay no further troops were forwarded to Gallipoli by sea. There was not enough wheeled transport to send supplies by road, so most of the food for the army had always to be taken by water. But it was "a hand to mouth business. . . . The activity of hostile submarines was a constant and heavy anxiety, and if communication by sea had been completely severed the army would have been faced with catastrophe."*

One moonlight night Nasmith sighted a battleship, which appeared to be the *Barbarossa*, with two destroyers screening her; it being too dark to see through the periscope, Nasmith attempted to attack from the surface, but before he could get into position to fire, he had to do a crash dive to avoid being rammed by one of the destroyers. One day he encountered a destroyer convoying five supply ships, and he torpedoed the largest. Later in the day he fired at another steamer, but the torpedo ran under her. Torpedoes are normally set to sink in wartime, but in order not to waste any, Nasmith set his to float. His First-Lieutenant (Doyley Hughes) swam to the floating torpedo, and unwound the fan until it locked the firing pistol, making it safe to handle; the torpedo was then pulled in through the stern tube, to be used again. The war head was found to have been grazed by the bottom of the ship, without the pistol having come in contact. Another day Nasmith torpedoed a large modern steamer in Panderma Roads, she was towed ashore listing heavily. After some days mostly submerged, they found the atmosphere of the boat very foul and oppressive, so he went

* "Der Krieg zur See, 1914-18: Die Mittelmeer Division," Chapter XV.

into the centre of the Marmora, to give the crew an opportunity of bathing and cleaning the boat. One busy day he torpedoed another supply vessel, which was no doubt an ammunition ship, as she blew up with a tremendous explosion. Later he missed a small steamer which ran herself ashore and was abandoned near a small town, but he was unable to pick up the torpedo, as he was driven off by rifle fire. That night he sighted two destroyers convoying a dispatch vessel, which he attempted to torpedo, but missed; the torpedo was recovered as before. The next day he had a very narrow escape of being rammed, and had to do a crash dive, but directly he did so, his adversary fled. In fact, by this time Nasmith had established such an ascendancy in the Marmora, that he experienced great difficulty in finding targets.

We learnt from our Intelligence Service, that his widely separated depradations, and visits to the shoal waters off Rodosto, Panderma, and small coast towns, had made a great sensation, and we were credited with having half a dozen submarines in the Marmora.

On 5th June, finding a serious defect in his "port main motor, and his starboard intermediate shaft cracked, it was considered advisable to return," to quote Nasmith's laconic report, and he started back on the 7th. He had reserved his last two torpedoes for the battleship which usually lay in the Straits to bombard the ships off Anzac. After rounding Nagara Point, and seeking for her in vain as far as Chanak, he might well have continued his withdrawal—his defective engines might have let him down at any moment—but he had passed a large transport at anchor above Nagara, and he had two torpedoes left; so he turned his crippled ship just above the Narrows, running the risk of being swept ashore in doing so, and again negotiated the dangerous turn round Nagara. Having torpedoed and sunk the transport, he continued his journey down the Straits. Immediately after rounding Kilid Bahr, Nasmith told us that the trim of the boat became quite abnormal, and he had to admit eight tons of water to get her down to 70 feet. He attributed this to change of density. An hour later he heard a scraping noise as if *E*11 was grounding; but knowing that this was impossible in the depth of water, he came up to 20 feet to investigate, and saw a large mine about 20 feet ahead of his periscope, which was

apparently being towed from its moorings by the port hydroplane; he continued his course for another hour, at a depth of 30 feet, and when outside Kum Kale, he went full speed astern and ejected the water from the after tanks, thus leaving the bow submerged and bringing the stern to the surface. The rush of water from the screws, as she gathered stern way, dislodged the mine which, to his great relief, fell clear. He had not even told his First-Lieutenant of the horror which had accompanied them so long.

The Admiral telegraphed that night, to ask the Admiralty to submit Nasmith's name to his Majesty for a Victoria Cross. Sir Ian told us that if the Admiralty declined to do so, he would telegraph, in the name of the Army of Gallipoli, to beg the King to grant it.

*E*11's engines were in such a bad state, that she had to be towed to Malta for repairs.

Both Boyle and Nasmith had reported that a gun would be of great value to deal with the small craft, and when *E*14 went into the Marmora on the 10th, she had a six-pounder gun mounted on her foremost superstructure. Boyle made the passage without encountering any obstruction. It was soon evident that no vessel of any size was moving in the Marmora; supplies for Gallipoli were being carried in lighters and sailing craft, towed by tugs, and escorted by destroyers and gunboats, which were very vigilant and elusive targets for torpedoes. The only vessel he found to torpedo was a steamer lying close inshore at Panderma, bows to seaward, with several small craft unloading her, the torpedo struck her in the bows and scattered the small craft. He said he thought she must be the vessel that Nasmith had already torpedoed, lying aground. Boyle sank a number of small heavily laden sailing vessels, but if they had no boats in which the crew could escape, or there was nothing in sight to which they could be transferred, he spared them. One day he had a number of Turks on board all day, before he could find a boat for them. On one occasion the crew of a sailing vessel, having seen him blowing up two others with demolition charges, became panic stricken when *E*11 approached. By the time he came up, he found two men swimming half a mile from their ship in a very exhausted state. After giving them a good meal, he returned them to their little vessel, which he spared.

On 21st June, Boyle was joined by Lieut.-Commander K. Bruce in *E*12, which was also armed with a six-pounder gun. After talking things over, they separated to work in different areas.

Bruce had one very unpleasant experience. Having chased a steamer towing two small sailing vessels, and brought her to, with a shot across her bows, he closed her and found that she was heavily laden with stores. Her crew were standing up with lifebelts on, but made no attempt to escape, so he ran *E*12's bow alongside her, and was sending a party on board, when the Turks threw a heavy bomb (which fortunately did not explode) on to the deck of *E*12, and unmasking a small gun, opened fire with it and rifles. The sailing vessels joined in with rifle fire, and also tried to foul her propellers. *E*12 managed to draw clear, and sank all three vessels with her gun; one shot from which caused a heavy explosion in the steamer. He then chased another steamer, a lucky shot set her on fire, but she beached herself under a shore battery, which drove *E*12 off. On 26th June, *E*12 was ordered to return, as she reported defects in her motors, but she got back all right on the 27th.

Lieut.-Commander A. Cochrane in *E*7 then entered the Marmora on 30th June, and met *E*14 on the following day. Boyle came safely back on 3rd July, leaving Cochrane in charge of the Marmora.

Boyle told us that Cochrane and most of his crew were suffering from the local fever, which was very prevalent in Gallipoli and the Fleet, so we were rather anxious about him. However, it did not seem to deter him. He steamed into Rodosto on the surface, to attack a steamer and five vessels alongside the grain store; some troops opened fire on him, but he drove them off with his gun, and put a party on board the steamer and two of the sailing vessels, which they destroyed; the other three were beached. Unfortunately Lieut. Halifax and an able seaman were badly burned by an explosion in the forehold of the steamer, and they suffered much during the next three weeks.

Cochrane's report remarks: "As both available officers and several of the crew were suffering from the prevalent fever, and the telegraphist had developed dysentery, not much work could be done"—without mentioning that he himself was a sick man. Nevertheless after resting one day, he steamed into the Gulf of

Mudania and sank two or three vessels. Another day he found a vessel of about 3,000 tons alongside Mudania Pier, protected by sailing ships secured outside her. He dived in and torpedoed her, causing a very heavy explosion aft. He next dived into Constantinople and fired a torpedo into the Arsenal camber. Like Nasmith, he found it very difficult to control his vessel in the strong and variable currents surging out of the Bosphorus. He then took up a position off the Zeitun powder mills, and rested on the bottom until it was dark, when he rose to the surface and bombarded it. One day he sighted a German submarine being towed by a destroyer, but could not get near enough to attack. Another day he went to the Gulf of Ismid and opened fire on a railway cutting and succeeded in blocking the line. He then visited the shipyard but found it closed. While inspecting it, he saw a troop train, and hoping the line was still blocked, gave chase at full speed; it evidently was, as the train returned and took shelter in a belt of trees, which made spotting difficult, but he fired 20 shots at it and succeeded in blowing up three ammunition wagons. Later he shelled another train, and hit it several times.

On 21st Boyle returned to the Marmora in *E*14, this time she fouled a mine mooring, which turned her eight points off her course, but she managed to shake it clear. When nearing Nagara, Boyle saw an obstruction, which appeared to be suspended under a number of lighters, but he dived under it at 80 feet. He met Cochrane the next day, and warned him of the new obstruction.

On 24th July, Cochrane left the Marmora to Boyle's care, having sunk, or driven ashore and destroyed, five steamers and 12 sailing vessels in 24 days. He dived to 90 feet under the net at Nagara, but after passing through the Narrows, he fouled two mine moorings, one of which swung *E*7 round head to the current, and anchored her for half an hour. As full power had to be used before Cochrane could free his vessel, and he had been submerged for 11 hours, she arrived at the entrance of the Straits with her battery completely exhausted. Cochrane (a great grandson of the distinguished seaman, Lord Dundonald) had certainly made full use of the few opportunities the enemy now gave our submarines, and had worthily upheld his ancestor's reputation for conducting war offensively.

Meanwhile Boyle sank all the sailing vessels which ventured out from the shelter of the anti-submarine batteries, which had been erected along the coast, and only found one small steamer to torpedo; she was lying alongside a pier at Rodosto and blew up with a heavy explosion.

The only steamers which now ventured into the Marmora were painted as Hospital ships, and flew the red crescent (equivalent of our red cross).

The captain of one of Boyle's victims spoke English; he said he was at Chanak during our bombardment in March; it did a tremendous amount of damage, and they could not understand why the Fleet did not come right through that day. He said that owing to our submarines, all the troops now went by train to Rodosto, and then marched three days and nights to Gallipoli. All supplies to Gallipoli had now to be taken in sailing vessels and lighters, convoyed by destroyers, along the coast *at night*. There was a German submarine at Constantinople, smaller than *E*14, with a crew of 33. Boyle had sighted a submarine in tow of a Turkish destroyer a few days before, but could not get into range to torpedo her. He continued to dominate the Marmora single-handed, until he was joined by Nasmith on the eve of the August offensive, when their co-operation introduced another new phase of submarine warfare.

While the Fleet was anxiously waiting for the arrival of the torpedo-proof monitors and cruisers, and the submarines were thus endeavouring to sever the enemy's communications; the Allied Army, pending the arrival of the new divisions, was improving its position in the southern area by a series of successful though costly offensives, under conditions of indescribable discomfort. Heat, dust, flies and the presence of a number of unburied corpses in No Man's Land, made life almost unbearable for the troops in the trenches; but I think everyone was buoyed up by the hope that at last the new Government was determined to see the matter through, and would send sufficient ammunition and reinforcements to make success certain.

On one of my visits to the Peninsula, I accompanied Sir Ian to the French headquarters, and made the acquaintance of General Gouraud. He had greatly distinguished himself in Morocco and the Western Front, he was imbued with the

offensive spirit, and had undoubtedly raised the *morale* of the French corps ; his confident soldierly bearing much impressed me.

The first of the offensives to which I referred was carried out by the French corps, Gouraud's plan being to capture the network of Turkish defences covering Kereves Spur. All preparations were made for this attack to take place on the morning of the 21st June. On the 18th, the Admiral and I embarked in the *Prince George* and, screened by destroyers, went to the entrance of the Straits to try and destroy some of the Asiatic guns, which were annoying the French.

On the 19th, a German submarine was well hunted by our patrols off Helles and later actually lay on the surface abreast of the French, who refrained from firing, thinking she might be British. This was very annoying, as it had been arranged that any submarine seen in the Straits was to be considered hostile, unless contrary warning had been given. The submarine then stood up the Straits on the surface, was met by a motorboat off Kephez and piloted through the minefield. She was evidently the submarine sighted by $E7$ and $E14$.

The French attack opened at daylight on 21st, and the fighting continued intermittently for three days. The net result was a substantial gain, but at a cost of over 2,500 killed and wounded. According to the Turkish official account, their losses exceeded 6,000, and the division engaged had to be withdrawn from the Peninsula.

On the 25th June we had a most enjoyable afternoon, which I described in a letter at the time as follows :

> " The Admiral and some of the Staff and I went to Anzac in a destroyer. They all turned out to see us shelled as we approached the beach ; the Turks always greet newcomers, but they left us in peace except for a few rifle bullets. We landed on ' Brighton Beach ' amongst the bathers, several hundred in their birthday suits ! They have look-outs and blow a whistle when the first shot is fired, then they all come tumbling into their shelters ; they are the most extraordinary careless, cheery people—roars of laughter when the shells fall. The day before one shell killed four, and wounded 14, no one seemed to mind. As we landed we were shown where a five-inch shell had gone diagonally through a water lighter alongside the pier an hour before.
>
> General Birdwood was bathing that morning, and a shell fell amongst some bathers near. The water all got red, and a man staggered out carrying his arm, which was almost completely severed. The shells sometimes go into the dug-outs. The other day one went into one with several men inside, it was a high explosive ; one after another the men came out, bright yellow and naturally rather shaken, to be greeted with roars of laughter ; regardless of the possibility that there were one or two inside killed or wounded !
>
> General Birdwood met us and took us all round, it took about four hours. Nothing on earth, not even gas (touch wood), could turn them out, the place is absolutely marvellous. The hills are trenched and tunnelled in the most extraordinary way—we walked a mile at least under ground. Once we went along a tunnel and very carefully poked our heads up one by one, through a hole in the middle of a cornfield, quite close to the enemy.
>
> There are a good many periscopes—the men are so casual they will run risks, and so they have casualties every day, even in these wonderful trenches ; many men have had nasty wounds from their periscopes being hit and the glass splintering.
>
> The Australians and New Zealanders love Birdwood, he is always in their trenches, and he has something to say to nearly everyone. The trenches are most beautifully clean, spick and span—all sorts of cunning devices—it would have been impossible to imagine anything cleaner. (It was quite a surprise visit.) Notices on the wall, such as ' Everything in its place and a place for everything.' We saw no food scraps, cigarette ends or anything lying about. We were awfully impressed. Towards the end we passed through a very rough West Australian miners' battalion. They are wonderful diggers, and wonderful swearers—the most appalling language—but a very fine fighting lot, though not as tidy as the others. I think the ones who impressed me most were the Australian Light Horse.
>
> We were in the miners' trenches when two shells hit

the parapet near, of course, they come in sometimes. One man said that . . . shell missed a . . . party, meaning us. They would have been awfully tickled if we had been hit. A little further on, a man had just picked up a shell, which had hit the parapet and ricco'ed in without bursting—we all criticised the wear of the rifling of the gun, which could be seen from the scores on the copper driving band. We came to a place where 39 8.2-inch shells had fallen in an hour, only three burst, only one man touched, although the place was swarming with men in little dug-outs.

We went back to the beach to find no one bathing—apparently there had been a heavy burst of shrapnel fire, so they were whistled in, only a few minutes before. We got off very quietly; *awfully* impressed with what we had seen.

While we were there the *Lord Nelson*, protected by nets and destroyers, bombarded Chanak at 7½ miles range, and set it blazing, much to the amusement of the Australians. Chanak was out of sight, but the kite balloon was spotting, and we could see the fire and smoke coming up behind the hill.

Captain Collett, R.M.A. (who got a Zeppelin shed early in the War) brought down a German aeroplane two or three days ago, it was promptly destroyed by the French 75's as it lay on the ground over a ridge; they could not see it, but their aeroplanes spotted for them.

Three days ago our patrol destroyers saw a steamer at dawn, close to Erenkeui. They (six) led by the *Foxhound* rushed at her, in line abreast; they got a shot through her boiler; then one of them took her in tow and pulled her out of the Straits to Kephalo, where she sank before she could be patched. All the forts in the Straits blazed at the destroyers and their prize; luckily very little damage was done, and only two or three casualties. The destroyers did not waste any time. The Turkish crew had jumped overboard, but the destroyers lowered boats and picked everyone up, including two badly wounded men; being fired at all the time. It must have impressed the French. The steamer had been towing lighters with grain from Constantinople to Gallipoli, but had lost touch with them in rough weather, came on without them and lost her way in the Straits, and got below Kephez Point. She was one of the Golden Horn ferry steamers."

The next offensive was to be carried out by the 29th Division and an Indian Brigade on the left flank and Gully Ravine. A few days before the attack, my brother, in the *Wolverine*, took General Hunter-Weston and General de Lisle (now commanding the 29th Division), and some Gurkhas, who had taken part in the unsuccessful offensive on 4th June, to examine the enemy's flank trenches, on which he opened fire to show what a destroyer could do. The *Wolverine* or *Scorpion* had been on the left flank since April, and my brother had spent a good deal of time in our flank trenches, and had flown over that sector in order to see how he could best help. The General told me that his suggestions were invaluable, and the *Wolverine's* performance immensely impressed the Gurkhas.

The action opened at 9 a.m. on the 28th June, with a bombardment by howitzers, including French heavy howitzers, heavy artillery, and the *Talbot*, flying the flag of Admiral Nicholson, spotted for by the *Manica's* balloon and screened by four destroyers. The British artillery support though superior to anything that had been given in previous attacks, was still deplorably inadequate. The *Reynard*, *Scorpion*, and *Wolverine* were stationed on the left flank, literally alongside and enfilading the Turkish trenches, which came down nearly into the sea. According to the Turkish official accounts, the fire of these vessels entirely destroyed the front line trenches on their sea flank.

We watched the action from the *Triad;* all that we could see appeared to be going very well, and it was a relief, after some of the distressing sights we had witnessed, to see our men advancing steadily without casualties, behind a curtain of fire. But the land dipped down parallel to the cliff into Gully Ravine, and although the left had swung well forward, the centre appeared to be held up. During the night the Turks counter-attacked heavily, and attempted to turn our left flank along the shore, but were detected by the searchlights of the *Wolverine* and *Scorpion*, whose fire destroyed them.

The fighting continued for the next two days, and the result, though of great tactical importance, fell far short of what might

have been achieved but for the lack of high explosive shell, and reinforcements to exploit the initial success.

On 30th June, finding the Turks disorganised by the battle on the British front, General Gouraud attacked and scored an important success on our right flank. Unfortunately that evening General Gouraud was very badly wounded on "V" Beach by a shell from Asia. Amongst other injuries he lost an arm, and was invalided to France—a grievous loss to the Allied Army, and to Sir Ian, who had found in him a most loyal and trusted ally, "more a co-adjutor than a subordinate," to quote his own words.

Desperate Turkish counter-attacks were delivered during the next four days, culminating, at dawn on the 5th July, in an assault by two complete divisions; these attacks were all repulsed, the Turks suffering enormous losses, the British losses being negligible. The Turkish official account admits that between 28th June and 5th July, their losses amounted to no less than 16,000 men. The British casualties in that battle were 3,500.

The last offensive in the southern area, before the August battles, took place on the 12th July, and succeeded in bringing the Allied centre up into line with the advance on the two flanks.

The fighting lasted two days, and resulted in smashing the Turkish defences in that sector. Our losses amounted to 3,100, and the French had 800 casualties. The Turks admit that their losses exceeded 9,000, exclusive of 600 prisoners, and that in the three actions and counter-attacks that followed, their casualties exceeded 30,000.

Had it been possible for us to renew the attack immediately, with fresh troops and abundant ammunition, victory was unquestionably within our reach; but the 8th Corps and the French had fought themselves to a standstill, and were incapable of further effort. Two days later the Turkish Second Army began to reach Krithia, and by 20th July the Turkish account states: "The crisis was over and the line secure."*

After these battles General Hunter-Weston came on board the *Triad* to stay with the Admiral for a couple of days' rest, as he had had a very trying time. He seemed as gay and as high spirited as ever, but he went down with fever the next day and was invalided home a very sick man on 21st July.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, pages 111 and 112.

Lieut.-General Sir Francis Davies was appointed to succeed him in command of the 8th Corps.

Meanwhile Sir Ian had decided to launch his main offensive in the neighbourhood of Anzac, directly the promised divisions arrived, and was anxious to refrain from any action which might induce the enemy to strengthen their forces in that zone. The Turks displayed no desire to test the Anzac defences, after their heavy repulse of 18th May, until the 29th June, when they assaulted the position held by the Australian Light Horse; they were thrown back in great disorder, and left 300 dead in front of our line.

Although no offensive operations were carried out in the Anzac area, in June and July, the position was greatly improved by mining and tunnelling, to counter the Turks who were active in this respect.

One afternoon at Anzac stands out in my memory, and the following is a letter I wrote at the time to my wife:

"29th July.

When I last wrote, I was just leaving for Anzac. I took Admiral Sir Douglas Gamble, and Generals Altham and Ellison—who have been sent out to pull the communications together, from the military side, as they were chaotic. They have sent nearly all the senior officers home, who were responsible for the trouble, including the Director of Works, who is responsible for the absence of piers. . . .

"After I had done my business with General Birdwood's C.S.O. and the Naval Transport officer, I went to see General Godley, and he took me for a walk, until the destroyer went back. We first went up the trenches which we visited the first day with Sir Ian; then they were being sniped all the time, and one had to keep one's head down, but now they are unoccupied; we have extended so much further. Then we went up 'Shrapnel Valley,' where all the casualties occurred that first night—which so disheartened the men—it is still dangerous, General Bridges was mortally wounded there, but everything is so well worked now, one goes up by communication trenches—we were not taking any risks. Everyone carries an anti-gas mask—Godley would not take his, because I hadn't one! They haven't started gas yet.

Then we worked our way to 'Quinn's Post,' it is *the* sight of Anzac—but they won't take General or Admiral visitors there. However, Godley goes every other day and Birdwood nearly as often, and I wanted to see it. It really is wonderful, it is on the crest of the cliff, with a staircase cut up to it, the steps bound with brushwood traverses; then a plateau, with tunnels and galleries in all directions. Mining and counter-mining goes on all the time. *The* sight is a crater, which was blown in by a huge mine explosion some weeks ago. During the night the Turks built a regular fort in the crater, and from there drove us out of our fire trenches, and nearly down the hill with bombs. We replied, and made it impossible for them to live in the fort, which was in turn blown up by mining—but the fire trench was untenable by either side, about ten yards from our second line, and 20 yards from their front trenches. The crater is only 15 feet from their front trench.

Until this fighting commenced, the post was held by an Australian officer called Quinn, who froze on to it for a fortnight, when it was isolated except at night—hence the name. Then Quinn was killed, and soon after the Turks were top dog, and dominated our people with bombs, as we were very short of them. General de Lotbinière (the new Director of Works) made bombs for them out of baccy tins, jam tins, etc., and slabs of high explosive secured to a sort of hairbrush shaped piece of wood—they made hundreds a day—as do our ships now for the Army. They selected a New Zealand-Irishman—Colonel Malone—to command 'Quinn's Post.' He soon became top dog, and for every bomb thrown by a Turk, we promptly threw seven—now reduced to three. He retook and consolidated the fire trench, and occupied the crater; has blown 16 mines up under the Turk trenches, and has only been caught by their mines three times. He took us round. He is a fine fellow and simply loves it. He took me into the crater—pitch dark except for slits—it is held by four rifles, they said they could hear the Turks working, and had just sent for the miners to come and listen and counter-mine. The Australian miners are quite wonderful, and

can beat the Turks 99 times out of a 100. We were only 15 feet away from the Turkish trench.

Then we went along the fire trench—protected against bombs by rabbit wire overhead, barbed wire and very deep. Bombing was going on all the time, and one could see the parapet of the Turkish trench very clear, only 20 yards away. I asked a man whether he had had a shot that day, and he said 'three.' A Turk had been very saucy and had put up his head three times, he thought he had put him to sleep. Then another man told us that 'just here' a man had put his head back 'like this' doing the same himself—and got a shot through the head which killed him, only two or three hours before; a machine gun had done it. Then to show me, the man threw a bomb, and promptly the machine gun went rat-tat-tat against the parapet, ripping into the wood holding the rabbit wire. Standing as we all were, it was perfectly safe, but men *will* get careless. I asked whether they liked it? They said 'better than fatigues,' i.e. carrying water, food, etc. I *did* enjoy myself, and I promise you ran no risks.

"Then we came down to the pier, which is very shell-swept as a rule three or four times a day—and we had what the generals described to Sir Ian, as a Court of Enquiry on the pier, conducted by the Commodore. They had been complaining to G.H.Q. about lack of transport and tugs, etc. I was furious when I got the letter, because we had given them everything the N.T.O. asked for, and he was satisfied. We could give more than they could or would take. I pointed out that during the six hours I had been there, there had been hardly any shelling, but three lighters had been left loaded, not one ton out of 45 had been moved, etc., etc. General Birdwood 'walked back' very handsomely, put his arm through mine, and said we knew how thoroughly he appreciated our work, etc. . . . I told him complaints which were made without proper enquiry . . . and forgave him! Sir Douglas Gamble and the new Generals were awfully amused, especially as they all said, a conclave on the pier like that would draw a bouquet of shells—however it didn't, and I had my say."

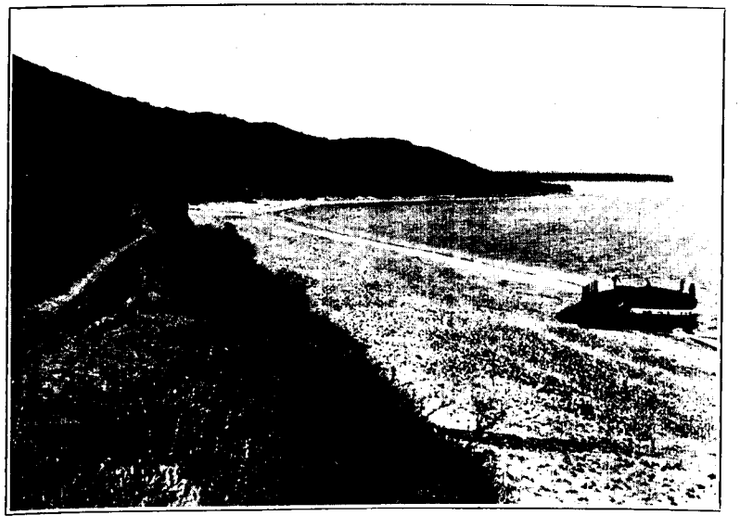
CHAPTER XXII

THE AUGUST OFFENSIVE

The Plan; Preparations; Arrival of new vessels and troops; Secret reinforcement of Anzac; The offensive opens at Helles; Attack on Lone Pine; Attack on Sari Bair; Landing at Suvla; *E*11 and *E*14 co-operate in the Marmora; Two days delay; The Turkish problem; Attack at Suvla repulsed; Attack on Sari Bair repulsed; Failure of the August offensive.

THE main object of the operations which Sir Ian intended to carry out, directly the new divisions were ready for service, was to seize a position astride the Gallipoli Peninsula from Gaba Tepe to the neighbourhood of Kilia Bay, with a protected line of supply from Suvla Bay. The object of the Anzac Corps was to throw back the right wing of the Turkish Army opposed to it, drive it south towards Kilid Bahr, and thus secure a position commanding the narrow part of the Peninsula between Gaba Tepe and Maidos. For this purpose the Anzac Corps was to be reinforced by one of the new divisions and an Indian brigade. The main attack was to be directed against Chunuk Bair, and the capture of Sari Bair was considered essential for the whole success of the undertaking. Simultaneously with this attack, two of the new divisions were to land in or near Suvla Bay, and were to seize the heights which commanded the bay and the plain to the southward.

Sir Ian had asked the Admiral to consider the possibility of landing in the Gulf of Xeros, but the latter pointed out that it would mean another long line of communications, 60 miles from the base, on which it would only be possible—now enemy submarines had arrived—to use small craft, of which we had barely enough for our existing commitments. When he learnt that Sir Ian had definitely decided to use his reinforcements on the left of Anzac, the Admiral told him that he was warmly in favour of the plan from a naval point of view. The possession of Suvla Bay would give us a harbour on the Peninsula, which could in some measure be protected against submarine attack, and which would afford shelter in a northerly gale. It might



ANZAC BEACH
Ari Burnu with Gaba Tepe beyond



NEBRUNESI POINT, SUVLA BAY AND SALT LAKE FROM ANZAC

even be possible to make a sheltered harbour for small craft in south-westerly gales, in the south-east corner of the bay, by sinking blockships; if, however, the operations could be extended to include Ejelma Bay, we would have excellent shelter from the southward, and the small craft could move from one to another as necessary.

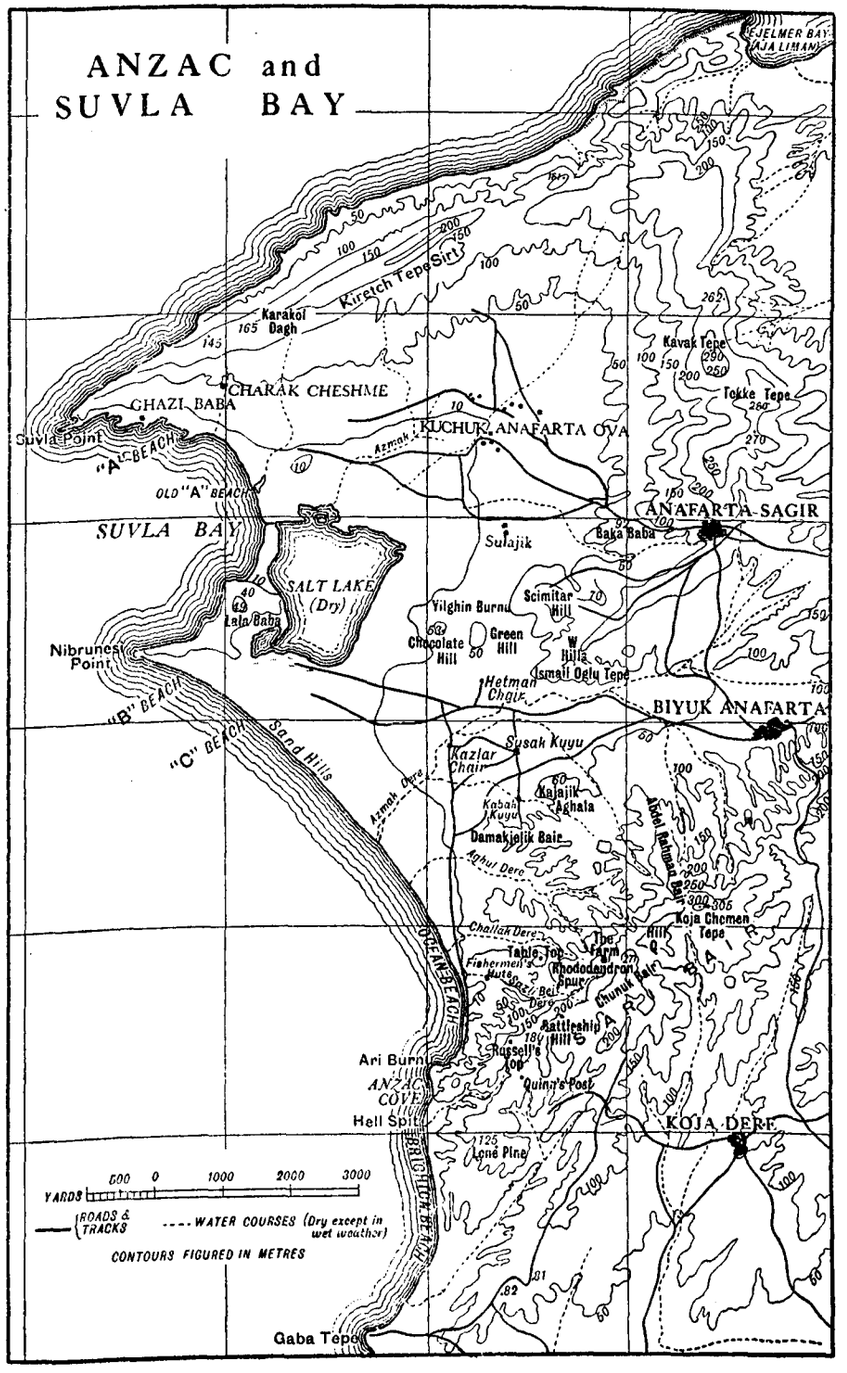
About this time we were all grieved to lose the services of Lieut.-Commander F. H. Sandford, who had been a most energetic and valuable member of the Staff since 19th March. We had been anxious to mine the approaches to Smyrna, and having no mines or minelayer, fitted one of our Fleet Sweepers to lay French mines, under Sandford's directions; one exploded prematurely while they were being laid, and Sandford lost an eye. The French minelayer *Casabianca* was blown up on the same service the next day.

As the operations were to be in the Anzac area, I arranged for Commander the Hon. Lionel Lambart to join the Staff; he had come out to the Dardanelles directly the operations started, had been in the *Ocean* when she was mined, and since then had acted as Chief Staff Officer to the Senior Naval Officer of the vessels off Anzac. He had landed with the Australians in the first flight of boats on 25th April, and had led the raid on the Turkish post on Nibrunesi Point; his local knowledge and experience were invaluable. The Admiral, Lambart, Godfrey and I studied the Suvla position from a hill on the north flank of Anzac, and from seaward, through powerful glasses, and formed a strong opinion that a night landing in Suvla Bay would be inadvisable. The foreshore to the eastward looked very shallow, and on the northern shore very foul. Commander Douglas—the hydrographical officer on the Staff—considered that the chart (a very sketchy one 35 years old) could not be relied upon; for instance, the outlet from the Salt Lake might well have silted up the eastern foreshore. On the other hand, we knew that the long stretch of beach from Nibrunesi Point to the southward was "steep to" and free from rocks and shoals. Lambart told us that prior to the raid he went in, in a destroyer, at right angles to the beach until the stem almost touched it, and it was quite certain that a very large force could be landed there simultaneously on a wide front.

Lambart and I examined the position for hours from

various points through our glasses, during the next few weeks. It all looked so peaceful, there was not a sign of a trench, wire, nor a Turk, and we became enthusiastic and hopeful for a great success. We could see numbers of beasts in the neighbouring fields, which left us in no doubt as to the presence of plenty of water, and our raiders had found a good well near Nibrunesi Point. This was a great relief to us, as water at Anzac was a ceaseless and haunting anxiety; there was very little on shore, and enormous quantities for men and beasts had to be brought overseas from as far as Egypt or Malta to Mudros, and thence by lighter to the shell-swept beaches.

When G.H.Q's draft of the plan arrived, the 11th Division was apparently to be divided equally between Suvla Bay and the beach by Nibrunesi Point. As it was considered inadvisable to give the enemy any inkling that we had an eye on Suvla Bay, boats could not be sent in to survey the approaches to the beaches, and the Admiral told Sir Ian very definitely that he could not guarantee a landing on a dark night in Suvla Bay. However, Sir Ian attached the greatest importance to landing a force to the northward of the entrance to the Salt Lake, which he feared might be defended or impassable, and delay was undesirable; it was necessary to occupy Kiretch Tepe Heights before daylight, as they commanded the bay. Of course the Admiral thoroughly appreciated the importance of this, and agreed to a landing in the desired position, remarking optimistically that, provided the troops were prepared for a long wade, he had no doubt that they would get on shore all right. So it was arranged, but to meet our views 7,000 troops were to land south of Nibrunesi Point and 3,000 in Suvla Bay. We would have greatly preferred to land a force on the northern slopes of Kiretch Tepe, where they would only have had a short climb to their objective. We thought it quite a feasible operation, and one that had been actually carried out on 20th June by a very enterprising reconnaissance of a small party of New Zealanders, who landed there from a trawler after dark, and struck right across the plain to the "W" Hills and back unmolested. This party found good water on Kiretch Tepe. We felt that a landing there on the lines of the "Y" Beach landing, might be of great value; but there were apparently military objections to this.



Among the craft which had arrived from England, were the first of the new motor lighters, which had been designed for Lord Fisher's Baltic project. They were big flat-bottomed vessels, driven by heavy-oil engines at a speed of six to seven knots; their sides and decks were plated with steel, proof against machine-gun bullets and shrapnel. They could each carry 500 men or 40 horses, and drew very little water forward, and only seven feet aft when fully loaded; they were fitted with a long ramp forward, which on a "steep to" beach, such as that at Nibrunesi Point, enabled troops to land dryshod. Two very valuable vessels, fitted to lay 500 yards of heavy anti-submarine net at a considerable speed, arrived in July. I believe they were old Isle of Man passenger steamers, and we heard that the ingenious arrangement for laying the nets was designed by Sir Arthur Wilson. They were accompanied by a steamer carrying several more 500-yard lengths, which could be transferred and ready for laying in a few hours. We hoped with these vessels to be able to make the entrance of Suvla Bay practically submarine-proof within 24 hours of the landing.

I begged the Admiral to keep the direction of this new landing in his own hands; after all the responsibility would be his, whoever he placed in charge, and we had so much more experience by that time than anyone else. He agreed to allow his Staff to work out all the details, but said he wished Admiral Christian (who was on his way out from England) to take command of the naval forces engaged, on the eve of the action, in order that he might have the same opportunities as Admirals Wemyss and Thursby had had in April.

Lambart, Godfrey, Ramsay and I worked in the closest accord with Sir Ian's General Staff. Ramsay, greatly assisted by Douglas, initiated the new monitors and blistered cruisers into the new methods of bombardment and co-operation with the Army, and Lambart and I dealt with all the watertight compartments into which the Army Staff is divided. Braithwaite and the two new Generals—Altham, Inspector-General of Communications, and Ellison, Quartermaster-General—were excellent people to work with, and we had an agreement, that if anyone introduced a particle of grit into the smooth working of the machine, his head would be blown off! Piers and quays developed with great rapidity, under the masterful energy of the new Director

of Works—General Lotbinière—and by the time the offensive was ready for launching, I think the naval and military co-operation could not possibly have been more complete or cordial than it was in the two fighting areas, at G.H.Q., and on the lines of Communication.

In the light of our knowledge after the event, it was a deplorable misfortune that the question of rank and seniority should have governed the selection of officers for high command; and that an enterprise with such infinite possibilities should have been confided to the new divisions, commanded and staffed by officers who had no experience of the amphibious warfare in which we had been engaged for the last few months.

It was very hard on Sir Ian that such a situation should have been more or less forced on him; he had begged that General Bruce Hamilton might be sent out, an old and experienced General of great determination, who had proved his worth in war. His request had been refused. He then begged for young and energetic Commanders for the 9th Corps and the new divisions, and submitted two names for the former, Byng or Rawlinson. Again his request was refused. He had protested that the Chief of Staff who had been appointed to the 9th Corps was unsuitable. His protest was ignored. It is true that General Byng was eventually sent out, but, like everything else in this campaign, so dogged with misfortune, three weeks too late.

The date for the new offensive was fixed for the 6th August. By the 3rd August the landing of the Anzac Corps' new drafts, amounting to about 7,000 officers and men, 40 guns, vast quantities of stores, ammunition and supplies, had been safely landed. During the next three nights, the 13th Division, a brigade of the 10th Division, and the Indian Infantry and Mountain Artillery Brigades were quietly landed and hidden away at Anzac during hours of darkness; not a sign of them, or the vessels that brought them, was to be seen when day broke. We know now that the enemy remained in ignorance of this great concentration, though at one time we feared that they were suspicious. During the night of the 4th a heavy burst of fire was opened on the beaches during the disembarkation. A small steamer and two horse-boats were sunk, and the casualties included the Naval Beach Master, who was mortally wounded.

On the afternoon of the 6th, the 8th Corps was to open the offensive by a series of attacks in the southern area, with the object of holding the enemy opposed to it to their ground.

In the Anzac area the battle was to be opened by an attack on the enemy's southern defence system, known as "Lone Pine," in order to draw his reserves away from the northern sector, where the main attack was to be delivered; with the object of capturing Sari Bair Ridge as soon as the enemy's attention had been directed to the "Lone Pine" fight. Simultaneously with the main attack at Anzac, the remainder of the 9th Corps was to seize Suvla Bay and operate on the north flank of Anzac.

The naval support and co-operation was to be given by the four monitors mounting two 14-inch guns each, and four cruisers of the "Endymion" class, armed with 9.2-inch and six-inch guns. These eight vessels were considered proof against torpedo attack; the *Bacchante*, *Talbot*, ten small monitors, each mounting a 9.2-inch or six-inch gun, two kite balloon ships—the *Hector* and *Manica*—and a number of destroyers. The Admiral was to fly his flag in the light cruiser *Chatham*, and the Corps Commander, General Sir Frederick Stopford, and his General Staff, were to be berthed in the sloop *Jonquil*, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Christian, which was to anchor close in to Nibrunesi Point, in signal communication with the naval and military signal station on the Point.

The submarines in the Marmora were also to take part; Boyle in *E*14 was still there, and on 5th August Nasmith went in *E*11 once again, to co-operate with Boyle in attacking the Turkish reinforcements, which were certain to march along the Bulair Isthmus by the Marmora shore, as the road on the other side, which was to be watched by the armoured cruiser *Cornwall* and destroyers, was open to direct attack from seaward.

The great August battle opened at Helles at 2.30 p.m. on the 6th with a bombardment by all our heavy batteries and the fire of the supporting ships. General Davies—fresh from the Western front—who was to take command of the 8th Corps immediately after the operation, which was in progress under the command of Major-General Douglas, arrived in time to watch the fight, and has recorded that he was horrified at the total inadequacy of the British bombardment.

The enemy, who had been quiet for a month, consolidating their positions and husbanding their ammunition, replied a few minutes after our bombardment commenced, with a heavy sustained fire which inflicted considerable losses on our troops, who were waiting in the crowded trenches to assault. At 3.50 the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division—brought up to strength again with well-trained drafts—assaulted as bravely as ever, and suffered 2,000 casualties out of the 3,000 engaged, to no purpose. The following day the 42nd Division attacked with equal lack of success. In less than 24 hours, in a limited attack on a mile front, the 8th Corps had 3,500 casualties; moreover this sacrifice had not achieved the result hoped for. We know now that Liman von Sanders decided at daybreak on the 7th that the risks must be accepted in the southern area, and he withdrew a fresh division, which had been in reserve there, to reinforce the northern zone with all speed.

On learning of this costly failure, Sir Ian gave orders that no further offensives were to be undertaken in the southern area, and the British line remained practically unchanged until the final evacuation five months later.

At Anzac the battle opened at 4.30 p.m. on the 6th, with an hour's bombardment of "Lone Pine" by 28 guns. The *Bacchante* searched the valleys beyond, and the monitors shelled the Turkish batteries to the north-east of Gaba Tepe. At 5.30 p.m. the 1st Australian Brigade assaulted the "Lone Pine" defences, and within ten minutes, after desperate hand-to-hand fighting and despite heavy losses, a number of small posts were established in the heart of the enemy's position. For the next 48 hours the Turks delivered a number of fierce bombing counter-attacks. On the morning of the 8th the worst of the fighting was over, but for the next few days several more attempts were made by the enemy to recapture the lost position. By the 12th the Australians had gained a complete ascendancy in that zone. The fighting spirit of the Anzacs was simply unquenchable, and throughout those desperate combats round "Lone Pine," in which only limited numbers could engage, pickets had to be stationed to control long queues of men, who were endeavouring to take part in the fight, and offering as much as five pounds to take the place of those who were detailed for the front line. I am glad to find that this

story, which thrilled us at the time, is recorded in the official history.

Our losses were 1,700, including two Colonels killed. The Turks lost about 5,000, and over 1,000 dead Turks were removed from the captured Turkish trenches.

The main attack on the north flank of Anzac was delivered by the New Zealand and Australian Division, ten of the 17 battalions of the 9th Corps recently landed, and the Indian Infantry and Mountain Artillery Brigades, under the command of General Godley. I will not attempt to follow the Military Historian through the intricate details of General Birdwood's plan to capture the Sari Bair Ridge, but quote his concluding paragraph:

> "It will be seen from these details that the whole scheme of the operations was strewn with amazing difficulties. The main hope of success was that the very boldness of the scheme would ensure surprise and enable the attacking troops to gain the crest of the ridge before the Turks could muster sufficient strength to stop them."

The main advance was to be made in two columns, and was preceded by an attack in which the *Colne* gave valuable assistance to the New Zealand Mounted Rifle Brigade. At 9 p.m. every night for the three preceding weeks, the destroyer on duty on the northern flank—either the *Colne* or the *Chelmer*—had switched on her searchlight and bombarded the trenches of the strong posts in the vicinity of Table Top. The Turks, of course, simply cleared out and took shelter in their dug-outs. The destroyer would then switch off her searchlight, wait for a bit to give them time to come back, and then repeat the dose. It was hoped that after a time the Turks would look upon it as a matter of routine, and wait under shelter until the destroyer got tired of it. At 9 p.m. on the 6th the *Colne* switched on her searchlight and opened fire, under cover of which the New Zealanders crept up, screened by the glare of the searchlights, and when the light was switched off, they rushed the post and captured or killed the garrison, with trifling loss to themselves. The *Colne* then transferred her attention to Table Top; here a strong resistance was encountered, but the New Zealanders would not be denied, and after desperate fighting they captured

it and the other Turkish posts north of Anzac. The way was then clear for the right assaulting column to advance on Chunuk Bair. On the left of the New Zealand Mounted Rifle Brigade, two battalions of the 13th Division advanced to the northward, and most gallantly captured a strong Turkish post with the bayonet, taking 200 prisoners, and the way was open for the left assaulting column to advance.

One of the battalions of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, which formed the right assaulting column, lost its way in the dark in the steep, difficult country, and when day broke the other three battalions of the New Zealand Brigade were waiting for it, still 1,200 yards from Chunuk Bair, which was thought to be unoccupied, and which it had been hoped to reach more than two hours earlier.

The left assaulting column, consisting of the 4th Australian Brigade and the Indian Brigade, advanced through even more difficult country, and had considerably farther to go. In neither case had reconnaissance been possible, and it was not surprising that they, too, lost their way in the darkness. When day broke they were more than two hours behind the scheduled time.

Despite the failure of the two columns to obtain their objectives, the attacks which were to take place from within the Anzac position at dawn, were delivered with the greatest gallantry, but repulsed with terrible loss. This sacrifice was made in vain, for the sole object was to help the New Zealanders on Chunuk Bair, whose advance had not yet begun.

The failure of the main assaulting columns was not due to the opposition of the enemy. Thanks to the spirited attack of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, the enemy's defence on the north flank had been completely disorganised; the right assaulting column had encountered no opposition, and at 1 a.m. were within 1,500 yards of Chunuk Bair; at 4.30 a.m. it was still 1,200 yards from its objective, and in the intervening hours only one Turk was seen.

The left assaulting column had only met with slight opposition from a small body of Turks, who had been driven out of their positions by the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, but according to the Military Historian it had "been given a task—the capture of Hill 971 before dawn—which even in peace-time, with troops

in perfect health, would have left small margin for error"; but the majority of the troops engaged had been in the trenches for three months, were suffering from the prevailing complaint, and were worn out by their long and arduous climb, heavily laden with entrenching tools and ammunition.

When the attack on Chunuk Bair was eventually delivered at 10.30 a.m. on the 7th, supported by the fire of all the available artillery and that of the ships, it made no progress, and the tired troops dug themselves in where they were. The Australian Brigade of the left assaulting column was too worn out to attempt any further advance on the 7th, and the Indian Brigade, widely scattered, had lost all cohesion; the heat was tropical, water was scarce, and nothing further was done that day.

We know now from the evidence of a German officer who organised the first defence of the Sari Bair Ridge, that the only Turkish troops on it, when he arrived there at 7 a.m. on the 7th, was a Turkish battery of two mountain guns and an escort of 20 rifles, who were asleep! *

Meanwhile the 11th Division had landed at Suvla Bay.

Soon after dark on the 6th, ten destroyers (under the command of Captain C. P. R. Coode), each carrying 530 men, towing ten motor lighters each carrying 500 men and accompanied by a picket boat, left Kephalo Bay and steamed in complete darkness, in line abreast a cable (200 yards) apart, to the neighbourhood of Suvla Bay. The northern three units entered the bay, to land their troops on the eastern shore, north of the Salt Lake cut; the seven southern units made for the "steep to" shore to the southward of Nibrunesi Point. The former was called "A" and the latter "B" Beach. This force was followed by six trawlers, each towing a naval launch, and a number of boats from the transports, to assist the landing in case of accidents.

Then followed the *Endymion* and *Theseus* in the wake of the seven southern units, each carrying 1,000 men, to be landed at "B" Beach. To the northward of this force was the sloop *Aster*, carrying 500 men and towing a motor lighter carrying eight mountain guns and 40 horses, accompanied by a picket boat. She had in company three trawlers each carrying 200 men, and each towing four horse-boats, which carried eight 18-pounder guns and 76 horses. These trawlers were accompanied

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, page 205.

by three picket boats. This force was to land at "C" Beach immediately to the southward of "B." Twelve more horse-boats were waiting at Kephalo to be towed to "C" Beach directly these three trawlers had slipped their first tows. The naval beach parties for the three beaches were embarked in three trawlers and accompanied their respective landing forces.

A cable ship was detailed to run a cable from G.H.Q. at Imbros to Nibrunesi Point, directly the landing was secure. A destroyer on the northern flank at Anzac was anchored in a position to act as a guide to the southern flank of "B" Beach, and she kept her searchlight fixed on Chocolate and "W" Hills to give the vessels navigational aid during their approach.

Everything went according to plan at "B" and "C" Beaches. At 9.30 p.m., precisely to time, seven destroyers steamed in very close to the shore and quietly lowered their anchors by hand off "B" Beach. Seven motor launches shot out and landed 3,500 men in one rush, returned to their destroyers and landed another 3,710 men with equal celerity. Thus 7,210 men were landed dryshod in half an hour without a casualty. Only one rifle shot was fired by the enemy, which killed a naval rating. The motor launches then proceeded with all dispatch to the *Theseus* and *Endymion*, which had anchored quietly close to the destroyers, and 2,000 more men were promptly landed at "B" Beach.

Eleven hundred men were landed at "C" Beach, and 16 guns and their horse teams were safely ashore soon after midnight.

Meanwhile the three units steaming into Suvla Bay were less fortunate; it was pitch dark and the destroyers could see nothing; they felt their way in slowly, but it was 10.30 p.m. before they actually anchored, 600 yards from the shore, and nearly 1,000 yards to the southward of the intended position; by that time the enemy were aware of their presence, and they came under a desultory rifle fire and the fire of a small field gun. One motor lighter chanced on a good spot, landed her troops dryshod, and went back to her destroyer for the second load. The other two ran on a reef about 50 yards from the beach, and the heavily-laden men had to wade ashore, in some cases almost up to their necks in water; seamen took lines ashore to guide the men landing, but it was an extraordinarily trying experience for young troops, and they suffered some casualties

from snipers. It was after midnight before these two lighters were cleared; one succeeded in getting back to her destroyer for a second load, the second remained fast. The first lighter which got back and returned with a fresh load, failed to find her good landing place, ran aground on a reef at a considerable distance out, and her troops had to be transferred to boats; the second lighter did likewise. A third lighter was provided from "B" Beach to take the place of the stranded one, but it was not until 3.40 a.m. that the last man of this unfortunate Brigade was eventually landed. As the Military Historian remarks, "the Navy's reluctance to attempt a landing inside the Bay had been only too well justified."

The troops which landed at "B" Beach quickly gained possession of Lala Baba, but the battalion which led the assault suffered rather heavy casualties, mostly from snipers, who hid in the neighbouring scrub after they were driven out of their posts.

Owing to the confusion caused by the failure to land rapidly in Suvla Bay, Hill 10 was still in the possession of the enemy at daylight; but a battalion which had landed at "A" Beach had passed to the westward of it in the darkness, and was astride of Kiretch Tepe Ridge, about two miles to the eastward of Suvla Point, before dawn.

Watching and listening in the *Chatham*, accustomed as we were to desperate fighting, it seemed to us that our troops were encountering very slight resistance. There seemed to be less firing than one heard on a peaceful night at Helles or Anzac.

The *Jonquil* anchored just inside Suvla Bay, abreast of Nibrunesi Point, soon after midnight; by that time all was quiet in that vicinity, and but for some scattered firing towards Hill 10, everything seemed to be going well, without serious opposition. This should have reassured General Stopford, who had been quite satisfied with the scheme until he came under the influence of his pessimistic Chief of Staff, but since had made no secret of his misgivings. The Chief of Staff was an artillery officer, lately from France, who was absolutely obsessed with the necessity for a heavy expenditure of high-explosive shells on continuous lines of trenches, before an attempt was made to assault them. He even told us the exact weight of ammunition per yard of trench that it would be necessary to fire before an attack could be delivered with any prospect of success. He ceaselessly complained of the lack of artillery support at Suvla, and the folly of attempting to land without support, on a scale which would have exhausted our meagre supply of ammunition for the three fighting areas in the course of a few hours. In fact he thoroughly disheartened everyone with whom he came in contact. As there were very few trenches at Suvla, no sign of wire and very few Turks, his gloomy forebodings were not helpful, and I shall always regard him as the principal marplot of the Suvla landing, as I told him on more than one occasion.

When day broke, the *Chatham* stood in to Suvla Bay, arriving about 4.30 a.m. Three lighters appeared to be fast aground some little way off the original "A" Beach. A column of troops was marching from the southward along the strip of low beach between the Salt Lake and the Bay, and were under shrapnel fire from two or three guns, well inland to the eastward, which we were unable to locate. These appeared to be dividing their attention between the troops and the lighters, from which ammunition was being landed in boats.

The sloop *Honeysuckle* and five troop carriers under the command of Captain Burmester (Admiral Wemyss' Flag Captain) were anchored in the Bay; these had arrived at dawn from Mitylene with six battalions of the 10th Division, which had remained there in their transports to relieve the congestion at Mudros, and give the enemy the impression that we were landing in Asia somewhere in that neighbourhood.

These troops were to have landed at the original "A" Beach, to reinforce the troops on the left flank, but Unwin, who was in charge of all the motor lighters, had surveyed the approaches and had told Admiral Christian that he did not recommend a landing there owing to navigational difficulties.

Unwin had collected ten motor lighters, and had placed sufficient alongside the Mitylene ships, directly they arrived, to land all the troops in one trip, but as there was no sign of any movement for more than an hour, the Admiral signalled to the *Jonquil* to ask the reason for the delay. Admiral Christian replied that "A" Beach was impracticable and the troops would have to be disembarked at "B" and "C" Beaches. It was evident that it was thought in the *Jonquil* that there was no other

alternative; but as the enemy's shrapnel was bursting right over the column of troops already marching by that route, and we could see was causing casualties, it seemed folly to give troops required on the left flank a three-mile march, for at least a mile of which they would be exposed to shrapnel fire without any cover, if they could be landed on the northern side of the Bay unmolested and within a mile of their objective. We could see two sandy coves which might have a clear approach, but in any case there was no reason why the troops should not land on the rocks if necessary. So Lambart and I went off in the Admiral's barge at once, with a message from him to General Stopford to this effect. As we were crossing the Bay we saw men crawling about on the ridge towards Kiretch Tepe, but could not distinguish whether they were British or Turks. The early possession of the ridge was essential, as it commanded the Bay; so I transferred to a destroyer and steamed full speed round Suvla Point to the northward until we were in a position to identify them as British, and I then went to the *Jonquil* with all dispatch.

There was still no sign of any movement of troops into the lighters; they ought to have been on shore within an hour of their arrival, and I went alongside the *Jonquil* in a fever of resentment at these leisurely proceedings; everyone there seemed quite satisfied that all was going well, and immensely relieved at the ease with which a whole division had been landed, after the blood-curdling tales they had heard of the desperate fighting on the beaches on 25th April.

I found it quite impossible to refrain from saying what I thought. I told them that the troops on the northern ridge were British (of which they were in doubt) and that they had not made much progress. I understood that the Mitylene Brigade was to reinforce them. Why march men all the way round under shrapnel fire if they could be saved two miles and landed within a mile of their objective unmolested? The General complained that he had been told that it was impossible to land on that shore. I said that Admiral de Robeck was prepared to land them anywhere in daylight, even on the rocks, if any advantage was to be gained. Except for a little shrapnel fire there appeared to be no opposition on shore; but haste was essential, if full advantage was to be taken of what was now

quite obviously a surprise and almost unopposed landing. Moreover, transports large and small and store ships were approaching Suvla Bay, from which numbers of horses and mules, vehicles, large quantities of ammunition and supplies had to be landed with all speed, and for this the motor lighters which were lying idle were urgently required; speed was of vital importance. I submitted that the troops should be ordered to get into the motor lighters with all dispatch, and in the meantime I would run in, examine the approaches, and lead the lighters to a suitable landing place.

I then went in with Lambart, and we found a steamboat and a whaler from the *Chatham* marking the limits of a little beach, and there was another to the westward of it. We examined them both and found that there would be no difficulty in landing troops in motor lighters at either beach. They were then named "A-East" and "A-West" and were the principal landing places in Suvla for the remainder of the campaign.

We were just leaving the shore when there was an explosion near "A-East"; I thought it was a shell, but as all the beaches in Gallipoli were under fire it did not seem important; as a matter of fact at that time these two beaches could not be reached by the enemy, and the explosion was caused by two wounded men who had come down from the battalion on the ridge stepping on a ground mine, which blew them up—only we did not know this till later.

I then went full speed to the *Jonquil*, having spoken to Admiral de Robeck in passing the *Chatham*; he told me to tell the General and Admiral Christian that he strongly recommended a landing at "A-East." They then decided to land the troops, which had just arrived from Mudros in five troop carriers, at "A-East," but they would not divert the Mitylene troops. They said they had already got their orders to go to "B" Beach, it was too late to change, it would cause confusion and delay. Very few had started, and none had landed. I felt terribly impatient that they would not change their minds.

Amphibious power is a wonderful possession, but it is very difficult to get its value recognised and made full use of.

I then went back to the *Chatham* and begged Admiral de Robeck to return with me to the *Jonquil*. I told him that I had already said more than I ought to senior officers; there was no

reason from a naval point of view why the troops should not have been on shore within an hour of their arrival, and we must get a move on. It was 8.30 a.m. when I got back to the *Jonquil*, this time accompanied by the Admiral, who remained with the General for a long time. I again pointed out to the Chief of Staff that the delay in landing the 10th Division was disorganising the whole time-table for the disembarkation of all the essentials for a rapid advance, so vital for success. I begged him to send a Staff officer to each ship to urge haste. He readily agreed, and asked General Stopford to lend his A.D.C., a very young officer who would obviously not carry much weight, so I accompanied him and acted as spokesman. "This officer has come with orders from the Corps Commander, who considers it imperative, etc., etc."

The officers in command, without any exception, had no orders, and very naturally wanted to know what they were expected to do when they landed; so I found the Divisional-General, who was in one of the transports, and returned to each ship with a message from him to the effect that the commanding officers would find their Brigadier on shore, who would give them all the information they required on landing.

It was 11 a.m. before I finished this round; I then picked up Admiral de Robeck in the *Jonquil* and we accompanied the first flight of lighters to the northern beaches to assure ourselves that the arrangements were satisfactory. "A-East" was the widest beach, and we led the leading lighter to it, the troops jumped out dryshod and ran on to some small land mines, which blew up half a dozen men. Their Commanding Officer thought they were under fire and ordered them to lie down. The second lighter tried to turn away, but ran aground, and the men had to wade up to their waists. It was now obvious to us that the place was mined, so we diverted the remaining lighters to "A-West." This was found to be clear of mines, and the troops were able to land without difficulty.

While we were watching this landing I pointed out to the Admiral a man who had his head thrown back draining the last dregs of his water-bottle, within a few yards of the beach. During the next few critical days, when military undertakings were governed by thirst, my thoughts often turned to that incident, which explained so much.

As we lay off impatiently watching the disembarkation, which seemed to me deplorably slow, the coxswain of the barge reported that he had seen two or three Turks' heads appear in some scrub a couple of hundred yards away, so we went in and warned the battalion then landing that they were probably snipers. A small detachment was sent out to round them up; we watched our men wandering about with considerable anxiety; they were simply asking for trouble; but the Turks did not open fire and slipped away unseen. Later they caused several casualties on the beach; a proper hunt was then organised, which resulted in the death of three Turks, and relieved the beach of further trouble.

Submarine risks were simply ignored—or rather, we confided the safety of the cruisers off the Peninsula, and the ships moving to and fro, to the drifter patrols and their indicator nets. A thousand yards of anti-submarine net was laid half-way across the entrance to Suvla at dawn on the 7th; the ships then went off to prepare another length, and the defence was completed early the next morning. Large transports and battleships then used the Bay freely.

The naval plan of operations, prepared in co-operation with G.H.Q., was based on the understanding that after the first landing on the night of 6th-7th, supplies, troops and all necessaries would be landed at one main beach in Suvla Bay. The most sheltered from the naval point of view was the south-east corner under Lala Baba, and it was proposed to station a water ship and a water lighter there, which would be able to cope with all requirements, as at Anzac and Helles. It was certainly never contemplated that large numbers of troops and animals would require to be supplied with water in three different positions; two widely separated from the third. ("B" and "C" became one beach.)

Lambart and I spent the whole day and half the night going round the various beaches, reorganising the beach parties, visiting transports and store ships, and speeding up everything within our province, and striving to make the Military Supply Services realise the vital need for haste. The places at which the various items—guns, horses, mules, ammunition, stores, etc.—were to be landed, and the order of priority, was a military concern. We could then use the available transport and the

beach space to the best advantage. However, it seemed almost impossible to get a rapid decision, and confusion reigned. South of Nibrunesi Point the beach space was unrestricted, but inside Suvla Bay it was limited to two small coves. We made absolutely certain that water was being delivered at all three beaches, and finding a water lighter aground on a reef near the original " A " Beach, we towed it off and placed it within reach of the shore, for the artillery which occupied Lala Baba.

We went on board the two stranded lighters of the ill-fated Suvla Bay landing—the third got off that morning. We found one deserted except for an elderly pensioner torpedo coxswain, who was very sober but full of rum. He told us very contemptuously that his officers—a temporary R.N.R. Lieutenant and Midshipman—and the crew had deserted in the lighter's boat, when she came under shrapnel fire at daylight. For his part he had stayed " to soothe the dying moments of the wounded." These vessels had been sent out in a great hurry; there were some splendid fellows amongst their crews, but a good many changes had to be made. As usual, of course, there were unlimited volunteers to man anything that might get under fire.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the furious energy which was put into the disembarkation of artillery, mules, etc., etc., by Unwin and the people working with him and on the beaches. I counted 127 mules come out of the hold and off the upper deck of one lighter designed to carry 50 at the most. They worked incessantly, and by nightfall had made up some of the lost hours as far as we were concerned, by doubling normal loads and taking considerable risks. Under Service regulations, high-water mark is the dividing line between naval and military effort. We never recognised any in Gallipoli, and at Suvla there was nothing we did not undertake to lighten the Army's task.

The original " A," " B " and "C" Beaches had all been under shrapnel fire from daylight until the afternoon of the 7th, and amongst the casualties was Robinson of the *Venerable*, who was severely wounded whilst landing guns on "C" Beach. Although the 11th Division's right flank only extended about half-way from Nibrunesi Point to Anzac, the latter had run a telephone cable to the 11th Division's Headquarters at Lala Baba, at daylight on 7th. We heard later that General Birdwood had

told the G.O.C. 11th Division that a number of wagons and a Turkish battery could be seen retiring to the eastward as early as 10 a.m. We thought on the afternoon of the 7th that the cessation of the enemy's fire might be due to lack of ammunition, but it seemed to me much more probable that the guns had been withdrawn to avoid being captured by the comparatively large army that had landed, and which, in the absence of any serious opposition, might be expected to advance. From the nature of the rifle fire, and the absence of machine-gun fire, it was obvious that our troops were meeting with very little opposition, and though much regrettable delay had occurred, there seemed to be no reason, on the evening of the 7th, why the operation should not yet proceed successfully. It seemed incredible to us, who had watched the fighting in April and May, that over 25,000 men could be held up by such trifling opposition.

It never occurred to me that evening that we would shortly be faced with the problem of supplying water to an army corps and an enormous number of animals on the threshold of a well-watered country, lightly held by the enemy.

Naval support had been given throughout the day by the *Foxhound* on the left flank, the *Theseus* and *Grafton* off Nibrunesi Point, and the *Talbot* in Suvla Bay, under the direction of the Brigadier-General Royal Artillery of the 9th Corps, who was embarked in the latter.

When night fell the left flank of the 9th Corps was entrenched astride the Kiretch Tepe Ridge, about three miles from Suvla Point; the right flank was on the beach between Anzac and Nibrunesi Point, whilst four battalions occupied the Chocolate and Green Hills, from which the Turks had retired to the " W " Hills after offering a slight resistance to this vastly superior force. The artillery was stationed on Lala Baba.

After a very peaceful night it was apparent, when dawn broke on the 8th, that the troops were not, as had been confidently expected, occupying the Anafarta Valley and the ridges, so necessary for the command of the valley and the security of the Bay. The 9th Corps was, in fact, entrenched in the scrubby locality near the shore, and on the apparently waterless high ground to the northward, and, as far as we could see, there was no sign of an advance. It then became evident to us for the first time that about 25,000 men and numbers of animals would

be almost entirely dependent on sea-borne water until they advanced; and unless they advanced, the guns which had been shelling the beaches on the 7th would return, no doubt reinforced. The speedy accumulation of a large reserve of water on shore, though a military question, then became a matter of vital importance from a naval point of view. We had small craft with a capacity of 480 tons which were discharging water at four different places, and an enormous quantity of water in the ships anchored in Suvla Bay to replenish these vessels; but strong southerly wind, or damage to water lighters by shell fire, might make it impracticable to deliver it to the beaches. Under the most favourable weather conditions it was probable unless the Army advanced, that the discharge of water would be limited to the dark hours.

At an early hour on the 8th, Admiral de Robeck visited the destroyer *Foxhound* on the left flank, and found that Lieut.-Commander Tupper, hearing that the troops on the ridge above him were short of water, had cut out his fresh-water tank with chisel and file and landed it and the ship's canvas bath on the rocks at the foot of the spur, keeping them continually filled from the ship. This supply was continued for some days until good wells were found behind the lines.

Meanwhile Lambart and I were visiting all the beaches. It was evident that there was a fierce battle raging on the heights above Anzac. Suvla was profoundly peaceful. We found water being pumped on shore at the three beaches and under Lala Baba. At the northern beaches the greatest confusion existed round the shore end of the hoses, as no receptacles had been provided for receiving and distributing the water, except some shallow wooden troughs which were leaky and useless. Men were crowding round and sucking water through holes they had made in the hoses with their bayonets, and there was much wastage. The provision of receptacles for the accumulation and distribution of water was a military responsibility, but the 9th Corps had apparently made none. We then set to work to improvise means for accumulating a reserve as soon as possible. Every ship off the Peninsula landed her canvas baths, tanks, etc., and the Admiral ordered all the ships at Imbros and Mudros to do likewise. Hoses and fire engines from the ships were also landed, and naval parties pumped all

day. (This went on until the 14th, when we learnt by chance that the Royal Engineers' store ship *Prah*, to which the 9th Corps had free access, and which arrived in Suvla Bay on the 8th, had any number of tanks, motor pumps and machinery for boring wells, which had been specially provided but had been overlooked by the responsible military authority.)

It soon became evident to me that the troops which had been left in peace throughout the night were not to be asked to make any further effort that day. Hundreds of men crowded down to the beaches to bathe, and I can find no better description of the amazing scene we witnessed than that given by the sorely tried troops fighting fiercely on the Anzac Ridge—"an August Bank Holiday."

After a visit to the *Jonquil*, which nearly drove me to open mutiny, I went back to the *Chatham*, where one piece of cheering news greeted me.

A message had been received from *E*11—the first since she left on the morning of the 5th; I had been fearfully anxious about her. It seemed that Nasmith was anxious that his presence should not be suspected, and feared that if he signalled, the enemy might detect another wireless note. Not finding the Turkish battleship in the Straits as he went up, he concluded that she would come down from Constantinople during the night, to take part in the battle directly the offensive started; so he lay in wait for her off the entrance to the Straits. She appeared at dawn, as he anticipated, he torpedoed her at 5 a.m. She capsized and sank a quarter of an hour later.

He also reported that in accordance with his orders, in co-operation with *E*14, he had watched the Bulair Isthmus road for troops, which we knew were at Keshan, and expected to come south directly our offensive developed. At 11-30 a.m. the submarines engaged a column of troops which were marching towards Gallipoli, frequently scattering them, causing great confusion and driving them off the road. The submarines were sometimes forced to dive when artillery was brought into action against them, but they came up in a fresh place and continued to harass the enemy, until 3.30 p.m., when they were finally driven off by Turkish artillery. *E*14 only had a six-pounder, but Nasmith had had a 12-pounder fitted while *E*11 was being repaired at Malta.

We heard all about this by wireless at 7 a.m. on the 8th; we learnt later that the battleship was the *Barbarossa Harridin*, which was hurrying to Gallipoli with reinforcements, field guns and aircraft, and the loss of life was very heavy.

Our aircraft had reported on the 7th that Turkish troops on the Bulair road had been thrown into great confusion by a submarine, which we concluded was *E*14. It was a great relief to know that Nasmith had also taken part.

I found the Admiral as unhappy as I was about the Suvla situation. We discussed what could be done to stir the High Command out of its apathy, and the result was a signal to Sir Ian. "It is very important that we should meet, shall I come over and see you, or are you coming to Suvla?" It never occurred to me at the time, that this message was not responsible for bringing Sir Ian over in great haste, but I learnt from him a couple of years later, that he never received it. I suppose that it was held up because Sir Ian had already left, before the line was sufficiently clear to receive it. We learnt later that Sir Ian, who was following the course of events in the three battle areas from his headquarters at Imbros, was deeply concerned about the situation at Suvla. The meagre information he had received from General Stopford, indicated that the 9th Corps landing had been completely successful, but no report of progress towards its objective had reached him. At an early hour on the 8th, therefore, he had sent Colonel Aspinall to get in touch with the Corps Commander and report. Owing to the most deplorable misfortune, the *Arno*—an Italian-built Portuguese destroyer, which we had acquired, and which was acting as dispatch vessel for the General—broke down, and it was 11.30 a.m. before Aspinall arrived, as he had to take passage in a trawler. He has described his consternation at the situation he found, at some length in the official military history; and it can be summed up in a telegram which he asked me to send by wireless to G.H.Q. at Imbros: "Just been ashore, where I found all quiet. No rifle fire, no artillery fire, and apparently no Turks. 9th Corps resting. Feel confident that golden opportunities are being lost, and look upon the situation as serious." Before the signal got through, we were able to tell Aspinall that Sir Ian had already left for Suvla in the *Triad*.

When Sir Ian arrived at about 6 p.m., we learnt that he also

would have come much sooner, but for the breakdown of the *Arno*. Had his desire been properly represented to Admiral de Robeck, without a doubt, one of the destroyers patrolling within a few miles could have brought him over within an hour.

The Admiral then placed the *Triad* at the disposal of Sir Ian, in the hope that he would stay at Suvla and try to dispel the ghastly inertia which overhung that area. He made no secret of his misgivings, and I took Sir Ian straight off to the *Jonquil* in the Admiral's barge, and told him exactly what I thought about the proceedings. When I learnt that he wished to visit the G.O.C. 11th Division, whose headquarters were dug into a little cliff on the southern shore of Suvla Bay, I landed him there in a skiff. I came away profoundly depressed. It was obvious to me that no fiery offensive—which could now alone save the situation—was likely to emanate from there. Sir Ian told me that General Stopford had said all was going well, the troops needed another night's rest and more artillery, but they would resume the advance the next morning under the G.O.C. 11th Division. Hence Sir Ian's visit to the latter, to urge him to advance without further delay, the margin was too narrow; the next day might be too late. Enemy reinforcements were being rushed south; Tekke Tepe Ridge *must* be seized, or we would be forestalled on it. He told me the General had attributed his failure to advance on the 7th, to thirst and lack of mules to carry water to the forward troops. Orders were, however, being issued by the G.O.C. for a brigade, which he believed to be concentrated near Sulajik, to advance on Tekke Tepe at once, and for the attack on Anafarta Sagir and "W" Hills to be delivered as arranged in the morning. We then went back to the *Triad* and waited anxiously for the morrow. It was going to be a desperately near thing.

An aeroplane had dropped a message at 3 o'clock that afternoon, reporting that Turkish reinforcements were approaching Turshun Keui. So little was known about the disposition of the troops of the 11th Division, that two battalions, which were well to the eastward of Sulajik and excellently placed for an immediate advance on Tekke Tepe, were ordered back to Sulajik, where four battalions were being concentrated for the attack. Owing to various causes, the withdrawal of these two battalions from their advanced position took a considerable

time, and when the advance on Tekke Tepe eventually started—within a quarter of an hour of daylight—two Turkish battalions were approaching the ridge on the opposite side. The race for Tekke Tepe had been lost by rather less than half an hour.

The ridges, within four miles of the beaches, which could have been occupied at any time on the 7th or 8th without serious fighting, were now in the hands of a resolute enemy—who had marched over 30 miles in less than two days—while our troops had been resting and looking at their objective—so vital to the success of their enterprise.

It is now known that throughout the 8th, the Suvla Plain and Tekke Tepe Ridge were unoccupied, and the enemy had withdrawn all his artillery by the afternoon of the 7th, to avoid capture. On our left three battalions were opposed by three companies of Gendarmerie (about 350 men), holding a post 800 yards from our trenches; in the centre and on the right, 19 battalions by 1,100 Turks including 300 Broussa Gendarmerie, all of whom were concentrated on a 3,000 yard front between Baka Baba and Ismail Oglu Tepe ("W" Hills).

The casualties of the 9th Corps up to the evening of the 8th, amounted to 100 officers and 1,600 men, more than the total Turkish force then opposed to them. The Turks had no machine guns nor modern artillery, and no wire, except for a few rusty strands on Chocolate Hill, which did not form a serious obstacle. The casualties were caused to a small extent by shrapnel, but mostly by snipers, who would have been swept away, if the troops had advanced.

It is interesting to look beyond the ridges which divided the combatants and examine the problems which faced Liman von Sanders, and the following is based on enemy official accounts.

The risk of a landing near Bulair, or farther north in the Gulf of Xeros, had to be guarded against, and strong reserves were retained in the northern area, to await the development of the British onslaught, which was confidently expected early in August.

On the afternoon of 6th August when Liman von Sanders heard of the attack at Helles and Lone Pine he held his hand, and his only action was to warn the Commander of the troops

at Bulair to be vigilant, and the Commander of the troops in the Suvla area to send a battalion to Anzac.

During the night, however, he ordered three battalions from Bulair to march with all speed to Turshun Keui, and the Southern Commander to send a Division to Anzac. Soon after daylight on the 7th, the armada of ships in and off Suvla Bay, the thousands of troops on the beaches, and the strong forces on the foothills of Anzac, convinced Liman von Sanders that the British object was the capture of Sari Bair, and the envelopment of his northern flank. He telegraphed at once for two of the Bulair Divisions to hasten south; all the troops in Asia to cross the Straits; and the Commander of the southern area to send another Division to the northern area.

At daylight on the 8th, Liman von Sanders who was at Turshun Keui waiting for the Bulair Divisions, which were being rushed south by forced marches, was told that the main column was strung out on the road, and no attack could be delivered until late in the afternoon. That the handful of troops opposing Stopford, could scarcely be expected to withstand a determined assault, and that at Anzac strong forces were on the slopes of Sari Bair. Moreover, the Chief of Staff of the Southern Army had arrived to urge that the Achi Baba position should be abandoned at once, and the Army transferred to the Asiatic shore, in view of the imminent risk of the British attack in the northern zone reaching the Narrows, and cutting that Army's communications.

A pretty black outlook, but Liman von Sanders was undismayed. He telegraphed to the Commander of the Southern Army, that not one foot of ground was to be surrendered, and immediately dismissed the Chief of Staff. The Commander of the small force in the Suvla area—in whom Liman appears to have had absolute faith—was ordered to hold the Anafarta Spur at all costs. This spur guarded the track from Suvla Bay to Anafarta Gap, and he felt convinced that Stopford's plan was to march via Biyuk Anafarta to assist in the capture of Koja Chemen Tepe (Hill 971).

The Commander of the Bulair force was told that it was imperative that his troops should counter-attack on a broad front, between Kavak Tepe and Biyuk Anafarta, not a moment later than sunset. At that hour Liman von Sanders considered

that darkness would protect his troops from the guns of the fleet. This officer met his Divisional Commanders early in the afternoon of the 8th, to give them their instructions. They deprecated an attack that evening; they had not enough artillery; their troops were tired and hungry; half the units were still on the road; far more time was needed to get out orders and deploy the force for attack. (All the arguments advanced by General Stopford's subordinates.) The unfortunate General agreed to postpone the attack until daylight on the 9th, and was ruthlessly dismissed by Liman von Sanders, directly he heard of the decision. Mustapha Kemal, who had been in command of a Division at Anzac and the northern sector of the Turkish defences, was then given the command of all the troops on the Suvla front. He arrived on the scene at 1 a.m. on the 9th, too late to advance the hour of the attack, but he made sure that it would be delivered with fierce determination at dawn.

When the long-delayed British attack opened, at an early hour on the 9th, there was no co-ordination between the scattered brigades and battalions of the 10th and 11th Divisions. The 53rd Division which had been landed during the night of the 8th and morning of the 9th, was to have been kept as a Corps reserve, but as the troops became available they were placed at the disposal of the G.O.C. 11th Division, and by the evening were scattered and thoroughly disorganised.

After giving details of General Stopford's plan, and the action taken to put it into operation, the military historian remarks: "It will be seen, therefore, that with the two brigades of the 11th Division moving forward at different hours, and the 10th Division not even forming its plans until after the 11th Division had started, any form of mutual support in the 9th Corps area was practically unobtainable."

Fortunately the Turks were numerically still very inferior to General Stopford's force, but they had all the advantage of position on the ridge, and the tropical heat sorely tried our inexperienced troops.

On the left flank the shooting of the *Foxhound* was reported to be very accurate, and here the troops made some progress. The Turks had no artillery, no machine guns, and had not yet

been reinforced. They still numbered no more than 350. During the forenoon the troops on the left signalled to the *Grampus*, which had relieved the *Foxhound*, that they were "dying of thirst," and the *Grampus* supplied them with water throughout the day, her boats running to and fro with every portable receptacle in the ship; and by the afternoon her water tanks were installed on the rocks below their new position.

Elsewhere the fire of the ships was of little or no value to our troops, fighting in the open. Our attack was everywhere repulsed, and the Turks, pouring down from the ridges on to the plains, drove our troops back to the position from which they started, and at nightfall dug themselves in near our trenches.

On the morning of the 10th the 53rd Division made an unsuccessful attempt to recapture Scimitar Hill, which had been abandoned on the night of the 8th. A further attack in the afternoon petered out and the troops at Suvla, like those in the other two areas, from thenceforward were reduced to trench warfare.

The failure of the 9th Corps to exploit, during the first two days, the wonderful strategic opportunities of its surprise landing had sealed the fate of the military effort.

Meanwhile, at Anzac, the battle for the Sari Bair Ridge was raging furiously. The roar of guns and the rattle of rifle and machine-gun fire was incessant. Here the young troops of the New Army, resolutely led and imbued with the spirit of Anzac, were winning imperishable fame.

A New Zealand battalion had captured Chunuk Bair at dawn on the 8th, and for a short time was able to look down on the waters of the Narrows. The crest, however, was untenable, but, with the assistance of two battalions of the 13th Division, a valuable position on the south-west end of Chunuk Bair was held all day, under the command of Colonel Malone (my friend of Quinn's Post), against fierce counter-attacks. The gallant Malone was killed that evening, but not before his devoted leadership had made the position secure, and it was reinforced by fresh troops during the night.

Elsewhere the attacks on the ridges had failed. It had been hoped that the advance from Suvla would greatly assist the Anzac plan, by threatening the Turkish northern flank; but it was soon evident that little help was to be expected from the

Suvla troops, the bulk of whom could be seen resting near the beach or bathing in the sea. Although the attack on Hill "Q" on the 8th had failed, a battalion of Gurkhas, under the command of Colonel C. Allanson, who had succeeded in collecting three companies of the 13th Division, dug in during the night, only 100 feet below the saddle connecting Hill "Q" and Chunuk Bair.

The general attack on the ridges was resumed on the 9th, and was preceded by a bombardment by all the Anzac artillery and the guns of the supporting ships. When the bombardment lifted, Allanson's small force stormed and captured the ridge. It is such a splendid story, that I feel I must quote from this heroic officer's account—written 48 hours after the event:

> "At an angle of about 35 degrees and about 100 yards away were the Turks. . . . During the night a message came to me from the General Officer Commanding, to try and get up on to 971 at 5.15 a.m., and that from 4.45 to 5.15 the Navy would bombard the top. I was to get all troops near me to co-operate. . . . As I could only get three companies of British troops, I had to be satisfied with this. . . . I had only 15 minutes left; the roar of the artillery preparation was enormous; the hill, which was almost perpendicular, seemed to leap underneath one. I recognised that if we flew up the hill the moment it stopped, we ought to get to the top. I put the three companies into the trenches among my men, and said that the moment they saw me go forward carrying a red flag, everyone was to start. I had my watch out, 5.15. I never saw such artillery preparation; the trenches were being torn to pieces; the accuracy was marvellous, as we were only just below. At 5.18 it had not stopped, and I wondered if my watch was wrong; 5.20 silence. I waited three minutes to be certain, great as the risk was. Then off we dashed, all hand in hand, a most perfect advance, and a wonderful sight. . . . At the top we met the Turks; Le Marchand was down, a bayonet through the heart. I got one through the leg, and then for about what appeared ten minutes, we fought hand to hand, we bit and fisted, and used rifles and pistols as clubs; and then the Turks

> turned and fled, and I felt a very proud man; the key of the whole Peninsula was ours, and our losses had not been so very great for such a result. Below I saw the Straits, motors and wheeled transport, on the roads leading to Achi Baba. As I looked round I saw we were not being supported, and thought I could help best by going after those (Turks) who had retreated in front of us. We dashed down towards Maidos, but had only got about 100 feet down when suddenly our own Navy put six 12-inch monitor shells into us, and all was terrible confusion. It was a deplorable disaster; we were obviously mistaken for Turks, and we had to get back. It was an appalling sight. . . . We all flew back to the summit and to our old position just below. I remained on the crest with about 15 men; it was a wonderful view. Below were the Straits, reinforcements coming over from the Asia Minor side, motor cars flying. We commanded Kilid Bahr, and the rear of Achi Baba and the communications to all their Army there. . . . I was now left alone, much crippled by the pain of my wound, which was stiffening, and loss of blood. I saw the advance of Suvla had failed, though I could not detect more than one or two thousand against them, but I saw large Turkish reinforcements being pushed in that direction. My telephone lines were smashed. . . . I now dropped down into the trenches of the night before, and after getting my wound bound up, proceeded to try and find where all the regiment was; I got them all back in due course, and awaited support before moving up the hill again. Alas! it was never to come, and we were told to hold our position throughout the night of the 9th-10th. During the afternoon we were counter-attacked by large bodies of Turks five times between 5 and 7 p.m., but they never got to within 15 yards of our line. . . . Captain Tomes and Le Marchand are buried on the highest summit of the Chunuk Bair. . . . I was ordered back to make a full report. I was very weak and faint. . . . I reported to the General, and told him that unless strong reinforcements were pushed up, and food and water could be sent to us, we must come back, but that if we did we gave up the key of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The General then told

me that nearly everywhere else the attack had failed, and the regiment would be withdrawn to the lower hills early next morning.* †

The Anzac artillery subsequently declared that the shells mentioned by Allanson, must have been fired by the Turks. But Colonel Allanson's belief that they were naval shells of course got about, and caused acute distress to the ships, whose preliminary bombardment had so greatly impressed him.

Boyle, the captain of the *Bacchante*, who was responsible for the fire of all ships in that sector, declared that no ship had reopened fire on the ridge, after the bombardment lifted; and, as it was pointed out at the Dardanelles Commission, it would have been impossible for the naval shells to have fallen 100 feet below the ridge on the reverse slope, as described by Allanson.

By midday on the 9th, the August offensive at Anzac had also failed, although the indomitable Anzacs would not admit it. The worn-out troops in the advanced positions were relieved by New Army formations, during the night of the 9th, and preparations were made to renew the attack on the 10th.

Mustapha Kemal, whose command still included the northern sector of Anzac, having satisfied himself that the situation at Suvla was well within his control, now turned his attention to the threatened Sari Bair. Before he left for Suvla on the night of the 8th, he had sent his available reserves on to the Sari Bair Ridge; and late in the evening of the 9th, after a personal reconnaissance of Chunuk Bair, he decided to launch an attack from that point at dawn on the 10th, to drive the British from the western slopes, and recapture the lost territory.

Our troops were overwhelmed by Mustapha Kemal's fiery onslaught. Chunuk Bair, and eventually the plateau known as the Farm were lost, but elsewhere the new line held firm; and here the New Army troops of the 10th and 13th Divisions most gallantly played their part, and suffered terrible losses.

Thus ended the four days' battle for Sari Bair. Anzac had suffered 12,000 casualties and Suvla 6,000, and the Turkish forces, though still inferior in numbers, were firmly established on every point of vantage. The Turkish strength moreover

* "The World Crisis, 1915," pages 441-443.

† Allanson was justly recommended for the V.C. but did not get it.

was increasing hourly, while Sir Ian was nearly at the end of his resources.

The 9th August was the decisive day in the Army's effort to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula, and we now know from German and Turkish official accounts, that it was so regarded by the enemy.

Turkey owed the defeat of our enterprise to the wise and determined generalship of Liman von Sanders and the inspired and skilful leadership of Mustapha Kemal.

All through the morning of the 9th I watched one distressing incident after another at Suvla—and from a distance Anzac still fighting desperately for Sari Bair.

At about noon, Sir Ian, who had been on shore visiting General Stopford, and as far afield as the Brigade Headquarters on the left flank, returned to the *Triad*, and expressed a wish to go to Anzac, so I took him there.

We called at "C" Beach and picked up Commander Tyndal Caryll Worsley, much to his delight, to take charge of one of the new Anzac beaches, replacing the Beach Master who had been killed that morning.

The brave atmosphere of Anzac, undaunted by its cruel losses and disappointments of the last three days, was something to be proud of, but I suppose I could not hide my feelings about Suvla, for Sir Ian has recorded in his diary:

> "For the first time in the Expedition, Roger Keyes seemed down on his luck; we had often before seen him raging, never dejected. These awful delays: delays in landing the Irish (10th Division); delay in attacking on the 7th; delay all the night of the 7th; delay during the day of the 8th, and the night of the 8th; have simply deprived him of speech."

Well, I had come to the conclusion that the Army had completely shot its bolt, and that my Admiral would have to wait until Doomsday to enter the Marmora, if he could not be induced to take any naval action until the Army had captured the forts at the Narrows.

A combined naval and military attack alone could achieve victory, and to that end I devoted myself body and soul until the final evacuation.

CHAPTER XXIII

CAMPAIGN AT A DEADLOCK

Marking time at Suvla; *E*14 comes out of Marmora for third time; General Stopford superseded; General de Lisle takes temporary command; Visits to Anzac and Suvla; My endeavours to persuade Admiral to force Straits; Admiralty telegrams; Sir Julian Byng takes command of 9th Corps; French project to land in Asia; Submarine exploits; Bulgaria joins Germany.

By the evening of the 10th, even Anzac had realised that the loss of Chunuk Bair, the failure of the Suvla landing to turn the northern flank of the Turkish defensive position, and the arrival of strong Turkish reinforcements had barred the road to the Narrows over Sari Bair.

Sir Ian had offered Birdwood the 54th Territorial Division, which was arriving from Egypt, but the latter had declared that he had no room for it, and could not supply it. Moreover, the heavy losses and the fatigue of the troops, after four days' desperate fighting, had made it impossible to renew the attack from Anzac for several days, and in any case, without a turning movement from Suvla, he would have small prospect of success.

That Sir Ian fully appreciated this is evident, and he set to work to spur the Commander of the 9th Corps on to seize the surrounding heights before the enemy had time to fortify them. This was essential, not only for the security of the Bay, but for the development of an attack on the enemy's northern flank. Air reports definitely showed that the Tekke Tepe Ridge was still neither strongly held nor entrenched. On the other hand, reinforcements were approaching; haste was imperative, if success was to be obtained.

The 54th Territorial Division was landed on the afternoon of the 10th, and like the 53rd Territorial Division, was launched into the depressing atmosphere of confusion and indecision which pervaded Suvla.

On the 11th Sir Ian ordered General Stopford to occupy the Tekke Tepe Ridge from Kavak Tepe to Anafarta Sagir, with

the 54th Division, its flanks being protected by the 10th and 11th Divisions during its advance.

General Stopford raised every kind of objection. He pointed out that his inexperienced young troops would have to advance through broken, scrubby country, which would undoubtedly be held by Turkish snipers, and declared with some justification that the troops were quite unfit for such an enterprise.

Sir Ian then came over to Suvla on the 11th to try and overcome General Stopford's objections; he arranged for a small body of trained marksmen and scouts from Anzac to come and help the Territorials to deal with the Turkish snipers, and when he returned that evening to Imbros it had been definitely decided that the 54th Division should assault the ridge at dawn on the 13th.

Sir Ian's previous command had been that of the Home Army; he had seen the two Territorial Divisions when they sprang to arms in August, 1914, and had formed a high opinion of their *morale* and efficiency; he apparently did not appreciate that their value had been impaired by the withdrawal of a high proportion of the best officers and men to replace the heavy casualties in France and Flanders—to be replaced in their turn by inexperienced officers and brave-hearted, weedy boys who had been sent abroad half trained.

I watched the preparations for this attack with great misgiving.

On the afternoon of the 12th, a Brigade of the 54th Division, supported by artillery and the fire of the ships, attempted to gain a position on the foothills to facilitate the attack on the morrow. After an advance of about 1,000 yards almost unopposed, they were held up by fire on both flanks and fell back to the position from which they started, suffering considerable loss. We heard afterwards that one small party of 15 officers and 250 men pressed bravely forward, but were not supported and were never heard of again.

Braithwaite came over that afternoon, and I was much relieved when I heard that the attack was postponed; to us onlookers it seemed foredoomed.

*E*14 came alongside the *Triad* in Suvla Bay on the afternoon of the 12th, having left the Marmora early that morning. Boyle

got out safely, but must have had a narrow shave; he burst through the net, tearing a way through it at a depth of 80 feet. It brought him up to 40 feet in a few seconds; he said the noise was tremendous, ripping and tearing past the submarine for a few seconds—everything sounds so plainly in the hull. Then later on he fouled a mine mooring, but he was at Suvla by 5 p.m., having made a very quick passage down the Straits. For the last 16 days Stanley, his second-in-command, was desperately ill, temperature 102 to 104. He lay without speaking or moving in a comatose state; the only thing that woke him was going through the net. We got a doctor at once and sent him off to a hospital ship.

Boyle told us that on the 8th he torpedoed a large heavily-laden store ship, about 5,000 tons. She managed to run ashore, whereupon *E*11 and *E*14 went in and shelled her until she was ablaze.

In her three trips *E*14 had been 70 days in the Marmora without any dockyard repairs, though she had steamed over 12,000 miles since Boyle took command of her at Barrow. A remarkable achievement. The Admiral sent her down to Malta for a thorough overhaul and a well-earned rest.

The next day Lieutenant Eden carried out what I think must have been the first aerial torpedo attack, and hit the same ship with a 14-inch torpedo, unaware that it was already aground. The pilot was one of the two who succeeded in flying back to his carrier ship in the Christmas Day air raid.

It was evident to us on the 13th that General Stopford and his Chief of Staff were now thoroughly alarmed at the situation, and even feared that the troops would be rushed and driven down to the beaches. He seems to have expressed his fears to Sir Ian, who hurried over to Suvla to try to dispel the prevailing depression by his confident optimism. After his interview he told us that Stopford had complained bitterly about the inferior quality of the Territorial troops, but he was confident that if they were put fairly and squarely at their fences they would fight all right. He attributed the failure to indecision, lack of leadership and deplorable Staff work, an opinion I fully shared. He said it was pretty obvious that the 9th Corps must be thoroughly reorganised before it could be relied upon to

deliver an attack with any hope of success, and General Stopford was given orders to this effect.

However, on 15th, without any reference to G.H.Q., General Stopford, in his anxiety to retrieve the situation, launched an attack on the Kiretch Tepe Ridge, which we know now caused the Turks intense anxiety. On the left, thanks to the accurate shooting of two destroyers, a substantial advance was made, but the 350 Gendarmerie had been considerably reinforced by this time, and fresh Turkish troops were hurried up, with the result that after two days' fighting and suffering about 2,000 casualties, our troops were back in their original line. The enemy admit about 1,700 casualties, and—although it was not appreciated at the time by G.H.Q.—it is clear that they regarded the situation on the 15th as highly critical. Liman von Sanders declares that: "If during their attacks on 15th and 16th August the British had captured and held Kiretch Tepe, the whole position of the 5th Army would have been outflanked. The British might then have achieved a decisive and final victory."

Before the battle for Kiretch Tepe ended, Sir Frederick Stopford and the G.O.C. 10th Division had left the Peninsula. The former was temporarily succeeded by Major-General de Lisle, commanding the 29th Division, pending the arrival of Sir Julian Byng, who was now at last being sent.

My diary records that:

> "On Friday 13th we received rather a panicky message from Anzac, and after dinner that night Lambart and I steamed down the coast in a picket boat and landed there to see General Birdwood. His Staff Officer told me that he had gone to bed and was rather horrified when I said that I must see him even if he was turned in, unless he was fast asleep. So I went into his dug-out and sat beside his bed for nearly an hour. He had again been making panicky signals without consulting his Beach Master—asking for things he did not want: wounded to be evacuated, and when I sent for them they had already been embarked. For water—using that word 'critical' they are so fond of, which means so much to us and so little to them. I told him if he had asked his Naval Transport Officer he would have been assured that there was more water on the beach

in the water lighters than his pumps could deal with, but because of the word 'critical' I had robbed Suvla of a water steamer, and their right flank had gone short, in order to send water to him which he could not take.

Of course I was very polite and lectured him with much deference—all the same he had to have it. Then he told me of all his hopes and disappointments and cruel losses. How I hate it, and I feel all the time that we could stop it and win this great prize. Godfrey and Lambart agree with me, and I had a long talk with Wemyss this evening (16th August). I believe I have persuaded him. My submariners go up with an even money chance of never coming back; they have the only thing that matters, the spirit that will risk anything to win a great prize. I am sure that the majority of us would get through; and with the Army in a position to gather the fruits of victory, the end would be very soon, and a most glorious page would be added to Naval History."

Meanwhile I had tried my best to persuade the Admiral that the only chance of success now lay in *real* naval co-operation, and that by forcing the Straits, the Fleet would extricate the Army from the deadlock it had reached in its valiant efforts to help us, and that *together* the Army and Navy could yet achieve a decisive victory. The Admiral was not very encouraging, and obviously did not agree with me, so I decided to put all the arguments on paper. After recording the events which I have related, in a somewhat censored form, in the last chapter, my diary continues:

"Godfrey and I have prepared an appreciation of the whole situation, which I gave the Admiral yesterday (18th August). I want him to telegraph it home, but I am afraid he won't. He will, in the end, be driven into doing what we might so well do now, and in the meantime this awful fighting will go on on shore. I feel very unhappy about it, and I am sure I am right."

The memorandum was as follows:

"V. A. Submitted.

The failure of the recent attack to achieve its object has brought about a situation which as far as the Army is concerned promises to become an absolute deadlock.

The attached is the result of much thought and represents the views of Commander Lambart, Captain Godfrey and myself.

We are very strongly of the opinion that our proposal is *the* only solution of the problem before us and that it has every prospect of success.

If we fail the Army will be no worse off than it is now, and our casualties can be filled without weakening the fighting value of the Grand Fleet in Home Waters.

ROGER KEYES, C.O.S.

17.8.15."

THE POSITION IN THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA

"A" MILITARY SITUATION.

After determined efforts to capture ACHI BABA and so open the way for the Navy's attack on the Narrows—the Army have attempted to achieve this object by a movement against the SARI BAIR ridge and the country to the north of it.

The main object of the General Officer Commanding Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was to seize a position across the Gallipoli Peninsula from GABA TEPE to MAIDOS with a protected line of supply from SUVLA BAY.

It was laid down as essential to capture and retain Hill 305 in the SARI BAIR ridge.*

The capture of this hill was of vital importance to the Navy, as with that point available for observation stations the reduction of the CHANAK FORTS could be at once undertaken with sure chance of success.

The second point of special importance for the Navy was the securing of SUVLA BAY to enable the supplies of the Army to be landed unopposed; to ensure this it was laid down, by G.O.C. 9th Corps, that it would be necessary "to deny the enemy the heights which connect ANAFARTA SAGIR to EJELMER BAY."

The landing took place nine days ago and neither of the above essentials have been won.

* Koja Chemen Tepe, 971 feet high, called Hill 305 (metres) on our maps.

No body of troops could have tried harder or fought more magnificently than the A. and N.Z. Army Corps and the 13th Division attached to them. They came very near to victory, but they failed to gain what had been put down as essential to our success—i.e., Hill 305.

The nett result of the operations in the northern zone is to increase the area occupied by the A. and N.Z. Army Corps and to occupy an area to the northward of it which will be very difficult to retain and the soundness of the retention of which is open to argument.

The cost of this success is roughly 30,000 casualties.

As regards these operations certain points stand out:

(*a*) The enemy was completely surprised.

(*b*) The landing was practically unopposed.

(*c*) The covering ships were not hampered by enemy submarines.

(*d*) The sinking of the *Barbarossa* seriously weakened the enemy.

The above points were all to our advantage.

On the other side can be placed:

(*e*) Some delay in the landing in Suvla Bay.

(*f*) An absence of sufficient transport at A.N.Z.A.C.

(*g*) A shortage of water, due almost entirely to the absence of the wells which the Military counted upon to provide them with sufficient for drinking purposes.*

Taken all round no "Coup" could have commenced under more favourable circumstances, and yet the enemy were able to launch their counter-attack in time to deny to us the CHUNUK BAIR and Hill 305.

How far the Military reckoned on the reported loss of

* This statement was based on information given to us by the 9th Corps at that time, but General de Lisle, who reached Suvla on 15th August, stated in his evidence before the Dardanelles Commission: "There were wells within a quarter of a mile of the shore, which I had opened out. On the Kiretch Tepe Ridge, there were two wells 400 feet above the sea. . . . Between Kiretch Tepe and the Salt Lake there were as many wells as you liked to dig. You had not got to go down more than 15 feet before you got as much water as you wanted. On the shore, within 100 yards of high water mark, you had only to dig the sand down four feet to get water. . . . The difficulties about water were very much exaggerated."

morale by the Turks is hard to say, but the result of the fighting has shown that the Turk is still full of fight, and though his supply of artillery ammunition is low, he is well supplied with small arm and machine-gun ammunition and he has been well schooled in the use of the latter weapon.

It would appear, therefore, that any success by the Army on the present lines can only be achieved by an expenditure of personnel and material quite beyond its present resources.

"B" NAVAL SITUATION.

On the 18th March the Navy made a determined effort to force the Dardanelles; the attack failed principally on account of a minefield which had been missed by our sweepers, who were then a most inefficient service.

From more than one source it has been stated that the enemy were on the verge of being defeated on that day, until the unlucky accidents robbed the Navy of its chances of victory.

Since then the Navy has been exclusively employed in landing, covering and supplying the Army—that it has been successful in this task is to a great extent due to the continual fine weather experienced. There have been practically no days on which it has been impossible to land stores, etc.

A continuation of these weather conditions cannot be counted on and a fortnight of southerly gales would produce a most serious state of affairs in the Peninsula.

Unless a long drawn-out campaign is to be accepted and prepared for, with all its dangers and uncertainties from weather and other sources, there appears to be only one solution—that the Navy should force the Dardanelles, which feat accomplished, the fate of the Turkish Army in the Peninsula must be sealed.

The problem of forcing the Straits is not now so difficult as it was on the 18th March.

An attack would probably surprise the enemy.

It is possible that he has moved many of the small guns that made minesweeping so difficult.

The presence of the long range monitors makes the attack on the Chanak Forts, Suan Dere Batteries and the Torpedo

Tubes (if they can be located) much more deadly, as they can be shelled from the west side of the Peninsula.

The Navy now possesses an efficient air service—balloon and aeroplane—so that difficulties of spotting are much less than when the *Queen Elizabeth* used indirect fire from Gaba Tepe.

Above all there is now an efficient sweeping flotilla or one which could be made so with a little practice.

If the attack fails the Navy will be still easily capable of carrying on its present duties—the ships that will be risked in the attack are those at present in Mudros.

If three or four ships succeed in entering the Marmora with say six to eight destroyers, the Squadron will, in combination with the submarines, be sufficient to complete the domination of that sea.

The submarines have undoubtedly made the supply by sea of the Turkish Army in the Peninsula a most difficult matter, but too much cannot be expected of them. They cannot deal with supplies towed along the shore in shallow water and convoyed by destroyers, the usual method of transportation, or with the passage of convoys along the Bulair Isthmus.*

The presence of a small squadron will achieve these objects.

The passage through the Straits of say 50 per cent. of the attacking Fleet does not appear too optimistic, and an attack on this principle appears to be the only way of avoiding a winter campaign, which would be fraught with great anxieties, and of putting an end to the terrible slaughter of our troops in the Peninsula.

ROGER KEYES.

17th August, 1915.

* This is borne out by the German Naval History which declares that in the month of August "The British Submarines succeeded for the first time in raising the losses (among supply ships; all troops were at that time sent by road) to a point that caused anxiety. If the destruction of tonnage had been maintained at anything like the same level during the next few months the resistance of the Fifth Army would have come to an end."

"Der Krieg zur See, 1914–1918; Die Mittelmeer Division."

The Admiral then gave me some notes, which included a list of the vessels available for the operation, and enumerated all the difficulties we would have to overcome.

I sent a copy of my memorandum to Admiral Wemyss, remarking that although he had been against me in May, I hoped he would now feel able to support me, if he was consulted by the Admiral. He replied as follows:

"MY DEAR ROGER,

Many thanks. I should find it very difficult not to agree with your memo. of 17th. Whilst there was any chance of the Army winning through, the argument was different, but late events have quite altered the balance of the scales. A naval attack on our objective is the only way now to avert a winter campaign, whose greatest achievement can only be stalemate at the cost of much wastage. The presence of but a small number of ships on the other side of the Narrows, would so alter the situation in our favour that it would surely be worth the loss of an equal number of ships. Of course there may be political and perhaps even strategical issues at stake of which we out here know nothing—but the authorities at home would judge of these.

A British Squadron, however small, in the Marmora could not, I think, but have an enormous effect upon the whole war. It is difficult for us out here to weigh the good effects against the possible losses.

Personally I am of opinion that the result would be in favour of a shove.

Yours, R. E. WEMYSS."

Meanwhile Major-General de Lisle had landed at Suvla to take command of the 9th Corps. I think the difficulties of his task must have been almost overwhelming; however, he faced them with characteristic courage and determination (which was only to be expected from a man who, as a young officer in the Durham Light Infantry, had trained the Regimental polo team to be the champion team in India, and had already distinguished himself in France).

De Lisle was ordered to prepare for an attack on the "W" Hills and Anafarta Spur, and was told that a small force would

suffice to disperse the snipers in Suvla Plain, and push forward along Kiretch Tepe to Ejelmer Bay.

At the time Sir Ian was quite unaware of Stopford's unsuccessful and costly offensive along that ridge. In addition to the force he had inherited from Stopford, he would have 5,000 dismounted Yeomanry, who were on their way from Egypt, and he would have the co-operation of a brigade of the Anzac Corps on his right flank.

General de Lisle made personal reconnaissances everywhere, and obviously raised the *morale* of the dispirited troops. After two or three days he declared that he was convinced he could carry out the task Sir Ian had given him, but in order to make sure of success, Sir Ian sent him the whole of the 29th Division from Helles. The attack was to be delivered on the 21st, and the *Venerable* took up a position in Suvla Bay, well inside the net to co-operate with the *Talbot*, two blistered cruisers, and some destroyers in supporting the attack.

Meanwhile the enemy had brought guns to bear on the bay, and the ships discharging their cargoes had to submit to gunfire, or anchor far out close to the net, and risk being torpedoed through its meshes; a choice in fact between the Devil and the deep sea—they preferred the latter. It was fortunate for us that the enemy submarines were so lacking in enterprise, or that our patrols were so vigilant, for they had easy targets all day and every day.

The following extracts from my records give some insight into our life in those days, and the difficulties and problems that beset us.

"On Thursday, 19th August, when we came back from Suvla, I went up to G.H.Q. to do some business, and they asked me to attend a meeting on the following morning to discuss the supply of the Army throughout the winter. It was a very full meeting, the Inspector-General of Communications, Quartermaster-General, Director of Works, Ordnance Commissariat, etc., etc., everyone in fact except Braithwaite; he has nothing whatever to do with Supply or Movements, only Operations, hence a good deal of the chaos which exists, the frequent changes, etc., etc., which add so enormously to our work and which we simply don't and can't understand in the Navy. The amusing thing to me was the discussion at great length of arrangements under

conditions which I knew—only was not at liberty to mention—might not exist in two or three days' time. (I had just been talking to Braithwaite.) It seemed to me so strange that a Lieut.-General, a Major-General, and three Brigadiers holding important administrative commands, should have been left so completely in the dark. This water-tight compartment system of running everything may do very well in peace-time, and possibly in war, when trains and communications are regular, but when everything depends on an inadequate sea transport, weather, direction of the wind, state of the beach, etc., etc., it is hopeless from our point of view. Though I must say things have improved enormously since the new men came out, particularly Generals Altham and Ellison; they have an enormous Staff, who mostly live in great comfort on board the Royal Mail liner *Aragon*.

"I get on splendidly with the Generals and have nothing to do with anyone below them, except that day, when a Brigadier started grousing about lack of transport at Anzac—so I turned to him and said, 'Will you come there with me this afternoon?' He couldn't say no—then General Ellison said he would come, too. I said the only way to settle these matters was on the spot, and reminded General Ellison how I pinned down the last Anzac complaint to a definite statement at that meeting on the end of the pier, and proved that the complaint was groundless and that they had never consulted their Naval Transport Officer. We went off in a destroyer after lunch, and just after we landed they started shelling, so we did the first part of our business with the Naval Transport Officer under the cover of some bags of maize on the pier. When there was a pause we went off to Headquarters. The whole of Anzac Beach was strewn with wrecks of lighters and boats. Among the more recent wrecks is a picket boat of the *Lord Nelson*, awash with two shell-holes in her. After that we walked to a new pier about a mile out, which is in a place which was death to go near before the last battle, when Anzac trebled their acreage.

"General Birdwood came with us, but as he was rather tired I said I would take them out to the most northerly post, where I had been on a previous occasion. We had to go the whole way along a sap, with overhead cover in some places, but the first mile and a half we walked along the beach road until we came to

a notice, ' Beware of Snipers ' and as we were turning into the sap, two men repairing a telegraph wire said, ' Hurry, a sniper fires whenever we move.' I forgot to mention Lionel Lambart was with me, and he was a little way behind with General Ellison.

" When we got out to the old northerly post it all looked very different. When I first went there, there were great spaces one could not venture into—now there are troops everywhere —also many graves. General Godley and Rhodes gave us tea, and they took us up to a point where we could see the whole new position and battlefield. The storming of those impossible heights by the New Zealanders and Ghurkhas will live for ever. On the way up we picked up General Shaw, now commanding the 13th Division ; he is very cheery but has got very fat since I last saw him before the War. He has done very well, but has had awful losses ; his infantry is reduced from about 12,000 to 5,200. The losses are due to a great extent to inexperience ; the men bunch together when they get into tight places, or the country is difficult ; one has seen it so often in the last fortnight —then down comes the shrapnel or machine-gun and rifle-fire, and the carnage is awful. Shaw was very friendly and explained that his increase in girth was due to a wound in the leg, which had prevented him taking any exercise. We had to go up a very narrow sap, and I thought he would stick. I have never seen anyone put on so much weight in a short time, and one notices it here as everyone else is so gaunt and thin.

" The 13th Division did very well, much better than the 10th and 11th, but they had the advantage of being landed two weeks at Helles.

" It was wonderful to look down upon our trenches and the enemy's, apparently touching ; my powerful telescope brought everything so close. The curious thing is to see the dead ground swarming with men—in dug-outs or walking on newly-made roads, quite peacefully, within 50 yards of our trenches, which are the same distance from the enemy's. The steep hills and broken country are, of course, responsible for this, but it looks extraordinary through a telescope.

" From our position we could see Suvla, and Godley said to me, ' You can imagine my feelings when I watched my men fighting like tigers, doing practically the impossible, and at the same time could see—within three miles—the 10th and 11th

Divisions loafing and bathing.' The new Divisions, during the first few days after they landed, lost very heavily, but mainly because they bunched and were got by snipers. . . .

" General Ellison and the Brigadier thanked me for a most delightful day, and I had *learned* the latter not to bother me with unjustifiable complaints about transport ; he won't again.

" The Anzac people are simply splendid ; there is no other word for them.

" On Saturday (21st) I worked on board, and we went over in the *Triad* to watch a big attack from Suvla. Five thousand Yeomanry had arrived from Egypt, and the 29th Division from Helles. After half an hour's bombardment from the ships and artillery, the effect of which it was impossible to follow—owing to the mist and smoke which overhung the plain—our whole line seemed to spring out of the ground and advance. The spectacle of the Yeomen of England and their fox-hunting leaders, striding in extended order across the Salt Lake and the open plain, unshaken by the gruelling they were getting from shrapnel—which caused many casualties—is a memory that will never fade. Then they were lost to view in the dust and mist ; and a little later a raging bush fire seemed to cut them off. We left at nightfall, and were told that the position was very fairly satisfactory, but most of the ground was lost in the night and we had very little to show for 5,000 casualties. It is awful, I can't bear it when I think and believe that we could stop it all, and end the business in a few weeks.

" I had it out again with the Admiral on Friday and again on Saturday. He can only see disaster, and paints pictures—which one ought not to do in war. I told him our forefathers would never have won great victories such as the Nile and Copenhagen if Nelson had only thought of the difficulties. Curiously enough a telegram came from the Admiralty on Friday which might well have been answered by the memorandum I had given him. Directly it arrived the Admiral landed abreast of the *Triad* and walked out to G.H.Q., a mile or so along the beach to the eastward. As soon as the telegram was shown to me I went in pursuit to try and persuade him to put the matter squarely to the General, but I could not overtake him, and when I arrived at G.H.Q. he was already in Sir Ian's tent. I then went to Braithwaite and told him that the Admiralty were prepared to back the

Admiral if he decided to attempt to force the Straits, and I begged him to tell Sir Ian not to miss this opportunity, as our success could not fail to extricate the Army. We went together to Sir Ian's tent, but the Admiral had already left with the answer he wanted. Sir Ian told me that I was too late, he might have worded his reply to the Admiral differently, but he considered it a naval question and had declined to commit himself.

" On Saturday morning I was shown the answer the Admiral had drafted. I held it up, went to him and begged him not to send it. To wait—but he insisted. It is so very different from the high-spirited telegrams sent by Carden and de Robeck previously—so full of ardour and high enterprise. Quite inexplicable in the light of the telegram which I persuaded him to send in May, which, though not quite what I wanted, at least expressed readiness to go on and try—and took a high tone. He said his Admirals agreed with him, and that he had consulted the General. He thought that the Navy could do no more than it was doing. I thought he would be superseded—I believe it would be almost a relief to him—but to-day a very nice wire came from the Admiralty expressing confidence in his judgment. I am so sorry for him—he is so unhappy, but he is too nice to me for anything. I really think he is 15 years older. He says he would give anything for just two or three weeks' rest.

" I can't bear to think of rest until the prize is won—it will be, and in my way in the end, and I will try and possess my soul in patience, and help the Admiral all I can.

" When he sent the telegram I felt inclined to resign my appointment as Chief of Staff. Staying on, of course, if he would have me, in some minor capacity in charge of minesweeping, or something of that sort. But he was so charming to me, I hadn't the heart to say any of the things I was simply boiling to say a few minutes before. He is so very weary. He is a very lovable person—very difficult sometimes nowadays—I expect I am, too! Always charming to me. A leader with a personality which commands service, but ' responsibility ' is the devil, and it has been too much for him. Fiery ardour which will accept no defeat is wanted now.

" On Sunday (22nd) morning the General asked the Admiral to come and see him, and I went too. He told us that it might be necessary, owing to our heavy losses, to abandon Suvla in order

to shorten the line. The Admiral begged him to do no such thing; Suvla would be invaluable to us in the winter, when northerly gales would make Anzac beaches impossible.

" Sir Ian then asked me to go over to Suvla with him and Braithwaite to discuss the matter with General de Lisle; we went over at once in the *Arno*, landed at one of the northern beaches and walked up to H.Q. of the G.O.C. 9th Corps. We had a momentous meeting in a dug-out. I had not met General de Lisle since the Grand Military at Sandown, 1914. He told me he had commanded the attack in which my brother-in-law, Geoffrey Bowlby, had been killed near Ypres in May. He said very nice things about him, and also about my brother Adrian's invaluable work off the left flank at Helles.

" As I have already mentioned, the attack at Suvla was not successful but was most gallantly carried out; the Yeomen were splendid; Lord Longford was killed leading his brigade. I remember how hard and straight he used to go in the Bicester country. One brigade of the poor, gallant old 29th Division, brought up from Helles to stiffen the New Army, had about 1,200 casualties out of the 3,000 engaged, and we have had over 30,000 casualties in these operations since 6th August. The evacuation of the wounded on open beaches is no light task, and their endurance and patience is simply wonderful.

" De Lisle told us his story, and said that they so nearly achieved their object, but not quite, and they had to fall back after dark. Some Turkish trenches which were captured were held, but the advance was not great.

" The meeting was very interesting, and I said exactly what I thought about the retention of Suvla. Walking back, Sir Ian said he had decided to do what the majority of the meeting, which included me, advised. It was the bolder policy of the two naturally. I forgot to mention that we stopped off Anzac to pick up General Birdwood and his C.O.S. We were on the same side, of course, and I was representing my Admiral's views.

" I don't dread the guns, the mines, or the torpedoes in the Straits, but I simply funk the winter and all it means to supply the Army in those awful winter gales; but I believe we shall be spared that and will win through my way, before the weather breaks. That is my constant prayer. The sufferings of the Army and the anxiety of keeping it supplied is a nightmare. Of

course we will do it all right, if it is necessary. I am not really afraid, but I would have it otherwise if it can be avoided, and I so firmly believe it can.

"Going over in the *Arno*, Braithwaite told me that the Admiral had mentioned my memorandum to him. He said that his Admirals all agreed with him, and did not think my plan was feasible, or that the Fleet would have a chance. 'The Commodore is very confident, but the responsibility is not his.' Then, Braithwaite said, he added most awfully nicely, 'but it is only fair to him to say, if it was, he would not hesitate.' I am glad he said that. Of course if he feels as strongly as he does, he is right to stick to it, but the reasons he gives and searches for against it don't convince me a bit. We would not be the Nation we are if we had always stopped to count the cost.

"The Turks made a great song about our failure to land by Enos. This was the truth—the French had a company of 300 Greeks led by a French officer, and they begged to be allowed to create a diversion up there. We rather reluctantly agreed. They were going to cut the railway, or do something to stir up the Turks, and, as the Admiral said, the Turks would probably have the time of their lives hunting them. However, the Greeks did not give them the chance—they did not get very far from the beach before they were rounded up and driven down; they had several casualties, and the *Jed*, which, with the *Minerva*, had taken them, had some casualties in a very gallant and successful effort to re-embark them. I think only three or four were actually left behind. It was a silly, futile affair, but it gave the Turks something to buck about."

The telegrams referred to above ran thus:

"From Admiralty to Vice-Admiral. No. 836.

20th August, 1915.

If you still think your old battleships could make any really decisive or important contribution to success of land operations you will be supported in any use to which you may think it desirable to put them."

"From Vice-Admiral to Admiralty. No. 24.

22nd August, 1915.

Your 836. Have consulted General—consider support as at present given to Army by ships best means using Squadron. To attack Narrows now with battleships would be a grave error, as chances of getting even a small efficient squadron past Chanak very remote. Unless this could be accomplished the heavy loss in ships and personnel entailed in such an attack would only encourage enemy's resistance, also battleships will be required to replace monitors as covering ships in bad weather should campaign continue through the winter. We could therefore ill afford to lose them unless decisive result is possible. Regret that I cannot hold a hopeful view of another grand attack at present moment, but in light of past experience and present knowledge, it is only possible conclusion. This also opinion of other Admirals."

"From Admiralty to Vice-Admiral. No. 844.

22nd August, 1915.

Your 24. In my 836 we were not contemplating attack by warships on Narrows. If this comes at all it will come later on. We only had considered the probability that intervention of battleships might give important, perhaps decisive, aid to land operations. If this were so it would be worth running some risk with old battleships and we intended to convey that any decision you may come to on this point will receive full support from here. We have fullest confidence in your judgment."

This Admiralty reply was, to my mind, not very creditable to whoever was responsible for it. Their first telegram surely only had one meaning.

Sir Ian has described in his diary his feelings when the Admiral consulted him:

"De Robeck knows that when the Fleet goes in our fighting strength goes up. But he can gauge, as I cannot, the dangers the Fleet will thereby incur. Every personal motive urges me to urge him on. But I have no right to shove my oar in—no right at all—until I can say that we are done unless the Fleet do make an attack. Can I say so? No; if we get the drafts and munitions we can still open the Straits on our own and without calling on the sister Service

for further sacrifice. So I fell back on first principles and said he must attack if he thought it right from the naval point of view but that we soldiers did not call for succour or ask him to do anything desperate: 'You know how we stand,' I said; 'do what is right from the naval point of view and as to what *is* right from that point of view, I am no judge.' The Admiral went away; I have been no help to him but I can't help it."*

Lieut.-General Sir Julian Byng arrived on 23rd August to take command of the 9th Corps. As Aspinall remarked: "The experienced pilot has arrived but the ship is already on the rocks."

I have never ceased to regret that I did not resign my appointment at that time as I felt impelled to some weeks later—it might have brought things to a head, and settled the matter. The British Government we gathered, had committed the British Army to a great autumn offensive in co-operation with the French Army on the Western Front, and neither reinforcements nor ammunition were likely to be forthcoming until these operations were over. At a moment when I was beginning to hope, that with Braithwaite's assistance, I could persuade Sir Ian to appeal to the Admiral for help—an appeal which he could hardly have resisted, and I would certainly have resigned if he had—the fates which pursued our enterprise introduced a new complication.

The political friends of a French General (Sarrail) who had been dismissed by Marshal Joffre, were determined to find him an independent command elsewhere, and it was at first proposed that four new French Divisions, together with the two already in Gallipoli, should be landed on the Asiatic shore under Sarrail's independent command, but in close liaison with the British troops fighting on the Peninsula. In communicating this proposal to Sir Ian, Lord Kitchener told him, that the two French Divisions withdrawn from his command, would be replaced by two good regular Divisions from France.

Sir Ian and his General Staff were of course overjoyed, and once again saw victory within their reach. They knew that there were not more than 12,000 Turkish troops on the Asiatic shore. (We know now that there were really only 2,000 between Chanak and Yukyeri Bay.) The importance of my project was

* "Gallipoli Diary," Vol. II, pages 124 and 125.



AERIAL VIEW OF "W" AND "V" BEACHES, GALLIPOLI
Before *Magenta* and a French Steamer were sunk to complete "V" Beach Harbour

lost sight of, in the enthusiasm that was evoked by the enormous military possibilities opened by such a reinforcement, and I felt I could not now press my case to the point of resignation.

The Admiral offered to net in a large area off Tenedos, to provide a submarine-proof anchorage for the men-of-war covering, and the ships supplying the new French offensive. French Staff officers came out to study the problem on the spot; I accompanied them to Tenedos, and we lay on the hill top and scanned the coast opposite through our glasses. It was a network of entrenched positions and barbed wire, and I soon came to the conclusion that Sarrail's campaign would never be launched there.

I had several conversations with Sir Ian at that time, and gathered that in his opinion, the six new Divisions, adequately supported by artillery and a plentiful supply of ammunition, could not fail to carry his August plan to victory. In order to ensure this, he added: "I would gladly serve under Sarrail, if that was made a condition for French co-operation."

Nasmith's arrival from the Marmora on 3rd September was like a breath of fresh air to me, in the hateful atmosphere in which I was living. He had been to Constantinople again, and had torpedoed a heavily-laden steamer, which blew up and sank as low as the depth of water would permit it to. The Italian Embassy was still at Constantinople and the story of this attack had reached us. It seems that the steamer had just arrived from the Black Sea with 3,000 tons of coal, and there was much jubilation. A committee of officials was standing abreast of the ship, which was lying alongside the Haidar Pasha Railway Station quay, and was settling how the coal was to be distributed. Railways, ships, flour mills, electric lighting and water supply works all depended on coal, which had to come from the Black Sea. While they were discussing the matter, the steamer blew up before their eyes.

When Boyle left the Marmora on 12th August, his place was taken by Lieut.-Commander Stocks in *E*2. I knew him to be a very determined and skilful submarine captain, and he thoroughly lived up to his pre-War reputation.

There is a long viaduct on the Baghdad railway near the entrance of the Gulf of Ismid. Nasmith and Stocks bombarded it together, but the Turks brought down guns to drive them off.

So one dark night after the moon had set at 2 a.m., Lieutenant Doyley Hughes—Nasmith's First Lieutenant—swam ashore pushing a small raft, carrying his clothes, a revolver, a very sharp bayonet, and a large charge of guncotton, to try and blow up the viaduct. He had to land about a mile from it, and striking the railway near where he landed, he started to walk along the track, until he nearly ran into three armed Turks who were sitting beside a fire only about 150 yards from a culvert over a little stream. He made a wide detour and stumbled into a farmyard waking up the dogs and poultry but fortunately not the household. He got quite close to the viaduct but found a large body of men with flares, evidently repairing the damage caused by the submarines' fire; he also heard an engine at rest blowing off steam. Realising that it was impossible to get near the viaduct, he walked back along the line, looking for some other vulnerable spot, but found nothing until he reached the culvert, which presumably the three Turks were guarding. He managed to dig his charge in right under it, without being heard. He muffled the fuse pistol with a piece of rag, but it was a very still night, and when he fired it, the three men jumped up and ran towards him, firing; he fled down the line, firing his revolver now and then to try and stop them, for about a mile to a point where the line was near the sea, into which he plunged, quite three-quarters of a mile from the place where *E*11 was waiting for him. As he entered the water there was a tremendous explosion, and fragments fell round the submarine, more than a quarter of a mile to seaward. Doyley Hughes swam out 400 or 500 yards to seaward, and then along the coast, blowing a whistle at intervals, and all the while shots were being fired in his direction. Nasmith being very anxious, hearing the shots, but not the whistle, took *E*11 in until her stem nearly touched the shore, but Doyley Hughes was the other side of a small promontory, where he had landed to have a rest. By this time the countryside was astir and dawn was approaching, so directly he got his wind he swam out to sea again, but seeing what he thought was a Turkish boat—it really was the bow of the submarine—he swam in to hide again. A little later the visibility having improved he saw the submarine and swam out again, and was pulled on board almost unconscious with exhaustion. A proper man, worthy to be second in command to Nasmith.

One evening Nasmith sighted a convoy of eight sailing vessels being towed by three tugs and convoyed by a destroyer. He shadowed them all night and at dawn was submerged between them and the shore, for which they always made at daylight. He tried to torpedo the destroyer, and very nearly got into position to do so, when she started to zig-zag. Her presence made it impossible for him to rise and attack with his gun, and he told me, he felt rather beat, but fortunately one tug got rather far behind and the destroyer, like a sheep dog dashed back to drive her on, so Nasmith promptly rose alongside the leading tug and gave her and the four craft she was towing a good hammering before the destroyer could get back and force him to dive. The sailing vessels scattered under sail, but the tug and one sailing ship were too damaged to move. The destroyer evidently did not wish to stay near a submerged submarine and cleared out, but sent the other tug, which was armed, to take the damaged tug and sailing ship in tow. Nasmith engaged her with his gun, and hit her several times, but she replied with such an accurate fire that he was forced to dive again. This was too much for the tug, which expected to be torpedoed, so cut the tow and fled, abandoning the other tug and sailing vessel to Nasmith, who promptly rose and sank them both. He picked up 19 people, including five Germans, all nearly naked. One fat German, who said he was a banker at Chanak, had nothing on but a very short pink silk vest—not a very pretty sight, said Nasmith, but a very grateful person—he told Nasmith that he had 5,000 marks in gold in the tug, and the sailing vessel was full of ammunition. If Nasmith had only succeeded in sinking the destroyer, he would have bagged the lot; however, he sank the third tug before the armed tug forced him to dive again.

Later in the day he captured a small vessel, and put his prisoners into her, after making her throw her cargo overboard. He said they were very grateful, at any rate the Turks and the old German, but the other Germans were just stolid yokels, who seemed to take everything as a matter of course.

Our aircraft reported that there were four large ships in the Straits which were evidently landing supplies off Ak Bashi Liman, the main ammunition and supply depot of the Turkish Army, so a signal was made to Nasmith to this effect. I knew that we were setting Nasmith a difficult and dangerous task

in those swift narrow waters, but had unbounded faith in his skill.

He arrived there at 7 a.m. and finding the ships well protected by a screen of small craft, including a gunboat and a destroyer, he tried to torpedo the gunboat, but the torpedo ran under her and exploded amongst some little vessels in-shore. He then dived up the Straits clumsily showing his periscope, and even his conning tower, to encourage the pack to hunt him, which they proceeded to do; having led them well away from his quarry by inviting them to try and ram him, he dived deep and disappeared, returning below them to the two biggest transports, which he torpedoed with a right and left from his bow tubes, sinking them both. He then dived across the Straits, torpedoed and sank a ship on the opposite shore off Nagara, which was no doubt waiting her turn to discharge at the depot. He now only had one torpedo left in his stern tube, with which he attacked the fourth steamer, on his way back to the Marmora. The torpedo hit her in the bows but she managed to run herself ashore, where *E*2 saw her the next day and finished her off with another torpedo.

Another day *E*2 and *E*11 bombarded Mudania Railway Station; and these vessels gave the enemy very little peace during their stay in the Marmora. On his way out of the Straits Nasmith decided to charge the net full speed at 80 feet, having placed Doyley Hughes in the conning tower, with the dead lights lifted so that he could see the net through the ports and gain information. He reported that it was apparently made of 2½-inch wires with a ten-foot mesh and that it parted with the impact.

Cochrane went up to take Nasmith's place; before leaving he discussed with me a plan for inflicting damage in the Golden Horn, which for ingenuity rivalled the most brilliant of his great-grandfather's exploits, but it was not to be, for *E*7 was caught in the net, which fouled one propeller when she was nearly through, this swung her round and she became hopelessly enmeshed at a depth of 100 feet. Cochrane struggled for 12 hours, trying every conceivable way of breaking out of the net, including sinking to the bottom in 240 feet, which caused her to leak dangerously. In the end a heavy charge was exploded close to the hull, which destroyed all the electric light fittings, and he had no choice but to bring *E*7 to the surface to give his crew a chance of escaping, which he did, and then sent her to the bottom again. He and his crew were taken prisoners.

Meanwhile *E*2 was finding very little moving in the Marmora during daylight hours. On her way through the Straits her gun mounting had been considerably damaged when bursting through the net, and finding the plating under it strained, Stocks decided to remount the gun in a fresh position abaft the conning tower, which he proceeded to do in the middle of the Marmora; a remarkable feat with his very limited resources. *E*2's trip was marred by the loss of her second in command, Lieutenant Lyon, who swam ashore with a raft with the object of destroying a railway bridge on the Constantinople-Rodosto line; but he was never heard of again.

About this time Braithwaite sent me a report, which came from the Italian Military Attaché in Constantinople, who spoke of the intense admiration which was felt in Constantinople, even by the Germans, for our submarines in the Marmora. Their work was admitted to have been wonderful, and a German speaking to him on the subject said that "the officers are evidently far above the average." And so say all of us, added Braithwaite.

In the meantime Godfrey had been working out a plan of attack on the minefields, and the forts at the Narrows, on the lines of that of the 18th March, but with the enormously increased resources now at our disposal. He suggested that it would be advisable to issue a memorandum to the Captains of the Fleet giving them an outline of the scheme of attack, in case the Admiral was *ordered* to force the Straits to help the Army and avoid a winter campaign.

I never lost an opportunity of talking to the Admiral on the subject, and urging my view, but it was quite evident that he would have nothing to do with it. On 22nd he showed me a letter from Mr. Balfour, from which it is obvious that they had not the faintest conception of the true state of affairs, and that they—including Lord Kitchener—were building false hopes on the proposed French offensive, which in my opinion could only be a dire disappointment. I spent nearly the whole night writing the following memorandum, which I showed to Godfrey in the

morning. He said it breathed *the spirit*—he would not alter a word, so I had it typed out and handed it to the Admiral.

VICE-ADMIRAL.

Captain Godfrey has asked me to forward the attached letter to you. His proposals for an attack are drawn up on the lines of the minute you gave me after reading my submission of 17th August covering an appreciation of the naval and military situation.

The military situation has certainly not improved since that date. The final check of the 22nd August thoroughly disheartened the Army, which is up against trench warfare now in the new area, and I do not believe there is an officer or man, from Sir Ian downwards, who is not convinced at heart that the Army has shot its bolt and is incapable of achieving its object. The Turks have had time to prepare exceedingly strong positions in front of our new line, and I know it is the opinion of the General Staff that any reinforcements which are likely to be forthcoming —over and above the new formations which may be sent out to relieve the French on the Peninsula—can only suffice to strengthen our long line, which is very lightly held in places, replace casualties and wastage, amounting to nearly 1,000 a day, and relieve the tired troops who are so sorely in need of rest and reorganisation.

It is evident, however, judging by a letter you showed me yesterday, that the decisive nature of the check in Gallipoli, the magnitude of the task before the French if they land in Asia, and the great difficulties of a winter campaign under existing conditions are not properly appreciated at home.

It appears that a great combined attack is to be delivered on the arrival of the new French divisions, and as you said a few days ago, in the event of such an attack the Fleet would go inside the Straits to support the Army; I would submit that, in order to be prepared for any eventuality, a plan of action should be drawn up now and the organisation of an efficient force proceeded with at once.

It would appear, according to the same letter, that much is expected from the next attack of the Army, but

although an expedition on a large scale in Asia might, at one time, have accomplished decisive results, the effort now contemplated by the French is surely being made too late. I do not believe the most optimistic soldier thinks that the French Army will be able to make any appreciable progress in the face of the strongly entrenched positions which are being so energetically prepared by the enemy to oppose an advance on Chanak from the southward. I understand any wide detour would involve a long line of communications requiring a far larger force than that being sent out and any slight optimism which the General Staff may possess is based not on any possible military action, but on stories of Turkish despondency and their hatred of the Germans, the hope that submarines and muddy roads will make it impossible for the enemy to supply his army in the Peninsula, etc., etc. I do not think we have any right to count on such unlikely possibilities.

I have long felt that decisive results can only be brought about by naval action, that the forcing of the Straits is the only way to overcome the *impasse* at which we have arrived and that, cost what it may, a determined effort to do so should be made before the winter gales are upon us.

The daily reports of aircraft show that a very large number of small and some large craft continue to supply the enemy by sea in spite of the activity of our submarines. If a very small proportion of our available force could succeed in getting into the Marmora the enemy in Gallipoli would very soon be completely cut off by sea and his land communications could be greatly harassed by day and night by vessels on either side of the isthmus.

A force above and below the Narrows could, I believe, soon cripple the defences sufficiently to enable supplies to be passed up, at any rate by night. The force above could, however, be self-supporting for at least three or four weeks and decisive results might well be effected in Gallipoli within that period with the assistance of the Allied Armies on either side of the Straits well placed to take advantage of a naval success.

It is surely worth risking much to win such a success, and I fully believe the prize is well within our reach.

The arguments which have been used against risking a naval attack are :

The loss of prestige we should suffer in the event of failure—and consequent on this—" trouble in the East." This is a vague phrase which should mean nothing to us since we are determined to win. I think that failure in such an enterprise can only add to our prestige, particularly so if naval reinforcements are promptly sent out to replace our losses. These can be sent without in any way affecting our position in Home waters, and their advent would make it clear that we do not intend to be deterred by any temporary check.

It is suggested that failure would jeopardise the position of our Army on the Peninsula, that it would dishearten our troops and correspondingly encourage the enemy. Our Army would be no worse off than it is now, since it would continue to receive the support of the protected cruisers and monitors, and our successors would arrive before any further assistance for a new offensive is likely to be required.

As regards *morale*, if elation on the part of the Turk inspired him to attack, our Army would soon recover any loss of spirit.

Success or failure would probably mean the loss of ships and men. The Army has made great sacrifices in these combined operations and I believe the Admiralty, if the true state of affairs was put to them, would now be prepared to risk such loss, if by doing so there is a reasonable chance of a successful issue.

Personally I am confident that success can be achieved without disproportionate losses, and I venture to submit that the plan for co-operating with the Army in the forthcoming operations should include a detailed plan of action for forcing the Straits based on your minute, a copy of which is attached.

In the event of Admiralty approval I would suggest that this plan should be confidentially issued to the commanding officers of the ships which will take part, in order

that they may be thoroughly prepared in good time for what will be required of them.

I regard the organisation of an efficient minesweeping force of vital importance. Experience has shown how greatly our sweepers improve with practice and exercises can be arranged for destroyers and sloops without necessarily interfering with their other duties, but in any case so much depends on the skill and determination of our sweeping force that I think their training should be the first consideration, every opportunity being taken to prepare them for their great task.

Finally I would submit that the attack should be simultaneous with the next offensive movement of the Allied Armies and that we should prepare for it at once.

I concur generally in Captain Godfrey's carefully thought-out plan of attack. If you will criticise it and give your directions your staff will prepare a detailed plan for your consideration.

ROGER KEYES,
23rd September, 1915. Commodore and Chief of Staff.

The Admiral then decided to appoint a committee to study the question under my directions, consisting of Captain Dent of the *Edgar*, a Gunnery officer who was giving valuable assistance in the development of naval bombardment; Captain McClintock, who had commanded the *Lord Nelson* in all her engagements; Captain Heneage, who had been in command of the sweeping force which had been trained under his direction to a high pitch of efficiency by the 4th April; Commander Lambart, Commander Ramsay, Captain Godfrey and myself.

Dent was always at Imbros or on the coast, McClintock at Mudros, and Heneage at sea or in another harbour in Lemnos; therefore the committee could never meet, but I took every opportunity of discussing the plans with these officers individually.

While the British and French Governments were hesitating, apparently unable to appreciate its immense possibilities, the enemy was under no illusion as to the vital danger of our threat on Constantinople.

While the Suvla landing was in progress, Admiral Tirpitz

wrote: "The situation is obviously very critical. Should the Dardanelles fall, the World War has been decided against us."

There is clear evidence to show that Falkenhayn—Chief of the German General Staff—had intended to overwhelm the British Army in France in the spring of 1915. However, alarmed at the Allied attack on the Dardanelles, and fearing that if we forced the Straits Bulgaria would come in on our side, he turned his attention to the eastward, being confident that the German Western Front was strong enough to resist any Franco-British attack. After inflicting a heavy defeat on Russia, he proceeded to overrun Serbia, in order to open the road to Constantinople, instead of continuing his attack on Russia, as desired by the Austrians. "It is incomparably more important," he wrote to the Austrian G.H.Q., "that the Dardanelles should be secured and, in addition, the iron in Bulgaria struck while it is hot."

Meanwhile Bulgaria, who had been sitting on the fence waiting to see which side was likely to prove the victor, greatly impressed by the heavy Russian defeats and our Suvla failure, decided to back Germany and proceeded to mobilise.

CHAPTER XXIV

A VISIT TO ENGLAND

Sir Ian Hamilton superseded by General Monro; I return to England to press for a naval offensive; Interviews with Mr. Balfour and Lord Kitchener; Visit French Minister of Marine in Paris; Return to Eastern Mediterranean; Meet Lord Kitchener at Salonika and Mudros; Interview with General Monro; Lord Kitchener recommends evacuation and goes home; Admiral de Robeck goes on leave; Admiral Wemyss takes command of Fleet.

BULGARIA's threatened intervention brought about a tragic situation and completed the discomfiture of the military campaign in Gallipoli.

Appealed to by Serbia and Greece for help, the French and British Governments decided to send troops to Salonika, and Lord Kitchener telegraphed to Sir Ian to consider the question of giving up Suvla, as two British and one French Division from Gallipoli would have to go to Salonika. At the same time he assured Sir Ian that there was no question of withdrawing from the Peninsula until the Turks were defeated.

Thus at a moment when the Allied Armies on the Western Front were launching an attack (which was to suffer 250,000 casualties, in a fruitless effort to break the German line) and could spare neither troops nor munitions for our enterprise, which was petering out for want of support, the Allied Governments embarked on yet another Oversea campaign, which was only a drain on our very inadequate resources.

It was so difficult in those tormenting days to know what to do. Time was passing and it was evident that the Admiral had no intention of renewing the attack on the Narrows. On 26th September I wrote to my wife:

> "After our daily argument the Admiral concluded: 'Well, Commodore, you and I will never agree, but there is no reason why we should not remain good friends.' I said: 'Our forefathers would not have hesitated or

stopped to count the cost.' He replied, 'You would do what old Duckworth did: go up and get stuck there, and have to fight your way out, losing heavily—having achieved nothing.' I replied that I was not thinking of Duckworth but others of another calibre. It is hard to be patient."

Another day I wrote:

"I went for a walk with the Admiral, as I do most evenings when we are at Kephalo, and tackled him again about my project. I suggested some changes in the plan of action to meet certain objections he had raised. He agreed, so I asked him to put the whole matter before the Admiralty. He flatly refused, saying he did not believe in it, etc. I am torn to know what to do. We have simply got to do it sooner or later. I told him so and said I knew I was right, there was not a shadow of doubt that it could be done. When the Army made an attack, they did so knowing full well that they would suffer heavily. We would probably suffer heavily too in ships and men, but provided that we attacked in sufficient numbers and in the right spirit we could not fail. I told him we had only to hold our breaths for an hour or so—like the submariners did every time they dived through the minefield—and quite enough of us would be alive to draw a deep breath the other side of the Narrows and finish the business. I can do nothing while I am on the Admiral's Staff. I ought to resign, but if I do and go home, it will be very difficult to persuade the Admiralty to listen to me; de Robeck has such a reputation for being a thruster, and I would only be looked upon as foolhardy. My thoughts so often turn to John Nicholson on the ridge of Delhi, and his tormenting difficulties, and like him I wonder. . . .*

"I feel sure something will turn up, the Admiral will see it as I see it; but time passes, and winter gales which I dread are approaching. If he *won't* do anything, then

* John Nicholson and the stalwart soldiers of his day—contemporaries and comrades of my father—held our Indian Empire the *last time* it was in jeopardy, and shared with the sailors of a previous generation the hero-worship of my youth.

I *must*, but what and how, that is what puzzles me. They don't a bit realise what the winter means—how I dread it."

On the 12th October we went to Salonika to settle a number of outstanding questions which the new campaign had raised. While we were there an American Petty Officer from the U.S.S. *Scorpion*, the *Stationaire* at Constantinople, arrived on board with a young British soldier who had lost the sight of both eyes and had been taken prisoner at Suvla, and had been released through American intervention. The Petty Officer told us that they had been held up for two days at Dedeagatch waiting for their passports to be viséed. He said the Bulgarians were actively preparing to dispute a landing there. He gave much information confirming the reports of our agents, and he declared that he himself had seen the Turks loading their hospital ships with ammunition and stores and embarking troops. He said that all the officers and men of the *Scorpion* could testify to this, in spite of official denials. This no doubt accounted for the Turkish protests that we were improperly using hospital ships as transports.

On 14th October the Bulgarians declared war on Serbia.

On the 16th we heard of the supersession of Sir Ian and Braithwaite by Sir Charles Monro and Lynden-Bell. Our relations with them had always been so excellent that we felt very sad. From my point of view it was a great blow, because I hoped so much to persuade Sir Ian, through Braithwaite, to call upon the Admiral for help, now that the French co-operation was very unlikely to mature. The Admiral arranged to send them to Marseilles in the *Chatham* the following morning. I went for a walk with him that afternoon, determined to have it out, and felt that I was nearer persuading him than at any previous time. So much so that just before we got down to the boat I said, "Then you will telegraph and ask for reinforcements, and put the general scheme to the Admiralty for their decision," but he thereupon shut up like a book, and I felt I was beat. That night Sir Ian and Braithwaite dined in the *Triad*, and I told the latter I was determined to press my point, even if it meant resigning.

We learnt that a few days earlier, Lord Kitchener had telegraphed to Sir Ian asking him to estimate his probable losses in

evacuating the Peninsula. Sir Ian had previously declared that evacuation "was unthinkable." He had replied to the telegram that his losses would depend on the weather and other uncertain factors; he might lose half his force; he might be lucky and lose far less; on the other hand with raw troops at Suvla, and Senegalese at Helles, it might be a catastrophe. The Government's decision to supersede Sir Ian appears to have followed immediately after his reply was received in London.

The next morning Sir Ian and Braithwaite came on board to say good-bye on their way to the *Chatham*. I felt terribly sorry for them and I told them that if ever I took a knock like theirs, I only hoped I would meet it with as stiff an upper lip. We sent them on their way with the cheers of the whole fleet.

I had confided all my hopes and fears to my wife, and that day I received a letter from her which was full of encouragement and faith. She told me that I must do what I thought right, regardless of consequences, and that my duty was to the country first. "Remember," she wrote, "you belong to England, not to me, and until the war is over you must not think of us."

I went to bed that night happier than I had been for a long time, with her letter in my pocket, thinking hard of how I would go to work. About 3 a.m. I woke up with a start, quite wideawake, out of a very sound sleep, with a most extraordinarily strong impulse urging me to get up and write my minute to the Admiral, which I did.

I thought about my memorandum all day, had it typed, and gave it to the Admiral before dinner, saying that I hoped it would not keep him awake. He said he would not read it before morning.

It was as follows:

VICE-ADMIRAL,

Submitted.

It seems to me to be a matter of vital importance to force the Straits, whatever it may cost, before the German-Austrian-Bulgarian offensive can be carried into Turkey.

In view of the attitude of Greece and Roumania it is more than probable that this offensive will succeed, and I submit that no time should be lost in preparing for a combined Naval and Military attack on the Straits.

I am very strongly of the opinion that a Naval atttack, if it is made with a sufficient force and reserve, *must succeed* in forcing the Straits—the Navy will then be in a position to assist the Army to complete the opening of the Dardanelles. This opinion is shared by several senior officers and all the members of your staff.

The arrival of the old battleships and the promise of the Special Service Ship, *Oruba*, revives the idea of using specially prepared old vessels to clear a passage through the minefields and mask the torpedo tubes, instead of employing sloops and destroyers to sweep.

If a Squadron of old Battleships and Special Service Ships is placed at your disposal, I would propose to divide the Fleet into five Squadrons:

1st. To support the Army and attack the Forts from outside the Straits.

2nd. Inside the Straits to attack the Forts from below the Kephez minefield.

3rd. To force a passage through the Straits and operate above the Narrows using Pasha Liman Harbour as a base.

4th. *Redoubtable* (late *Revenge*) and Special Service Ships to precede 3rd Squadron.

5th. Old Battleships and *Terrible* to carry supplies, nets, etc.

The sloops and destroyers to be similarly divided:

1st. To sweep a channel for the 2nd Squadron in the lower reaches of the Straits.

2nd. To join the 3rd Squadron.

3rd. To rush the Straits at dawn or towards the end of a moonlight night, with the object of attacking vessels which are believed to be held in readiness to drop drifting mines and probably to lay fresh minefields higher up the Straits if the Narrows are threatened.

I have put the general outline of this scheme to the members of your Secret Committee and I understand that they are all, with the possible exception of Capt. Dent,* in

* Dent wrote to me later to say he was in favour of a surprise attack.

favour of a surprise attack. It is a matter for decision whether the 3rd and 4th Squadrons should attempt a surprise at dawn or force a passage under cover of a heavy and deliberate bombardment from inside and outside the Straits. In either case, I think it is important to rush a few destroyers up as a first action. If a surprise attack is decided on the destroyers must of course be closely followed by the 4th and 3rd Squadrons at their utmost speed.

I understood you to concur generally in the suggestion to use ships to clear the minefield instead of sweepers—and, if you approve, I would submit, since the preparation of the ships will take some little time, that an outline of the scheme and a request for the vessels required should be telegraphed to the Admiralty at once—the reinforcements to include the *Albemarle*, *Russell*, *Redoubtable* (late *Revenge*) and as many other battleships as can be spared, and about six or eight Special Service Ships. If the enemy hear of the passage of several S.S. Ships, they will probably think they are to be used, like the *Oruba*, as block ships off our beaches. For this reason, I do not think the *Oruba* should be included in our S.S.S. Squadron.

If you approve, your Staff will prepare two plans for your consideration :

1. A surprise rush, followed by a general attack.
2. In the event of an attack being obviously anticipated, a deliberate bombardment generally on the lines proposed by Captain Godfrey, R.M.L.I. The Straits to be forced by 3rd Squadron preceded by 4th Squadron, when the Forts have been more or less silenced by bombardments.

I would propose to utilize the services of the two officers of your Secret Committee who are not already on your Staff—Commodore (K.) in connection with sweeping work and the destruction of mines, and Capt. Dent, who has had considerable experience in the Controller's Department and who has already made valuable suggestions in connection with the preparation of vessels to minimize the effects of mine and torpedo attack.

I believe the Admiralty and Govt. would welcome a definite proposal at this critical moment, and it would probably ensure the dispatch of the military reinforcements indicated in Admiralty telegram No. 104, with the assistance of which a combined attack could be delivered, which should have every chance of success.

You have been good enough to suggest several times that I should go to Malta on leave; would you instead allow me to go home for a week to lay the plan of attack before the Admiralty—so much depends on prompt action in regard to the preparation and dispatch of the S.S. ships, and also ample reinforcements—to give a good margin for losses; for instance four "King Edwards," which surely could be spared, would be invaluable and would not be unduly risked if employed below the Narrows. Letters and telegrams are an unsatisfactory means of communication, and I feel sure I could persuade the Admiralty to send reinforcements which would enable you to deliver an attack on a scale which could not suffer defeat.

ROGER KEYES,
Chief of Staff. 18 *Oct.*, 1915.

The following account is taken from my diary :

"18th October. I went in to see the Admiral before breakfast and he said very severely, 'Well, Commodore, you will go home with the King's Messenger.' So it was all over between us—and I felt very sad. I told him how miserable I was about it—I felt like stabbing my best friend in the back, but that I was so sure a Naval attack was the only way to avoid a great disaster, that I felt I had no choice. He was too nice for anything—I felt an awful brute. He said I was perfectly right and only doing my duty—as he was doing his in giving his opinion against it—feeling as I did, he agreed I had no choice. He said he would give me a fair field to state my case; all he would say was that he did not agree, and that if they wanted it done, they had better send someone out who believed in it, and would approach it with a fresh mind. He said he was weary and in need of rest. After breakfast I said I felt I must resign my appointment; I would then feel free; but that having gone against him I could not expect him to want me back as Chief of Staff—but I would like

to come back in any other capacity. He said of course I must come back as his Chief of Staff, and that there was to be no question of my not returning to him. He is a good fellow—but I felt that if he wrote as he said he would, my task at home would indeed be difficult. He said McClintock could do my duty, and was to come away with us, as there was much to settle before I went."

It happened that Adrian's *Wolverine* was due to go to Malta on 23rd to refit, and I suggested that she should drop me at Reggio on the way. I would then catch up the King's Messenger and be spared a journey to Piræus in the *Imogene** and on in an Italian steamer. It might be absurd, but I was most anxious not to run any risks which might interfere with my scheme, and the idea of being caught in an Italian steamer by an enemy submarine and taken to Austria filled me with horror!

Meanwhile our submarines were doing good work in the Marmora. Stocks in *E*2 was relieved on 16th September by Bruce in *E*12, which had returned from her refit at Malta with a four-inch gun. A fortnight later *E*12 was joined by *H*1, a small submarine of American design, built of American material by Vickers in Canada. *H*1 was commanded by Lieut.-Commander W. Pirie, a submarine officer who had retired before the War, but had begged for the command of a submarine when war broke out. We thought *H*1 was rather light to charge the net, but the Admiral gave in to the appeals of Pirie, who did 30 days' excellent service in the Marmora. Bruce and Pirie caused the enemy a good deal of loss and annoyance, but were hampered by bad weather, and their efforts to bombard the San Stefano powder factory were always frustrated by army patrol craft and aeroplanes, which were evidently stationed there for its defence.

The French were very anxious to get a submarine into the Marmora, and the *Turquoise* arrived with a new battery, which it was hoped would give her sufficient endurance for the passage of the Straits. Admiral Guépratte sent her Captain to me for instructions as to his co-operation with our submarines; I gave him a compromised signal book, with a transformation table,

* The *Imogene* was a small naval yacht formerly attached to the British Embassy at Constantinople, and then employed to take the King's Messenger weekly between Piræus and Imbros.

and all necessary information. He reported his safe arrival on the 20th October. The next day *E*20 (Lieut.-Commander C. Warren) which had arrived from England armed with a six-inch howitzer, with which it was hoped to do great execution, made a successful passage and reported having torpedoed two steamers above Nagara. There were thus four submarines in the Marmora when I sailed for England.

I learnt later that *E*12 after spending 40 days in the Marmora, had had a terrible experience on her way out. Owing to an obstruction which she picked up in the net, her hydroplane jammed, and she dived to a depth of 245 feet, which burst the scuttles, filled her conning tower, and caused other dangerous leaks. She appears to have alternated between a great depth and the surface, where she was heavily fired upon whenever she appeared. However she freed herself of the obstruction and Bruce and his crew lived to tell the tale.

Early in November the enemy announced the destruction of *E*20 and the *Turquoise*, but it was a long time before we knew what actually happened. The two submarines had communicated and arranged to meet a few days later, but in the meantime the *Turquoise* ran ashore and was captured intact by the Turks who found the Captain's note-book with a record of *E*20's rendezvous. Unfortunately *UB*14 was at Constantinople, she kept the *Turquoise's* engagement, and had no difficulty in torpedoing the unsuspecting *E*20. Warren and eight of his crew who were on deck were the sole survivors.

On the evening of 20th, the Admiral received a telegram saying that the Russians would bombard Varna on Thursday, 21st, and suggesting that the Allied Squadron should bombard Dedeagatch and the Bulgarian villages on the coast the same day; so I went round to see the Captains of the Russian cruiser *Askold* and the French cruiser *Dupleix*, with Millot and Ramsay. It was all a great rush, and as it was blowing hard from N.E., it was very doubtful if the trawler sweepers would get there in time. Captain Larken, of the *Doris*, who was to command the Dedeagatch force, was sent for—and everything as far as that force was concerned was satisfactorily arranged. Millot volunteered to go with the Russian, in charge of British and French signalmen.

The Admiral and his Staff watched the proceedings from the *Triad*. Our object was only to destroy buildings of military value, harbour works, railway rolling stock, etc. The Russians and French, I am afraid, felt rather out of it, but they would have destroyed the town—as they did several villages most ruthlessly. Our ships were ordered to be very careful to confine their fire to the objects mentioned, and very little damage was done to the town. The destroyers were very busy, very close in, plugging away at the rolling stock, etc. The force consisted of the *Doris* (Senior Naval Officer), *Theseus*, four monitors and four destroyers. The weather was beastly, blowing very hard from N.E., bitterly cold. There was no opposition and it was a horrid enterprise. I felt we might have been so much better employed.

On the 23rd October I embarked in the *Scourge*. General Godley was on board, and we went to Mudros. Everyone was full of good wishes, including the Admiral. I had a long talk with Admiral Wemyss, who gave me permission to say that he was ready to attack the Straits. He pointed out what a very awkward position he was in; being senior to de Robeck he simply could not take the initiative—that must rest with me. Wemyss said he had told de Robeck that if he put it to the Admiralty, as he meant to, it was not being fair to me, or giving me the chance he said he was giving me—it would prejudice my position impossibly. He said he had also pointed out that this was the first time *he* (Wemyss) had ever been consulted, and frankly he agreed with me, and thought it ought to be put to the Admiralty to decide. De Robeck said he would think it over. I learnt later from Mr. Balfour and Sir Henry Jackson that de Robeck wrote that he thought they ought to hear me, though he differed profoundly from my opinion.

In my diary that night I wrote:

> "The Admiral *knows*, as does Rosy Wemyss, that I am not out for myself, but as he *won't* do it and I am determined to get it done, I must try some other way. Rosy Wemyss was most encouraging.
>
> I went on board the *Suffren* to tell my dear friend Guépratte what I was doing. He had just been appointed to a shore command, and I told him that if we were allowed to force the Straits I would beg that he might be given command of the French Squadron. He strode up and down his cabin for some moments, and then, stopping in front of me, said, with emotion: 'I think always of Nasmith, I think always of Boyle; if I were permitted to do this I would think also of myself, moi, Guépratte,' thumping his chest and resuming his march. He was most anxious to come to the *Wolverine* to say good-bye, but I said everything was too unsettled, and begged him not to —I would come with the *Wolverine* close to the *Suffren*. I went back to Rosy Wemyss, who wished me God-speed and good luck. The Admiral let me take Millot for a little leave. I thought he would be most useful in Paris (as he was) if I had the chance of discussing the scheme with the Minister of Marine. We embarked in the *Wolverine* about 6 p.m. and manned ship as we passed the *Suffren*, which was manned with band on deck. Adrian led with three cheers for Admiral Guépratte, the *Suffren* returned them, and played 'Tipperary'—dear, gallant old man, I wish he was staying to take part in our triumph, which I feel sure will come—so does he."

We reached Reggio at 8 a.m. on Monday, 25th October, and I disembarked at once, in order to allow the *Wolverine* to reach Malta the same evening. A telegram to the Consul-General at Naples was the cause of an extraordinary reception! The Mayor, the Captain of the Port, the Prefét, the General Commanding and their respective Staffs gathered at the Vice-Consulate at about 8.30 a.m. I produced a box of cigarettes and the Vice-Consul a bottle of liqueur. During the forenoon Millot, the Vice-Consul and I motored round and paid return visits—lunched with the Prefét, who had all the same party and the Deputy of the District to meet me—very civil of them. We started off again about 3 p.m. and arrived at Rome early on Tuesday morning, 26th, and went to the Embassy, where I sat in my old (Naval Attaché) chair opposite Colonel Lamb, who had returned to be Military Attaché in December, after an absence of nine years. I did not feel as if I had ever left Rome —everything was so familiar, but it was nearly eight years since I had been there.

I arrived in London at 9 p.m. on the 28th October and went straight to the Admiralty to deliver the official bags, hoping to start my business at once; but was told that it was no use coming until 10.30 the next morning.

The following morning, therefore, I returned to the Admiralty, saw Sir Henry Jackson and Oliver and put my story to them, having first given it to Everett and then Oliver to read. They said that it seemed more than probable that something of the sort would have to be done, but it must be in combination with a military move on a large scale, and nothing could be decided until General Monro's report was received; it was expected in a few days. They then asked me scores of questions, and I did my best to explain the situation generally to them and the other Sea Lords.

Mr. Balfour was busy all day with Cabinet Councils and other meetings, but asked me to come at 5 p.m. I only had about 20 minutes with him as Lord Bertie (Ambassador at Paris) arrived. Mr. Balfour asked me to come at 3.30 the following day, Saturday, as he had a Cabinet Council in the morning.

Next day I saw various people at the Admiralty during the forenoon, and remember being so struck at the "wait and see what will turn up" attitude of the Sea Lords. I had come home on fire for reinforcements and *immediate* action, for time was flying, and when I wrote my memorandum to Admiral de Robeck, I had wanted him to wire and put the scheme, and ask for more ships at once. Of course, the fact that de Robeck had strongly disapproved of my scheme was making it difficult for the Sea Lords, but on the Friday I really thought I had fired them, as I believe I had, so I was very disappointed to find them almost stone cold on the Saturday!

My diary for the 30th October reads:

> "At 3.30 I went in to see Mr. Balfour. When I left him on Friday evening I felt almost beat, and I went out feeling like a boy leaving the 'Head Master,' but now I found him quite different somehow. I commenced better, I think. I told him I felt I had not been very convincing, but I was desperately in earnest—I was not young and foolhardy—I had as much right to have an opinion as Admiral de Robeck or any other Admiral—told him my age—and then got to work. He sent for tea about 4.45, and at 5.20 he rose slowly from the armchair in which he had been lying back, with his knees as high as his head, listening to me for nearly two hours, occasionally asking me searching questions. Standing with his heels on the fender coping, he looked down at me and said: 'It is not often that when one examines a hazardous enterprise—and you will admit it has its hazards—the more one considers it the better one likes it.' He then asked me what the Sea Lords thought about it. I said I thought I had fired them the evening before, but the atmosphere of London in these cold, foggy, November days was depressing, and they were not very encouraging this morning. He said I must persuade them again. Mr. Balfour then said: 'I suppose I ought not to ask you, but who would you recommend for the command if de Robeck resigns?' I said Admiral Wemyss —he would remain with the main fleet attacking from below and supporting the Army—the Chief must be there. The rush through was a hazard, and must be done by someone who believed in it, and would see it through. I wanted command of that small squadron. He smiled benignly and said nothing. He told me that there was nothing to be done for a few days until Monro's report had been considered, so I said I would like to go home to Fareham that evening to see my children. He said he would like me to see the Sea Lords again, but on no account must I miss my train. It was good to play with children, but it was also good to sleep, and I evidently needed it. He was most awfully kind. He is a charming person, and sent a message to the First Sea Lord that I was not to be delayed as I had a train to catch. I was then examined by all the Sea Lords, who asked me many questions and then told me to go and have a rest."

I returned to London on the 2nd November and spent some time at the Admiralty without getting much further. On the 3rd, Mr. Balfour sent me a message to say he wished me to see Winston Churchill and Lord Kitchener, and I spent half an hour with the latter at the War Office that afternoon. Lord

Kitchener told me of General Monro's report, and said the Cabinet wanted him to agree to the evacuation of the Peninsula. He had absolutely declined to sign any such order, and would not do so. He was starting for the Dardanelles the following night—Thursday—and if they gave up the Gallipoli Campaign and he had to evacuate, he would do it himself and be the last to leave. I said I would come off with him in the last boat. He asked me what I thought. I said it did not require much imagination to see what would happen; it might be the most appalling disaster, and we might lose a third to a half of our force and practically all the guns, etc. I told him what I thought should be done, and then he said he would land 40,000 men at Bulair, and coal and provision us across the Isthmus. I said that was absolutely out of the question and pointed out the difficulties, and said I did not think any General with local knowledge would recommend a landing there now. From a naval point of view it meant fresh commitments, and the revictualling across the Peninsula was impossible. He then said that he would evacuate Suvla, but I answered that in my opinion that would be an awful mistake, for it would open up Anzac to bombardment from the north, and would mean giving up all our valuable new beaches. If from a military point of view it was desirable to land men at Bulair, we would do it, but I did not think it was now a feasible proposition, and it would be much better to deliver an attack at Suvla. I was sure that Generals Birdwood and Byng would hold that view. Lord Kitchener said other things which made it pretty clear that Monro had been relieved of the Command. He said he simply could not understand a soldier giving the advice Monro had given the Government; in recommending evacuation he had said we might lose from 30 to 40 per cent. of the force in Gallipoli.

I afterwards learned that Lord Kitchener telegraphed that evening to Birdwood as follows:

> "Most secret. Decipher yourself. Tell no one. . . . You know Monro's report. I leave here tomorrow night to come out to you. Have seen Commodore Keyes, and the Admiralty will, I believe, agree naval attempt to force Straits. We must do what we can to help them, and I think as soon as ships are in the Marmora we should seize and hold the isthmus so as to supply them if Turks hold out. Examine very carefully best position for landing near marsh at head of Gulf of Xeros, so that we could get a line across at isthmus with ships on both sides. To find troops for this purpose we should have to reduce to lowest possible numbers the men in all the trenches, and perhaps evacuate positions at Suvla. All the best fighting men that could be spared, including your boys from Anzac and reinforcements I can sweep up in Egypt, might be concentrated at Mudros ready for this enterprise. The Admiral will probably be changed and Wemyss given command to carry through the naval part of the work. As regards command, you would have the whole force and should carefully select your commanders and your troops. . . . Work out plans for this or alternative plans as you may think best. We must do it right this time. I absolutely refuse to sign order for evacuation, which I think would be greatest disaster, and would condemn a large percentage of our men to death or imprisonment. Monro will be appointed to command the Salonika force." *

This message was followed by one from the War Office officially notifying that General Birdwood had been appointed to command the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and that General Monro was appointed to Salonika.

Lord Kitchener was immensely taken with my proposal for forcing the Straits and asked me to see Sir Henry Jackson at once, to tell him that he was going out to the Dardanelles, and that he begged him to give my scheme all the support possible, otherwise the Army in Gallipoli was doomed. I suggested that I should go out with him; he said, "Yes, if you can get the reinforcements you want first, not otherwise. You must persuade them to agree to your scheme before you leave."

He was leaving on Thursday night to join a cruiser at Marseilles. I asked him if his going meant that he had resigned; he said no, he meant to remain Secretary of State for War and take his Seal of Office with him, and be in a position to order

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, page 409; also paraphrased in "Dardanelles Commission Report."

the necessary force to Gallipoli when he required it. He added that he would like to see me again after I had seen Sir Henry Jackson.

I then saw Sir Henry. He was very cautious, and said that the Admiralty could not risk adding a naval disaster to a military one; the Army must be in a position to take advantage of the Navy's move into the Marmora in order to open the Straits. He said that Lord K's scheme for a landing at Bulair was simply fantastic. I told him that I had practically told Lord K. so, and I thought he would drop it at once. I felt sure that when he had an opportunity of consulting General Birdwood he would decide that the next military attack should be in the Suvla region.

Eventually Sir Henry Jackson gave me a message for Lord Kitchener to the effect that if he meant business the Admiralty would probably agree to forcing the Straits, but that without definite military support they were not justified in risking running ships into the Marmora, with the probability of their being cut off. I then telephoned to Lord Kitchener's Military Secretary (Colonel Fitzgerald), who asked me to come to York House after dinner. Lord Kitchener knew that I was dining with Sir Ian Hamilton and had told me that I could tell Sir Ian of General Monro's report.

Directly I arrived at York House that night (3rd November) Lord Kitchener showed me a letter from Mr. Balfour which he said had made him furious. The Navy, he said, was afraid to wet its feet, and Mr. Balfour's letter was so unhelpful that he was not going to answer it. I pointed out that the letter, which represented the view of the Admiralty War Staff, merely concentrated on Lord K's claim that he could supply the ships in the Marmora across the Peninsula. This was of course impossible, and he had unfortunately given them something to ride him off on. I suggested that what we wanted was that the Admiralty should accept in principle the absolute necessity for a naval attack on the Straits. Sir Henry Jackson had already practically agreed to that, and I was sure that if the Admiralty knew that Lord Kitchener would be prepared to take advantage of the Navy's action by launching a new attack they would agree. I added that the point for him to make was that the Navy had started the campaign, and it was up to the Admiralty

to make a great naval effort to retrieve the situation. Lord Kitchener seized on this, and at once sat down to write a letter. He kept on asking me for phrases, but I hated to be mixed up in it, so said that I wanted to telephone! After a little I got Fitzgerald to go in to Lord Kitchener's room to ask if he wanted to see me again; it was then past midnight. Lord K. said yes, and read his letter over to me. It certainly was rather offensive, but it put things pretty straight and insinuated that the Navy was declining to come to the Army's assistance, though the Army in the first instance had gone to help the Navy.

Lord Kitchener then told me that he was going to Egypt first, so I said that I would wait behind and try to get the reinforcements started. I told him that I wished he was not leaving quite so soon, as I was afraid that if he left before everything was settled the Admiralty might change their mind, and I really thought that, as things stood, if he was in favour of promising military support, the Admiralty would agree to attack. Fitzgerald told me that if I considered it vital to our scheme that Lord Kitchener should stay another day, I was to let him know at once.

The following day, 4th November, to my intense relief, Sir Henry Jackson sent for me to tell me that the battleships *Hibernia*, *Zealandia*, *Albemarle* and *Russell* and four destroyers were being ordered to the Dardanelles, and the Fourth Sea Lord told me that they were sending in addition 24 trawlers armed with 12-pounder guns.

In my diary that night I wrote:

> "After lunch I went back to the Admiralty and was sent for by Mr. Balfour, who had Lord K. with him—they had evidently made it up. Lord K. asked me if I had made up my mind whether I was coming with him or going straight to Mudros. I said I would do whatever he wished, but I was anxious to get back to Mudros as soon as I could, and that if he was going to Egypt I had better go to Mudros direct. Then he said: 'Do not leave until you have the reinforcements you require.' Mr. Balfour overheard and said he had understood we did not require any reinforcements. I reminded him that I had mentioned the reinforcements I had hoped for, both verbally and in

the written appreciation I had given him ; we were prepared to do the operation without if ships could not be spared, but I had just heard from the First Sea Lord that he was sending out four battleships and some destroyers, so I was content. Lord Kitchener said that if I was satisfied—that was all right, he would go, and we would meet shortly at Mudros.

At that moment Winston Churchill came in for a few minutes. Mr. Balfour called him ' My dear Winston,' and Lord K. was very friendly to him. Churchill said I must dine with him that night. Then he and Lord Kitchener went off together to see the Prime Minister.

Then I had a long talk with Mr. Balfour, and I gathered that he was very angry about Lord K.'s letter. I felt a villain, for I had seen both letters—only of course I could not say so. Mr. Balfour said that Lord K.'s letter was intemperate and impossible—he had read a meaning into his (Mr. B.'s) letter which was not there, and had told Mr. Balfour when he attacked him on the subject that he had ' read between the lines.' Mr. B. said that he prided himself that he never wrote anything between the lines and always said exactly what he meant. We then went through my plan again, and I promised to let him have the general outline in writing before I went. He was very friendly and was evidently warmly in favour of my project. He told me that if I could persuade Sir Henry and Oliver, that was really all that mattered, and he advised me to put the whole case to Colonel Hankey—the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence—for the information of the Prime Minister, with whom he had great influence. (This I subsequently did.)

Admiral de Robeck's disapproval of my scheme had been discussed at every interview with him and the Sea Lords. I said I felt sure that if de Robeck was approaching the problem with a fresh mind he would be in favour, but that he was weary and in need of sleep—suffered from insomnia—and had authorised me to say he was in want of rest. In fact he had written to Sir Henry to say so.

I also told Mr. Balfour that Admiral de Robeck had originally written that if they accepted my scheme they

must get someone else to do it ; but that he had rewritten his letter, as he felt it might prejudice my chance of getting a hearing. I said he was a great gentleman and I knew no one else who would have treated me as he had. Mr. Balfour said his opinion of de Robeck was higher than ever after hearing this.

I repeated that Rosy Wemyss was now strongly in favour of a naval attack, and again begged that he might be given command if de Robeck came home. Mr. Balfour then said he must wire to de Robeck, and he gave me the outline of a telegram which he proposed to send him quoting me. I must say I did not like it, and suppose showed that in my expression. He then took a pen and wrote for a few minutes, and read it out to me. It could not have been put more tactfully or more clearly. It was to the effect that he heard from me with regret, but not surprise, that de Robeck was in need of rest—he was at liberty to come home at once to recuperate—but in handing over the Squadron, the officer to whom he confided it must be prepared to force the Straits in co-operation with a military attack if, during his absence, the Army called upon us to assist."

Later, Bartolomé (Naval Secretary) told me that this telegram was dispatched, only slightly altered, to make it quite clear that de Robeck was not being superseded and was expected to go back after his leave, and that he must wait to see Lord Kitchener before starting for home.

My wife and I dined that night with the Churchills. He was evidently convinced that the attack on the Straits would be made, and he told me that Lord K. was going out pinning his faith to me and my scheme, and he felt sure it would succeed.

After dinner Churchill told me a great deal about the events connected with his supersession as First Lord, which followed on Lord Fisher's resignation. He also told me that he personally would have ordered us to force the Straits on the strength of our telegram of the 9th May—half-hearted though it was ; he had in fact drafted a telegram ordering de Robeck to go on, but Lord Fisher had declined to agree to it. I said, " Well, you nursed a viper when you took Fisher back." He rapped

out, "And I would do it again; he brought such fire and vigour into the production of ships." Curiously enough, Lord Fisher subsequently used very similar language about Churchill. Writing to Lord Cromer on 11th October, 1916, he said, "I backed him up till I resigned. *I would do the same again;* he had courage and imagination! He was a War man."*

Churchill told me that night that the Prime Minister wanted to see me very much. Mr. Balfour and others had told me so, too, but Mr. Asquith never sent for me.

Since leaving the Admiralty in May, Churchill had been Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, with a seat in the Cabinet and in the Dardanelles Committee, which, he told me, enabled him to exercise some influence and help the Gallipoli Campaign. But the Prime Minister had just formed a "War Committee" of four or five within the Cabinet, from which he was excluded. He felt that he could no longer hold a sinecure and was resigning to seek service on the Western Front. (Within a few weeks he was with the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards in the front line trenches, and later in command of a Battalion of the Scots Fusiliers.)

Churchill was charming to my wife, and when he came down to see us off and wish me good luck he told her that he shared with her a stake in my enterprise.

The 4th November was a red-letter day for me. The reinforcements I came home for had been promised; the principle that the Navy would attempt to force the Straits, if the Army would be prepared to take advantage of their action, had been accepted, and I felt sure that I had won my battle. I did not know until long afterwards that although Lord K. had left Mr. Balfour's room that afternoon confident that the policy I had urged would be carried out, an hour later, at a final meeting with the Ministers before he left London, it was decided that a naval attempt could only be sanctioned as a support to a new and determined offensive by the Army. In these circumstances, as there were not enough fresh troops now available to make such an attack (the Government being committed to the Salonika folly), Lord K. lost heart and telegraphed to Birdwood to cancel his previous message. "I fear," he said, "the Navy may not play up. . . . The more I look at the problem the

* "Memoirs," by Lord Fisher, page 57.

less I see my way through, so you had better very quietly and very secretly work out any scheme for getting the troops off."

If I had only known this at the time I would have gone out with Lord K., despite the fact that he was going to Alexandria first.

Some years later I read in "The World Crisis, 1915," the memoranda with which Churchill bombarded the Government during the month of October, 1915. In these he reviewed the whole situation, pointed out the immense opportunities still open to us, and the danger and folly of delay, and he implored his colleagues to rouse themselves to effective and energetic action, before it was too late. It was deplorable that the one man with the vision to see, and the courage to shoulder heavy responsibilty, should have had no influence upon that Cabinet of indecision, at such a critical moment.

Friday, 5th November. I went to the Admiralty and asked Sir Henry Jackson to telegraph to de Robeck that I was ready to return directly a passage could be arranged. If he could not send a vessel to Brindisi or elsewhere, I would go to Naples to join the *Rowan*, which was refitting and due to sail on 13th. This should ensure my arrival at Mudros before Lord Kitchener. Pending de Robeck's reply I went home to Fareham for the week-end.

On Monday, the 8th November, we lunched at Admiralty House, Portsmouth, with the Meuxes. I had a long talk with Sir Hedworth, and I believe he was thrilled; anyhow, he gave me a green stone Maori charm with a great battle history to give General Birdwood (commanding the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) *for luck*.

On hearing from Admiral de Robeck that I was to return to Mudros in the *Rowan*, I left London for Naples on the morning of the 10th November, having first obtained permission from Sir Henry Jackson to call upon the French Minister of Marine in Paris to explain the whole scheme to him and to ask for the co-operation of the French Navy, in the event of the naval attack being delivered.

Meanwhile, events of which I had no knowledge, but which were of immense importance to the success of my project, had been occurring in the French capital. When Lord Kitchener arrived in Paris on the morning of the 5th, he found the French Government (which had recently changed) very strongly of

the opinion that the Peninsula should not be evacuated. His hopes apparently revived and he therefore telegraphed to Birdwood:

> "I mean to do my very utmost to enable you to hold and improve your position, as I regard evacuation as a frightful disaster which should be avoided at all costs. Think over any plan which would enable us to improve our positions so as to render them . . . secure . . . against increasing artillery fire. I cannot say what troops I can now gather for this, but I much hope to assemble two divisions of regular tried troops—possibly 27th and 28th—a brigade of Gurkhas, and Younghusband's brigade from Egypt."*

The British Government, anxious to hasten a decision, telegraphed to Paris that morning to ask Lord Kitchener to go to Mudros direct, and at the same time they ordered Generals Monro and Maxwell (G.O.C. Egypt) and Sir Henry MacMahon (High Commissioner) to proceed from Cairo to Mudros to meet him. On hearing this news, Lord Kitchener telegraphed to the Admiralty on the 5th to ask that I might join him at Marseilles in order to discuss the scheme for a naval attack on the voyage to Mudros.

The Naval Secretary to the First Lord, who apparently dealt with this telegram, did not think it would be possible for me to get to Marseilles before Lord Kitchener left in the *Dartmouth* on 7th, so he, very unfortunately, took no action, and did not tell me anything about the matter until after Lord Kitchener had actually sailed.

There would have been ample time for me to have got to Marseilles by aeroplane and motor, or even by train; besides, Lord Kitchener would have waited for me if necessary, as he was ready to do before he left London. But when I did not turn up, he cursed the Admiralty once again and wiped out the possibility of the naval attack on the Straits.

Thus it happened that by the 10th November the Egyptian party and Lord Kitchener, de Robeck, Monro and Birdwood were all gathered at Mudros, and Lord Kitchener was surrounded by people with conflicting advice, as General Aspinall-Oglander,

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II. page 411.

who was on the spot, has recorded in "Military Operations, Gallipoli."

Admiral de Robeck considered it folly to make any attempt to force the Straits. He was ready to evacuate Suvla and Anzac, but wanted to hold on to Helles, in order to help the Navy to blockade the entrance to the Straits.

Sir Henry MacMahon and General Maxwell, with the safety of Egypt in their thoughts, were averse to evacuation, unless a landing at Ayas Bay could *first* be made.

Sir Charles Monro was determined on evacuation and to secure that end was ready to support the Ayas Bay scheme.

General Birdwood, who had warmly protested against superseding General Monro, was no longer so opposed to evacuation, on the understanding that no additional troops could be spared for Gallipoli, and that the Fleet would not renew the attempt to force the Straits. However, he was strenuously opposed to a landing at Ayas Bay, 800 miles from the Peninsula, if this was to *precede* the evacuation—for naval and military reasons which should surely have been apparent to those responsible for this amazing proposal.

Meanwhile, on my arrival in Paris I was met by Millot, who had remained there, and I asked him to arrange a meeting with Admiral Lacaze. He had only recently become Minister of Marine, and his appointment seemed to me a particularly fortunate one at the moment, as I had made great friends with him during the three years we were Naval Attachés together in Italy. We went into the project very fully. Like everyone I discussed the matter with in England, he was alive to all the difficulties, but I left him at about 10 p.m., after a two hours interview, quite enthusiastic. He promised his support and six ships, including some of the "Patrie" class (far superior to the "Suffren" class) if his Government would agree, in the event of the British Government deciding to carry out a combined naval and military offensive. He even went so far as to say that he hoped at least one French battleship would accompany the leading squadron. I asked him, if possible, to appoint Admiral Guépratte to command the squadron. He had fought with great gallantry on the 18th March, and was, I knew, an ardent believer in the naval offensive. Admiral Lacaze regretted being unable to comply with this request, but assured me of

his support, as he said he felt that success would be so invaluable to the cause that risk and loss would be justified, and he wished me the best of luck. I told him that it was destiny that he should become Minister of Marine at such a moment, as I could never have discussed the matter with a stranger as intimately as I had with him.

I wrote a full account of my conversation with Admiral Lacaze to the First Sea Lord, and have never heard that any exception was taken to my action. Armed with Lacaze's promise I continued my journey towards Mudros the following day.

I must confess that I was very unhappy at the thought of Lord Kitchener among the "Evacuators" at Mudros without me to remind him all the time that the Admiralty were ready to order a naval attack if the Army would co-operate; but I had no reason to think at the time that he had already abandoned all thought of a combined operation to retrieve the situation.

A delay of a day and a half at Naples, owing to the *Rowan* doing an unsuccessful trial after her refit, was exasperating—I was in a fever to get on. A wireless message received in the small hours of the 17th told me to come to Salonika, where Lord Kitchener and his satellites were now gathered, and I arrived that evening.

I was still full of hope, and so was astounded to hear from Godfrey that the idea of a naval attack had never been raised, and that Lord Kitchener had telegraphed home suggesting landing a large army in Ayas Bay, at the same time evacuating Anzac and Suvla. I signalled to Fitzgerald to ask for an interview with Lord K. and was told that he would see me on board the *Dartmouth*, where he was living, the following morning.

Sir Henry MacMahon and Sir John Maxwell dined with the Admiral and I gathered that the Government had stamped heavily on the Ayas Bay scheme, which was not surprising—as if we were not deeply enough involved already, without embarking on another Oversea enterprise. Apparently the French had strongly objected and were very suspicious of our entering what they regarded as their sphere of influence.

My diary records:

"18th November. I went on board the *Dartmouth* and heard from Fitzgerald of the disastrous effect my non-arrival

at Marseilles had had on Lord Kitchener; he said if I had only come all might have gone well. When I saw Lord K. he opened by saying, 'Well, I have seen the place; it is an awful place, and you will never get through.' He had spent a few hours at Helles, Anzac and Suvla, but could not possibly know anything about the Straits. I asked him how he knew; had he flown over the Straits? He replied, No, but he would like to. I said that I had watched the Straits for eight months, and had been fired at by almost every gun in them. I was quite convinced that we could get through. What had happened to make him change his mind? When he left England he had been ready to deliver an attack if the Navy would co-operate and attack the Straits at the same time. He said the Generals from France declared that there was not sufficient depth to develop an attack; they considered that an attack was doomed to failure, there was nothing to be done. He said that the Admiralty had given him no assurance that the Fleet would attempt to force the Straits if the Army attacked. He had telegraphed two or three times to try and ascertain their attitude; they would not answer. He had expected me to bring the answer to Marseilles and that I would be able to confirm what we both understood, but when I did not come he thought it had all fallen through. I said he had no right to think so; the Admiralty had sent out the reinforcements I had asked for, in order to be ready to carry out the attack if required. They had told Admiral de Robeck he could come home, but he must hand over the Squadron to someone who was prepared to attempt to force the Straits, if called upon by the Army to do so. Although Mr. Balfour had thrown cold water on his proposal to supply the Fleet across the Bulair Isthmus, his letter, which I saw in York House, made it clear that the Admiralty was ready to co-operate in an effective offensive. This was confirmed in Mr. Balfour's room next day. Matters were exactly where they were when he left England, and it all depended on him. I said I was convinced that the Fleet *could* force the Straits, and *would* do so if given the opportunity. He got up saying that he only wished it could happen, walked out of the cabin into his sleeping cabin and shut the door. So I was dismissed, feeling very sick, but I could not help feeling sorry for him, he looked so terribly weary and harassed.

"I asked Fitzgerald what had happened to Lord Kitchener. He told me that while they were in Paris the French were very insistent on the importance of Salonika, and Lord K. had promised his support. My failure to arrive at Marseilles, and de Robeck's attitude towards a naval attack, had driven Lord K. to the conclusion that there was no salvation through the Navy. General Horne, commanding the 2nd Division in France, who had accompanied him to give advice, like all other Generals in France, hated the Gallipoli 'side-show,' and strongly recommended evacuation. Then he met Sir Henry MacMahon and Sir John Maxwell; their only concern was for Egypt and they produced the Ayas Bay project to defend Egypt. Sir Charles Monro wanted to take the Gallipoli Army to Egypt to train and recondition it for six months! It was not surprising that Lord Kitchener was looking harassed.

"It is difficult to comment temperately on these confused and defeatist counsels in the middle of a desperate war, when our only object should be to fight and defeat the enemy with all the forces we possess. Egypt seems to be Lord Kitchener's chief concern now; but the main Turkish Army is in Gallipoli, and while our army is holding it there, Egypt is safe. A successful naval attack would ensure the defeat of the Turkish Army. Since the 18th March the Fleet has been a Commissariat service, not a fighting force, and apparently it is to continue to look on.

"I went back to the *Triad* feeling pretty miserable; even my friends who think as I do seem to have lost heart.

"That afternoon I had a long talk with the Admiral, hoping that the evacuation scare had shaken him, and feeling that I ought to do my best to persuade him to seize the great opportunity open to him. But he would only see all the difficulties. I told him he would be asked at home how he could reconcile his present attitude with his telegrams in March. We were ten times better off than we were in March; there were 133,000 men now on the Peninsula ready to take advantage of the Fleet cutting the enemy's communications. There was a certainty of getting sufficiently strong reinforcements to ensure success, if he would only back the project. I told him all that had happened at home and that I knew of Mr. Balfour's telegram telling him to hand over the Fleet to someone who was prepared

to force the Straits if ordered to do so. No one else on board knew anything about it, except his secretary, and the telegram was not in the files. He told me that he had intended to leave for home directly after he had seen Lord K., but a crisis arose in Greece, and he had to wait until that was settled.

"Lord K. had told me during my interview with him that the situation in Greece was awful. The British and French Divisions which had endeavoured to get into touch with the Serbian Army had been so severely checked they would probably have to fall back across the Grecian frontier, and might be interned by the Greek Army, as the King, having got rid of Venizelos, was determined to maintain neutrality. The Admiral also thought that we were involved in an awful Balkan plot. This amazed me. I said I did not believe that the Greeks would dare to do anything while the Allied Fleet was in a position to blockade Greece, destroy her fleet and reach everything of any value in Greece with its gunfire. Moreover, the Greek Army they were so afraid of was dependent on seaborne transport for its supplies, as there is 40 miles of unfinished railway between Piræus and Salonika. The Admiral told me that he had not slept all night and felt he must give in.

"After this conversation I realised that it is all over as far as he is concerned, that he must go home and have a rest, and that I must start afresh directly he goes. We sailed for Mudros that night.

"19th Nov. We all gathered on board the *Lord Nelson* and there was a succession of meetings all day. Birdwood arrived from Imbros in the afternoon and I saw him before he went in to see Lord Kitchener. I gave him Sir Hedworth's greenstone charm, which had belonged to a great Maori warrior, and wove a story round it, to the effect that it brought amazing luck, but only to those who fought. I saw him again after he had had a long talk with Lord K. and to my intense disappointment he told me that Lord K. had hardly mentioned the naval attack, and never as a feasible proposition.

"MacMahon told me that Lord Kitchener was going to the Piræus to see the King of Greece and then direct to England. So he was leaving without ever having put the case to Birdwood for a combined attack! Until then I had looked upon MacMahon and Maxwell and their Ayas Bay project as a nuisance

which had merely confused and delayed the issue, but I saw now that I must enlist them, so I got busy with the same old story, and ended by saying, 'If we fight the Turk and beat him in Gallipoli, isn't that the best way to defend Egypt?' MacMahon replied, 'Yes, absolutely the best way,' and he promised to do his best to get Lord K. to come back. I felt that if Lord K. went home in his present mood it would add enormously to our difficulties. Fighting the enemy in Gallipoli and the Straits will be child's play to what one is going through now, fighting one's friends to make them see.

"Then I had an attack on General Horne, who I knew had great influence with Lord K. I told him what Lord K.'s attitude had been in England and of the attitude of the Admiralty. I said that it was simply maddening that all my efforts should now be defeated by him and other Generals from France, who were incapable of considering anything but the war on the Western Front. I said I thought the one thing we most prided ourselves upon was not knowing when we were beaten. The Germans and Turks thought we were beaten in Gallipoli.* Now was the time for a great naval and military counter stroke. After a prolonged fight, having got the Admiralty to agree that if Lord K. made it possible for the Army to co-operate, the Navy would force the Straits, he refused to give the Admiralty the assurance they required. How Lord K. could face the Government after all he had said about being the last man to leave the Peninsula, and go home without having done anything to bring about the combined attack, simply beat me. It was awful to think of the British Army being condemned to evacuate a hard-won position without an effort, and accepting the possibility of losing 25,000 men—the latest estimate of the combined staffs working on the plan of the evacuation—without

* The following extract from a German official Study of the Strategy of the Campaign is of particular interest, in view of the pessimistic outlook in England after the failure of the August offensive.

"Notwithstanding the satisfactory results achieved in August, General Liman von Sanders still regards the future with anxiety. . . . The wastage amongst the Turkish troops was alarmingly high, and the danger was that they would gradually be bled to death. . . . Further formations were hardly likely to become available for Gallipoli. Drafts were coming in more slowly and their standard was growing worse. The increased size of the army enhanced the difficulty of supply. Not only were the lines of communication barely able to meet the existing demands, but the resources of the Capital were running short." ("Military Operations," Vol. II, p. 367).

even considering the offer of naval co-operation. The decision, and Lord Kitchener's change of mind, was obviously based on his (General Horne's) advice and that of Monro. However, it would not come to that—we were going to force the Straits and win a great victory in spite of them, but they made it very hard. I said: 'If you Western-Front Generals don't like the idea of attacking, at least be ready to take advantage of our naval attack when we deliver it.' I begged him and Fitzgerald, who had joined in, to persuade Lord K. to be prepared to do this. Horne, who struck me as being a proper man, was enthusiastic before I finished and said he only hoped I would succeed.

"Then they all went off to the Piræus. I felt if Lord K. reminded the King of Greece that the British Fleet was still in being—though our soldiers seem incapable of realising it—we would not hear much more from the Greeks about interning a British army.

"Just before they sailed a telegram came from the Government asking Lord K. to give a considered opinion about the evacuation of the whole or part of the Peninsula. The Ayas Bay affair was definitely off, thank heaven. Lord K. decided to come back to Mudros, and in the meantime Birdwood was to make out a report.

"I had a long talk with Birdwood that night and told him the whole story. I told him that I knew he had been appointed to succeed Monro, and that he had the chance of a lifetime. I enlarged on the greenstone story and told him we would put him on a column as high as the Duke of York's if he would only give us the chance."

I did not know until long afterwards that Birdwood had practically refused to accept the chief command and the great opportunity offered him. Replying to Lord Kitchener's telegram of 3rd November, he had said: "I sincerely trust that Monro will remain in command here. He has already established confidence in those who have seen him, and his experience in France, which I lack, will be absolutely invaluable. He will, I know, carry out any orders of the Government better than I can."* Lord Kitchener's and the War Office telegrams were kept secret.

* "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, pages 409 and 410.

My diary continues :

" After Birdwood had gone to bed I went over to see Rosy Wemyss in the *Europa* and for the first time since I got back I enjoyed myself. I had had no opportunity of talking to him during the day. I told him everything I have written in my diary. He has now quite made up his mind, but says he wishes he knew more about what was ahead of us after the Straits have been forced ; nevertheless he is prepared to do it, because there is no alternative.

" 20th November. Wemyss said he would have it all out with Birdwood today, and I went off in the *Usk* to the Peninsula with some of the Staff to visit the beaches, taking the Director of Works (Lotbinière), who, before the day ended, became the most ardent supporter and non-evacuator.

" Strong southerly winds had made work on the beaches difficult for some time. Sheltered by blockships, however, there was little interruption until the evening of the 17th November, when a violent south-westerly gale commenced with little warning and blew fiercely for 13 hours. A number of vessels were lost, including tugs, horseboats, motor lighters, steam pinnaces, water boats, etc., and many more were stranded. The stone pier connecting the Helles blockships with the shore was swept away, and all the piers and small craft were wrecked by the sea, which broke through the gap and caused the greatest havoc. At Anzac one pier protected by a blockship was intact ; all the other piers have disappeared.

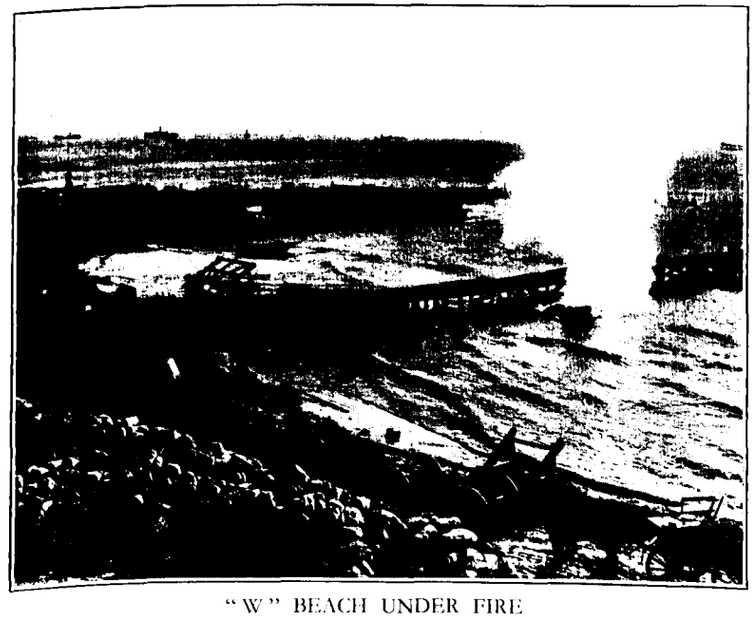
" At Suvla the blockships were the means of saving a number of motor lighters and other vessels from total loss, but all were severely damaged. I pointed out to General Davies, the Corps Commander at Helles, that the winter had not yet started, and evacuation was impossible until the damage could be made good. I told him very little, except that evacuation was in the air again, and I knew he was an ' evacuator.' He said he had told Lord K. that he was against it now. I said, nevertheless General Birdwood thought he was for evacuation, and if not he had better let him know as soon as possible, as he was preparing a memorandum for Lord Kitchener ; so he gave me a letter to take back.

" It is possible to go on landing stores on favourable days, and we have a big reserve on shore, but one thing is quite



" V " BEACH AND *RIVER CLYDE* UNDER FIRE

Magenta and French Ship in background sunk to complete " V " Beach Harbour



" W " BEACH UNDER FIRE

certain, it will be quite impossible to evacuate for some time to come, and for this I was most grateful to the stormy elements for their intervention.

" 21st November. Lord K. returned from Greece in the afternoon. Birdwood, who had gone back to Imbros when Lord K. left, returned to urge the case against evacuation. I gathered that the General at Anzac had reported that the *morale* of the Turk was very low, and that the Anzacs were strongly opposed to evacuation. I knew that Davies considered that, in view of the damage done by the storm, any attempt to carry out an evacuation at Helles would now lead to certain disaster, and I was very hopeful that Lord Kitchener would seize on the naval alternative.

" That night General Davies reported that after a very heavy bombardment the Turks had attempted to attack in great force, but very half-heartedly, and they were repulsed with heavy loss ; which bore out the Anzac view of the low *morale* of the enemy.

" The Admiral, Birdwood and I went on board the *Dartmouth*. On the way there I whispered to Birdwood that I hoped he was going to refuse to evacuate. He said so much depended on Monro, I had better go and see him. So I went at once to the *Aragon*, a large transport, which berthed the General Staff, and on board which Sir Charles Monro had quarters. Lynden-Bell, his Chief of Staff, took me into his cabin, where he was lying on a sofa with a bandaged foot which he had hurt disembarking from the *Chatham*.

" We had many mutual friends and after establishing friendly relations, I let myself go and delivered a fiery attack on his policy. I told him the whole story from beginning to end and begged him to help ; but he raised every kind of difficulty, and even catechised me on the naval side. I said, ' That is a naval matter and if I have got the approval of the Admiralty, and their concurrence, in that awful atmosphere of London, you really must accept it.' His point was that the Army could do nothing, even if we got through the Straits. He seemed quite incapable of realising the tremendous effect a fleet in the Marmora would have on the Turkish army in Gallipoli.

" I said the Admiralty were anxious to put the responsibility on to the Army, but we, who were going to do it, really did not care whether the Army made an attack or not ; though, of

course, they ought to be in a position to take advantage of our success, which would cause intense consternation to the Turks. I said that Kitchener wanted the Admiralty to take the initiative in proposing the combined attack, and the Admiralty insisted on the Army asking for it, but what was really wanted was a MAN to decide.

"At the end of this interview, which was very amicable in spite of my scathing remarks, I said I would beat them yet; if *they* did not want to share in the glory, some other soldiers would. Sir Charles said, 'Look out, Lynden-Bell, the Commodore is going to attack us; I can't get up.' Looking at his foot, which looked hot and red, I said innocently as I went out of his cabin, 'It doesn't *look* very cold, sir.' Then I went off with Lynden-Bell and Neil Malcolm, and at the former's suggestion we drank to the success of my enterprise.

"It was quite obvious that I would get no support from Monro, and that he had come out absolutely determined to put an end to the Gallipoli Campaign, and *nothing* would deviate him from his intention. But all the same I felt that if he was *ordered* to co-operate in a naval attack we should have good comrades in him and his Chief of Staff.

"22nd November. I had a long talk with Wemyss today; he says he feels very awkward about de Robeck; it is so difficult for him to go against everything he has said and done, and he asked me if I had anything to suggest. I said apparently they were determined to evacuate Anzac and Suvla and de Robeck had made no protest. If he thought as I did, that it might be a great disaster, and if de Robeck went home, leaving him to carry it out, without ever consulting him, surely he must be free to give his views to the Admiralty, and point out the hazards of evacuation now that the weather had broken, and give a true naval appreciation and suggest the alternative. He said, 'Yes, and we will force the Straits, Roger.' From that moment he was splendid and never faltered in his determination to save the situation, in spite of de Robeck's opposition."

That night a conference was held by Lord Kitchener on board the *Dartmouth*. Monro was unable to attend, but had sent a written appreciation, urging complete evacuation and an early decision. Maxwell, MacMahon, Birdwood and de Robeck were present; the latter withdrew after a few minutes.

He told me that they were going to evacuate Anzac and Suvla, and hold on to Helles, but he had left the conference because he regarded it as a military matter. He telegraphed to the Admiralty that the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla was not favoured by the Navy, but that "the Generals from France seem to have the view that the war can be ended only by killing Germans, which must be carried out in France." He reported later that he "was not present when final discussion and decision was made, but I understand evacuation was decided on after reading Monro's appreciation. Previously, General Davies at Helles and General Birdwood at Anzac were in favour of holding on."

The following is the official history's account: "(22nd November) Lord Kitchener cabled home his long-expected report. He stated that, as German assistance for the Turks was now 'practically available,' and as in this case the British positions could not be maintained, evacuation seemed inevitable. He recommended that the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac should be proceeded with, but that Helles should be retained, 'at all events for the present.' *This would prevent the Turks from establishing a submarine base in the Straits;** and would also facilitate the task of withdrawal from the two northern beaches. 'The above,' he added, 'is the considered opinion of the Admiral, MacMahon, Monro and Birdwood.'"† The War Committee rejected the plea for the retention of Helles in the belief that the naval arguments in favour of this course were not commensurate with the military disadvantages.‡

My diary continues:

"23rd November. Birdwood came on board in the morning and again in the afternoon, in the depths of depression. I told him to cheer up, we were not beaten yet. He said it was too late to stop it. I said it was too late to evacuate, that was quite certain.

"In the afternoon, he, de Robeck and I went on board the *Dartmouth* to say good-bye to Lord Kitchener. He and de Robeck talked for some time; Birdwood sat looking very glum and unhappy waiting for his turn, while I talked to Fitzgerald; I told him that de Robeck had not put the naval objections to evacuation half strongly enough. Fitzgerald

* My italics.

† "Military Operations, Gallipoli," Vol. II, page 421.

‡ "Dardanelles Commission, Final Report, page 57."

replied, 'de Robeck object! Why, *he* originally suggested leaving Anzac and Suvla and holding on to Helles!'

"I told Fitzgerald that as soon as de Robeck left, Wemyss would send an appreciation from the naval point of view, and I hoped Lord K. would take advantage of it. He said that I must see Lord K. again. A little later I was sent for. Lord K. said two or three times that he simply hated the evacuation and would do anything to avoid it, but it was now inevitable; and I replied each time that we *could* and *would* force the Straits if he would only help, and that directly de Robeck left, Wemyss would return to the attack. My last words were, 'I am not beaten yet, Sir, and I am not going to be,' and we shook hands on it. Birdwood told me afterwards that he said I was 'a very pertinacious young man!'"

Actually, though I had no idea of this at the time, Lord Kitchener had heard from Mr. Asquith that day that the War Committee was in favour of complete evacuation, and the decision would be communicated when the Cabinet had considered its report.

Lord Kitchener then appointed Sir Charles Monro to the command of all the British Forces in the Eastern Mediterranean, including Salonika, and General Birdwood in command at Gallipoli, to carry out the evacuation. He then left for England.

General Monro issued orders for the preliminary work of evacuation to be hurried on with all possible speed, and he informed General Birdwood that orders to evacuate the whole Peninsula were imminent, and that the conduct of the operation would be left entirely to him. On the 25th November, Admiral de Robeck handed over the Naval Command to Admiral Wemyss and sailed for home in the *Triad*, taking Ramsay, Bowlby and his Secretary with him.

Thus the Admiral and the General who were really entirely responsible for the lamentable policy of evacuation left the execution of this unpleasant task to an Admiral and a General who were strongly opposed to it! Admiral Wemyss transferred his flag from the *Europa* to the *Lord Nelson*, and during the next four weeks, under his leadership, a most desperate effort was made to avert what I shall always regard as one of the most disastrous and cowardly surrenders in the Naval, Military and Political history of our country.

CHAPTER XXV

FINAL EFFORT TO AVERT DEFEAT

Wemyss opens his campaign; Fierce blizzard causes heavy losses; Efforts to persuade Monro to co-operate in naval attack; Conference with Gallipoli Generals; Our hopes raised by probable abandonment of Salonika; I visit Salonika to hasten transport of troops; Kitchener endeavours to bring about a combined attack; Evacuation of Anzac and Suvla ordered; Wemyss recommends evacuation of Helles if Army will not co-operate in another naval attack.

It would be difficult to imagine a more invidious situation than that in which Admiral Wemyss found himself on the departure of Admiral de Robeck.

He told me that he had made it clear to de Robeck that he considered himself free to give his own opinion on evacuation, as he had been left to carry out the appalling task without ever having been consulted. He has recorded in his memoirs his final interview with de Robeck: "I went to see him before he left, but no mention was made of the matter uppermost in both our minds, and I assumed command in a state of uncertainty as to whether my tenure was temporary or not."*

Wemyss also told me that de Robeck had not mentioned the telegram which Mr. Balfour read to me on 4th November, the day before it was dispatched. I actually saw it and his reply for the first time when the official military history was published 16 years later. It was as follows:

> "First Lord to Admiral de Robeck. 5th November.
>
> I am sorry but not surprised to hear from Commodore Keyes that you are badly in need of a holiday. Please consider yourself at liberty to take one. Lord Kitchener arrives . . . on Tuesday evening. I think you should see him and discuss the situation. He is fully acquainted with Keyes' opinion. . . . In making arrangements for your substitute during your absence, please bear in mind the

* "The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign," by Lord Wester Wemyss, page 215.

possibility that an urgent appeal from the Army to co-operate with them in a great effort may make it necessary for the Fleet to attempt to force the Straits. The Admiral left in charge should therefore be capable of organising this critical operation, and should be in full agreement with the policy."

Admiral de Robeck replied on 7th November, 1915 :

"I am remaining at Mudros to meet Lord Kitchener. There is no hurry to leave in my case, but I should be grateful for a short holiday and will ask to proceed to England for few days later if service admits. In regard to various points raised in your telegram, a naval and military committee is considering all plans for evacuation of Peninsula. Certainly position of our Army on the Peninsula is not critical at present time as far as I am aware. Until I have seen Lord Kitchener, I am not clear what the policy is, but Admiral Wemyss and all Senior Officers agree with my opinion that unless we can show that some substantial and definite object can be attained by a portion of the Squadron eventually forcing their way into the Sea of Marmora, the sacrifice entailed in effecting this, and the consequent inability to safeguard the Army on the Peninsula and the new expedition to Salonika will be grave error."

I suppose as de Robeck thought that evacuation was inevitable, he did not consider it necessary to communicate either the telegram or his reply to Wemyss.

Since May, Wemyss had been most fully occupied administering the Allied base at Mudros and the lines of communication, and had had nothing whatever to do with operations, or the policy connected with them. On assuming command, however, he went very thoroughly into the whole matter with me. To quote his memoirs : "He (Commodore Keyes) and I spent many hours together elaborating a series of telegrams to the Admiralty, urging an immediate naval attack and putting forward every argument in its favour. In this we had the invaluable assistance of Captain Godfrey, who saw, as we saw, that in our proposals lay the only chance of saving the situation."*

* "The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign," page 216.

First we went together to the *Aragon* and did our best to establish the same kind of good relations with Generals Monro and Lynden-Bell as had existed between Sir Ian and Braithwaite and de Robeck and myself. At first all went well, and we formed the impression that if we managed to get their policy reversed, they would work whole-heartedly with us. We put all our cards on the table, and I suggested to Lynden Bell—with Admiral Wemyss' approval—that we should show each other the telegrams of our respective Chiefs, as Braithwaite and I had always done in the past. He readily agreed, provided Sir Charles concurred, and I had every hope of maintaining the spirit of good comradeship which had prevailed between the Naval and Military Commands from the first, in success and failure, in fair weather and foul.

Admiral Wemyss put the case for a combined operation to General Monro and asked him to consider certain points in connection with naval and military co-operation. He promised to reply by letter.

Immediately after this interview Wemyss opened the campaign by telegraphing to the First Lord that after Admiral de Robeck's departure he had had a long interview with General Monro, and had pointed out the great danger of evacuation, from a naval point of view, in winter weather. He begged that a definite decision should not be given until he had consulted further with Monro and other Generals and had sent a naval appreciation on the situation. He added that personally he viewed the operation with grave misgivings.

The Admiralty replied directing him to report fully at once by telegram, and Admiral Wemyss forwarded the following appreciation :

"28th November, 1915. I understand military reasons for evacuation are generally speaking based on following grounds :

1. The conviction that the Army alone cannot succeed unless they receive prohibitive reinforcements.
2. The wastage in personnel is large and regular; consequently better to lose heavily in evacuation than continue maintenance of a defensive army.
3. Anxiety lest overwhelming German artillery be

sent here, rendering our position untenable and making evacuation even more difficult than at present.

4. The Anzac-Suvla position is not well adapted to withstand sustained attack.

5. The Peninsula Army would be better employed elsewhere.

The evacuation of the Army is, I consider, almost entirely a naval operation.

Of the purely naval difficulties the most serious appear to be:

1. A lengthy spell of fine weather is essential; to count on this at this season of the year is highly optimistic. The weather is constantly changing, north-easterly winds being quickly followed by strong southerly winds, sufficient to drive all our small craft on to the beach and bring evacuation to an abrupt end.

2. The beaches, especially at Anzac and Suvla, shelve gradually, making the task of loading men into lighters and boats, without grounding, one of very great difficulty and of great length. The number of piers is quite inadequate to cope with such a force. At present, after recent southerly gale, piers are practically non-existent.

3. The submarine danger prevents any large transport approaching nearer to the beaches than Kephalo—possible exception Suvla.

The following facts accentuate these difficulties:

1. There is no portion of any of our beaches that cannot be shelled by the enemy.

2. Covering fire from warships cannot deal effectively with this fire.

3. Enemy's artillery is so registered on the beaches that these can be shelled accurately at night.

4. There would be no necessity for the enemy to husband his ammunition.

The evacuation, once commenced, would have to be continuous and should be carried out as rapidly as possible to take advantage of fine weather; taking into consideration the shortage of piers and the difficulties of evacuating from an open beach, it must be accepted that very few wounded could be removed; consequently all losses would be absolute, and men evacuated under such conditions would have difficulty in recovering their *morale*.

The position on the Peninsula is absolutely abnormal. Theoretically an evacuation in face of strenuous opposition means the probable loss of most of the force detailed to cover the re-embarkation of the main army by keeping the enemy out of gun range of the beaches. The operation now proposed is a re-embarkation of a main army without such a covering force.

General Monro places the probable losses at 30 per cent.; I do not think he exaggerates.

I am, however, strongly of opinion that such a disaster should not be accepted without an effort being made to retrieve our position.

I consider that a combined attack by Navy and Army would have every prospect of achieving decisive results.

The initial blow would be struck by the Navy, and whether the attack was successful or not the Army would still be supported adequately in its present positions, and the evacuation could then take place under no more adverse circumstances than at present.

I am prepared to submit a plan for the naval operations, and personally I feel assured Sir Charles Monro would be ready to vigorously co-operate in a joint attack if such were ordered.

Any doubt I may have had as to the value of a Squadron above Nagara before the Straits are securely opened has been outweighed by the gravity of the situation."

We had made a little harbour of refuge at Kephalo, protected by a couple of old Italian steamers as blockships. After our experience of 17th-18th November, this was greatly improved by sinking the *Oruba* (one of Lord Fisher's dummy battleships) filled with concrete, to extend the breakwater. Thus an excellent harbour was formed, into which the small craft from the Gallipoli beaches could take shelter from both northerly and southerly gales.

On 26th November a strong southerly gale was accompanied by a heavy downpour of rain, which lasted for 24 hours and drenched everyone on the Peninsula. This was followed, with hardly a pause, by an icy northerly gale, a fierce blizzard, then a heavy fall of snow and a very severe frost. The storm raged for three dreadful days and the sufferings of the troops on the Peninsula were terrible. At Anzac and Helles they stood it pretty well and were able to get some shelter in the ravines, dug-outs and galleries. But at Suvla, the troops on Kiretch Tepe felt the full force of the blast; those on the low-lying plain were flooded out of their trenches, and numbers, of friend and foe alike, were actually drowned, and many died of exposure. Our losses amounted to 200 dead, 5,000 cases of severe frost-bite, and another 5,000 were evacuated sick. The enemy suffered even more severely, and numbers of dead bodies were washed down in the torrents which flooded the plain from the high ground overlooking it.

This quite abnormal blizzard was a tragedy. On the other hand, it made evacuation impossible for the time being.

When the southerly blow started, remembering the gale of 17th to 18th, the small craft at Anzac and Helles were sent to the harbour of refuge at Kephalo. Unfortunately, in the northerly gale one of the old Italian steamers broke up and the sea running through the gap thus formed, wrecked the piers and jetties and piled up all the small craft on shore. The total losses included a torpedo boat, a water ship, several tugs, motor lighters, pinnaces, etc. Submarine *H3*, which was standing by to go into the Marmora, suffered serious damages and had a very narrow escape. Eventually she lay on the bottom until the gale abated, with her periscope just above the water; it was feared that she was lost, but to the intense relief of the onlookers on shore, it was noticed that her periscope revolved from time to time.

It was essential to have a harbour of refuge for small craft in Kephalo, the nearest shelter being at Mudros, and sudden shifts of wind made it impossible to risk leaving them on a lee shore. The Admiral therefore telegraphed to the Admiralty that if evacuation was decided upon he proposed to sink the armoured cruiser *Terrible*, or an old battleship, to close the gap in the Kephalo breakwater.

In the meantime, in response to a telegram from the Admiralty, Admiral Wemyss telegraphed:

> "The plan proposed is for the Navy to force the Dardanelles, whilst the Army is prepared for vigorous attack and held in instant readiness to do so at the psychological moment. . . .
>
> The Army would not necessarily be expected to attack simultaneously with the naval attack, but by vigorous feints it could materially assist by holding the enemy to his ground and preventing him reinforcing the light gun defences* of the minefields.
>
> The naval attack will be carried out generally on the lines submitted by Commodore Keyes when in England, with whom I discussed it before his departure. . . .
>
> Such an attack cannot but have a most demoralising effect upon the enemy, particularly so if, as is hoped, he is taken by surprise."

After dispatching this telegram the Admiral and I went on board the *Aragon* and showed it and the preceding one to Monro and Lynden-Bell. Sir Charles said that if ordered to co-operate they would do so thoroughly, but . . . and it was obvious he intended to do all he could to stop it.

I had two or three long talks with Sir Charles, and at that time he was exceedingly nice to me and was most tolerant of my outbursts. After one interview I wrote: "General Monro's shortsighted outlook is simply astounding. He said, 'Well, if it all succeeds, you go through the Straits into the Marmora and we occupy Constantinople, what good is it going to do? What then? It won't help us to win the war; France is the only place in which Germany can be beaten. Every man not employed in killing Germans in France and Flanders is wasted.' I said: 'The troops you get out of here won't go to France but to Egypt.' He retorted that he did not believe in the danger in Egypt. I said I did not either, but the 'Egyptians' (Sir Henry MacMahon and General Maxwell) did, and the Government would be bound to send a big army there when the Turkish Army was released." That rather beat him.

* We had good reason to believe that most of them had been removed for operations against the Army, and we know now that this was the case.

He used the argument Lord Kitchener had been given by Horne, as to the lack of depth in the Gallipoli position, which made it impossible to deploy and develop an attack. I replied that the sea was very deep, and asked where in France, or anywhere else for that matter, could a position have been reinforced by 25,000 men without the enemy having any suspicion of it, as Anzac was for the August offensive. Or where could 7,000 men have been launched into an attack (10,000 to 15,000 could have been equally well employed) and deployed for action within half an hour, as they were between Nibrunesi Point and Anzac on 6th August—entirely unsuspected by the enemy. Such operations were surely an absolute impossibility in land warfare; but they seemed incapable of appreciating the value of amphibious power.

I went on to say that the Germans were checked in France, Flanders and Russia; this was their one remaining outlet, and we were going to give them a free hand if his recommendations were carried out.

He said it was too late for a combined naval and military attack. I said that one would have been ordered early in November but for him. He did not like that. He said sentiment should not be allowed to interfere with "Higher Military Strategy"; which appeared to amount, in his opinion, to no more than killing Germans. "In fact," I wrote in my diary that night, "he can see no further than the wire in No-man's-land on the Western Front."

General Monro took everything I said in very good part, and when I asked him after his foot, remembering my parting shot on another occasion, he said, "It will be well enough soon to get up and kick somebody's —— stern." I said, "That is splendid, the best thing I have heard for some time—you mean the Turks, sir."

It was a black day for our enterprise when the Government decided to substitute Monro for Hamilton. Sir Ian had the vision to see its unlimited possibilities; the knowledge and experience to appreciate the immense value of a fleet above the Narrows; and faith in the Navy to carry out its undertakings. He would have welcomed Wemyss' offer to force the Straits and would have backed us up for all he was worth.

On 30th November I accompanied Admiral Wemyss to Imbros to confer with General Birdwood and the Generals from the Peninsula about evacuation. General Byng did not come, but sent his Chief of Staff.

The havoc at Kephalo was far worse than we imagined; the whole beach was a mass of wreckage and vessels piled up on top of one another. We almost rejoiced, for evacuation for some little time was a naval impossibility, and in the meantime wiser counsels might prevail.

Admiral Wemyss opened the meeting by putting our case to the Generals, and telling them what we proposed to do, and then he told me to tell them what had happened at home, so I took them through the history of the operations—from a naval point of view—from our check on the 18th March until the present date, and concluded by telling them that we were confident of our ability to sever the enemy's communications.

It was obvious that, with the exception of General Byng's Chief of Staff, they all hated the thought of evacuation. They told us the *morale* of the Turks was very low, that they had suffered more heavily than we had in the blizzard, and numbers were surrendering every night; the prisoners declared that many more were ready to come in, but were afraid of being shot from behind or in front.

General Davies handed in a written statement to General Birdwood, giving very strong reasons against evacuation; in fact, he declared, in the present state of his beaches it was an impossibility.

General Birdwood showed us the telegram he sent on 2nd November, when Lord K. asked for his opinion about evacuation, after he had received Monro's report recommending it. It set out very clearly his objections to evacuation. He said it still represented his opinion, when considering the local situation. Lately he had been asked to give an opinion on larger grounds, which gave him no option but to agree to evacuation. Neither he nor any of the Corps Commanders had ever contemplated a combined offensive. In fact the possibility of a naval attack had never been suggested to them by Monro or Kitchener.

It was a great pity General Byng was not there. I had seen a good deal of him before I went home and he had always made

use of the same phrase, " I can get on, but if they won't let me get on, I must get out." He had inherited a thoroughly disheartened and defeated Corps, but he had greatly raised its *morale*, and even after the 10th Division was taken from him for Salonika he still declared that he could " get on " without reinforcements. He was never allowed to try, and his Corps had never fought under his command. It was not surprising that he was in favour of " getting out," on the information given to him by General Monro.

I think everyone at Imbros was cheered by the thought that there might be a way out of their difficulties, for, as Brigadier-General Aspinall (then Chief Staff Officer to General Birdwood) remarked, the recent gale had shown how great a risk would be run in the final stage of withdrawal, and it was beginning to appear that a decision to evacuate would be an even greater gamble than a decision to stay.

Meanwhile the Cabinet or the Council of War was apparently unable to come to a decision, and we were in great hopes that Admiral Wemyss' telegrams were the cause of this delay. We know now that this was not the case. The Government at this moment had practically decided to withdraw from Salonika. Lord Curzon had written a very strong memorandum against the evacuation of Gallipoli. Colonel Hankey had submitted an appreciation to the Prime Minister, in which he pointed out that the evacuation of the Peninsula would enable Germany to obtain her ambition of increasing our difficulties in the East, without any effort at all on her part. . . . Lord Kitchener was already asking for 14 divisions to protect Egypt. . . . There was even a fear that Russia might sign a separate peace. He urged that the arguments in favour of holding on to Gallipoli were overwhelming, *provided that it could be done.* " It so happens," his paper concluded, " that good divisions are about to be set free from Salonika, and the main plea of this paper is that the question may be considered from the point of view of their possible use to save the position on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and if possible to take the offensive. . . . "

The opponents of evacuation then gained ground. The official history states :

> " Wemyss' request to be allowed to force the Straits had not, it is true, found much favour with the Government, for Admiral de Robeck had now reached England, and at a meeting of the War Committee on the 2nd December, in addition to emphasising the hazards of the undertaking, he pointed out that, ' though it might be worth while if there was a definite object to gain by it, he himself could see none.' But it had now been decided that the Salonika enterprise must be abandoned at all costs, and Lord Curzon's minute (against evacuating the Peninsula) had made such a vast impression that there was strong support for continuing the Gallipoli Campaign. Counting on the help of four divisions to be brought from Salonika, Lord Kitchener again changed his mind, and was supporting this plan."*

Lord Kitchener telegraphed to General Monro on 2nd December :

> " The Cabinet has been considering the Gallipoli situation all day. Owing to political consequences, there is a strong feeling against evacuation, even of a partial character. It is the general opinion that we should retain Cape Helles. If the Salonika troops are placed at your disposal for an offensive operation to improve the position at Suvla, could such operations be carried out in time, with a view to making Suvla retainable by obtaining higher positions and greater depth? The Navy will also take the offensive in co-operation."

General Monro replied on 3rd December :

> " I fully recognise the complexity of the situation which has arisen. I do not, however, think that the proposal to employ four fresh divisions in order to gain a more secure position at Suvla can be regarded as an operation offering a reasonable chance of success. . . . In respect of naval co-operation, the character of the terrain on the Peninsula is such that naval guns cannot search the Turkish positions. The fire of howitzers would be needed to do so effectively. The many deep ravines and gullies are very favourable for the concealment and protection of the Turkish reserves and for their rapid transference in case

* " Military Operations, Gallipoli," pages 428 to 436.

of bombardment. Nor do I think the supply of the Turks on the Peninsula by the two lines available to them would be prevented by naval action."

General Monro's experience was limited to one visit to the Peninsula; he landed at Helles, Anzac and Suvla on 30th October and remained for about half an hour in the vicinity of the beach at each place. His Chief of Staff *never landed* on the Peninsula at all. The opinion of the Generals with experience in Gallipoli, who were opposed to evacuation, was ignored.

With reference to naval co-operation, General Davies had actually reported most favourably on the great value of naval gunfire in an attack that was delivered at Helles on 15th November.

General Monro had been informed that the *Agamemnon*, *Endymion* and a monitor, operating in the Gulf of Xeros, had bombarded Kavak Bridge and completely destroyed the two centre arches and seriously damaged the northern approaches to the bridge and the road. The Kavak River and marshes being full of water at this season, the enemy's communications along the seaward side of the Bulair Isthmus were thus cut. Ships in the Marmora could completely control the other road, as well as all sea-borne transport.

Nevertheless, the last paragraph of General Monro's telegram expressed his opinion on a naval matter—which was quite outside his knowledge or experience—diametrically opposite to the opinion which Admiral Wemyss and I had repeatedly impressed upon him. Moreover, he knew that the Admiral was ready to stake his life, his reputation and his fleet on the belief that he could force the Straits, cut the two Turkish lines of supply and thus extricate our Army from its difficult position.

We soon got an inkling that something was on foot, for on 3rd December a telegram was received from the Admiralty directing the Admiral to report how soon four divisions at Salonika could be transported to Mudros. The Admiral and I went on board the *Aragon* at once to make arrangements with the General Staff. We were kept in complete ignorance of Lord Kitchener's telegram and General Monro's reply! (I saw these two telegrams for the first time when the final report

of the Dardanelles Commission was published in December, 1917.) I wrote that night: "The most awful difficulties were raised. They simply don't know how to make war. What wouldn't I give for Johnnie or Hubert Gough to put life into the proceedings. They simply hate our trying to hurry things. It is hard to 'wait and not be tired of waiting' and 'make allowance for their doubting too'—but I am trying to."

The next day we were told that it would take 15 days to transport the troops from Salonika. I felt inclined to weep or swear, and the Admiral said I might go to Salonika to hasten matters. The Admiral and I went on board the *Aragon* again to try and find out what they wanted in the way of transport, etc., as the divisions were equipped, of course, with all sorts of things which we knew they would not require in Gallipoli. Lynden-Bell promised to let me know the following morning. In an unguarded moment he said: "Well, we are in for it—we are going to do it; you have got your way." My hopes rose sky-high.

While I was on board I talked to Deedes, who was Intelligence Officer on Sir Ian's Staff. He knows Turkish like a Turk, and said the prisoners are very downhearted. They detest the idea of the Germans in Constantinople, and a success now would bring about a collapse of the German domination there. He said it was the most unfortunate time to *think* of evacuating, but he had never been consulted. I told him what we wanted to do and he said he thought it was the only way out of the awful position into which we had drifted.

That evening we received a signal from Nasmith in the Marmora, saying he had torpedoed the *Yar Hissa*, a French-built Turkish destroyer, and had picked up two officers and 40 men out of a crew of 85. Later he had put them on board a sailing vessel. He had also sunk the *Bosphorus*, a 3,000-ton steamer, by gunfire.

Next morning I went to see Lynden Bell and found him stone cold. He had seen his Chief in the meantime, who said he would not agree to any portion of the four divisions being brought without their whole paraphernalia, heavy guns, mechanical transport, etc., etc. The Q.M.G., who was present, dwelt on the absolute necessity for embarking everything complete and very deliberately. I sat quiet and good, because we could

not have any friction, though I nearly howled; but after they had said that if anything was left behind they would never see it again, I remarked it would be a small loss compared to what they were contemplating in the evacuation of Gallipoli, and surely the units not required could be safely left behind at Salonika. Lynden-Bell said, on the contrary, the Germans would be in Salonika in a very short time. "These are the people," I commented in my diary, "on whose advice the Government are acting!"

As it was quite certain that Monro would throw cold water on any suggestion for a combined offensive, in spite of the troops from Salonika, Admiral Wemyss, Godfrey and I concocted a telegram to the Admiralty, breathing encouragement and confidence. After remarking on the low *morale* of the Turks and their sufferings in the blizzard, the Admiral declared that he was ready to carry out the offensive with the ships then in the Mediterranean. He reported that the Turks were being continually harassed by indirect gunfire from the ships, in the villages where they were known to take shelter, and that the heavy monitors had been registered on to the forts on both sides of the Straits and had experienced no difficulty in repeatedly hitting them by indirect fire over the Peninsula.

On the 5th the Admiralty telegraphed suspending all landing at Salonika; in the meantime I had learnt from Birdwood what would be required, and I left that night in the *Hazel* with Lambart to speed up the transport of the troops from there. The result of my visit was that arrangements were made to transport all the troops of the four divisions, equipped with all that they would require for operations in Gallipoli, in the available transports, battleships and cruisers, within a few days. I returned to Mudros on the 7th very elated.

Admiral Wemyss told me that Admiral Le Bon, a great friend of his and mine, who had been in charge of the French lines of communication from Mudros, and had just been appointed to command the French Squadron at Mudros, had come on board the previous night to see him, and had told him that he thought evacuation was a terrible mistake; he felt sure the Allied Fleet could and ought to force the Straits. He was delighted to hear that we were now very hopeful of being allowed to do so.

I went to bed that night simply full of buoyant hope, to be awakened in the small hours (8th December) by the Admiral's Secretary, who told me that the following telegram had been received: "In view of unanimous military opinion, his Majesty's Government have decided to shorten the front by evacuating Anzac and Suvla." I turned my face to the ship's side and felt that I was almost beaten.

After breakfast we set to work again, and the Admiral telegraphed to the Admiralty as follows (626):

"8th December.

The reason given for this decision is a very great surprise to me and one which I feel convinced has been arrived at under a misapprehension by the military at home. I have never seen any of G.O.C.-in-C.'s telegrams or appreciations, though I have shown him all mine. I confirm strongly all I said in my telegram of 28th November *re* evacuation.

The Navy is prepared to force the Straits and control them for an indefinite period; cutting off all Turkish supplies which now find their way to the Peninsula either by sea from the Marmora or across the Dardanelles from Asiatic to European shore. The only line of communications left would be the roads along the Isthmus of Bulair, which can be controlled almost entirely from the Sea of Marmora and the Gulf of Xeros.

What is offered the Army, therefore, is the practical complete severance of all Turkish lines of communication, accompanied by the destruction of the large supply depots on the shores of the Dardanelles.

In the first instance I strongly advocated that the naval attack should synchronise with an Army offensive, but this is not a necessity and if the Army will be prepared to attack in the event of a favourable opportunity presenting itself, nothing more need be required of them.

The Navy here is prepared to undertake this operation with every assurance of success."

The Admiral followed this by a personal telegram to Mr. Balfour, who I knew was immensely taken with the idea

of a naval offensive when I saw him in London a month earlier. It was as follows (631):

"8th December.

The unanimous military opinion referred to in Admiralty telegram has, I feel certain, been greatly influenced, and naturally so, by the military appreciations of Sir Charles Monro. These I have not seen but their purport I have gathered in course of conversations. The Corps Commanders I know view the evacuation with the greatest misgiving.

The forcing of the Dardanelles as outlined in my telegrams has never been put before them and I am convinced that after considering the certain results which would follow a naval success, they would favour an attack on the lines indicated, especially in view of the undoubted low *morale* of the Turkish Peninsula Army, of which we have ample evidence.

A few days ago General Monro remarked to me: 'If you succeed and occupy Gallipoli, and even Constantinople, what then? It would not help us in France or Flanders.' I mention this to show that he has quite failed to realise the significance of the real German objective in the Near East. He is obsessed with the idea that the only method by which the Allies will be victorious is in killing or capturing such a number of Germans that they (the Germans) will be unable to continue fighting. He looks upon any action which does not have the above for its immediate objective as a waste of effort.

The very extensive German propaganda being pursued all over the Near East, accompanied by the expenditure of vast sums of money, is not, I feel convinced, being undertaken merely as a side issue to the European War.

A position of stalemate on both fronts of the principal theatres of war appears the natural outcome of the present situation.

This opinion is freely expressed in the higher military circles in Greece and would therefore appear to be fostered by the Germans, a significant point.

By surrendering our position here, when within sight of victory, we are aiding the enemy to obtain markets, the possession of which may enable her to outlast the Allies in the war of exhaustion now commencing.

A successful attack would once and for all disperse these clouds of doubt—a large amount of shipping would be released, and the question of Greece and Egypt settled.

I do not know what has been decided about Constantinople, but if the Turk could be told that we were in the Marmora to prevent its occupation by the Germans, such a course would inevitably lead to disruption and therefore weakness amongst them.

I fear the effect upon the Navy would be bad. Although no word of attack has passed my lips except to my immediate Staff and Admirals, I feel sure that every officer and man would feel that the campaign had been abandoned without sufficient use having been made of our greatest force, viz. the Navy.

The position is so critical that there is no time for standing on ceremony, and I suggest that General Birdwood, the officer who would have to carry out the attack or evacuation which is now ordered, be asked for his appreciation.

The logical conclusion, therefore, is the choice of evacuation or forcing the Straits. I consider the former disastrous tactically and strategically, and the latter feasible, and so long as troops remain in Anzac, decisive.

I am convinced that the time is ripe for a vigorous offensive, and I am confident of success."

On the 9th December I went over to Kephalo to attend an evacuation conference, and was much impressed by the disgust expressed by the fighting soldiers at the shame and folly of clearing out when we had the enemy beaten and demoralised. The Australian Brigadier-General G.S. at Anzac was particularly scathing in his comments. I reported this to Admiral Wemyss when I returned that night and he telegraphed again (638) to the First Lord:

"9th December.

From information I have received today, I am more than ever convinced that the true extent of the proposed

naval action has never been placed even before General Birdwood and that therefore any opinion already expressed by him has been given under a misapprehension. I therefore urge that the suggestion contained in my telegram of the 8th be acted on. At Anzac, where they know that they have the enemy beaten, the spirit has never been higher, and evacuation as discussed in the papers is ridiculed."

The Admiral then decided to go to Kephalo with me the following day, and asked General Birdwood to arrange for the Generals from the Peninsula to meet us.

On the 10th December therefore, we went back to Kephalo in great hope that Birdwood could be induced to take a strong line, in view of the courageous statements against evacuation he had repeatedly made to us. On our arrival Birdwood told us that on the morning of the 6th he had received a telegram from Monro telling him to prepare a scheme for using four divisions from Salonika, mentioning that the Navy would take the offensive in co-operation. He said he thought we had won, and he was delighted. He showed us his reply, which was to the effect that both he and Byng were of the opinion that, with fresh troops and plenty of howitzer ammunition, it was still possible to advance at Suvla. But he made no mention of the low *morale* of the Turks, of their nightly desertion into our lines, nor of the great effect a fleet above the Narrows would have on the enemy's communications. The blizzard had evidently shaken him, for he dwelt on the perils of a winter campaign and concluded by describing the suggested operation as a "complete gamble." After showing us his telegram, which he said General Monro had forwarded to Lord Kitchener, he remarked that we could see he had declared for an attack; but we did not feel very much encouraged and went sadly back to Mudros, realising that there was nothing to be hoped for from that quarter.

We know now that when Lord Kitchener heard that we could transport the troops from Salonika so rapidly, he refused to accept General Monro's verdict and again asked for the opinion of Birdwood and Byng. Monro was then able to send Birdwood's reply (which he had shown us at Imbros) and one to the same effect from Byng, whose Corps had suffered so fearfully

in the blizzard and who, by this time, was himself thoroughly disheartened by his long-enforced inaction.

So, once again, it was left to General Birdwood to make a big decision; but, as on a previous occasion when he was actually appointed to supersede Monro, his great loyalty to his Chief decided his action and he was not prepared to accept any independent responsibility.

On our return to Mudros we found two telegrams from the Admiralty.

"Admiralty to Vice-Admiral. 10th December, 1915.

As Admiralty are not prepared to authorise Navy single-handed attempting to force the Narrows and acting in Sea of Marmora cut off from supplies, the decision of the Government to evacuate Suvla and Anzac will not be further questioned by Admiralty in view of the individual and combined appreciation of the responsible Generals and the great strain thrown on naval and military resources by the operations in Greece. Holding Cape Helles and the mouth of the Straits will enable another attack to be started later working on a different plan should the Government decide to undertake it."

Mr. Balfour's personal reply to Admiral Wemyss breathed a finer spirit:

"Your telegram has been very carefully considered. I personally agree with your appreciation of German designs in the East, and I view with deepest regret the abandonment of Suvla and Anzac. But military authorities, including Birdwood, are clear that these cannot be made tenable against an increased artillery fire, while the Admiralty hold that the naval arguments against forcing the Straits are overwhelming. Naval authorities here are convinced that while success is most doubtful, very heavy losses are certain, and it must be remembered that nothing would have a worse effect on our Eastern position than a serious check to the Navy. This would be represented as a heavy blow at our naval supremacy."*

* This telegram is incorrectly attributed to the First Sea Lord, Sir Henry Jackson, on page 59 of the Dardanelles Commission's Final Report.

It is difficult to reconcile the official Admiralty telegram with the fact, which is now on record, that when Lord Kitchener decided to throw the Salonika troops into Gallipoli and called upon the Admiralty to provide the naval co-operation in a combined attack—which he had been led to count upon—Mr. Balfour had to inform the Government that the Sea Lords—who in the meantime had consulted de Robeck—were no longer prepared to allow the Fleet to force the Straits.

Admiral Wemyss, who was striving with such determination for a more courageous policy was left in ignorance of this and other important matters and it was a long time before we knew what was actually taking place at home.

We know now that the Cabinet's decision to evacuate was, in the end, dictated by the action of the French Government, who, supported by the Russian Government, were determined that our troops should not leave Salonika, and pressed their point to the verge of a rupture. They declared that if the Allies gave up that port, Roumania and Greece would join the Central Powers and Salonika would become a base for German submarines.

It is almost incredible that our Government should have accepted such a plea; but the French military authorities, like our own, seemed to be incapable of understanding the value of sea power, or of realising the impossibility of a hostile Greece, or a German base at Salonika, while the Allied Fleet was in being in the Eastern Mediterranean.

It was now clear that we had to accept the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla as inevitable. But to hold Cape Helles in order to enable another attack to be delivered later seemed to us sheer procrastination, and the Admiral, Godfrey and I discussed how we could best bring matters to a head. It was essential that, if another attack was ever contemplated, it should be delivered directly after the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac, with the object of capturing Achi Baba, the possession of which would fulfil the conditions which Admiral de Robeck (who was now on his way back) had considered necessary before he would undertake to renew the attack on the Narrows. If the General was not prepared to undertake this, we felt that we should make every effort to bring about the evacuation of Helles

at the earliest possible moment. We felt that it was not fair to ask the Army to endure the daily losses which were suffered at Helles and which would increase when the Turks at Anzac and Suvla were released, simply to make it more easy for us to watch the Straits. The possession of Helles could not possibly affect the enemy's submarine campaign, as suggested in Lord Kitchener's telegram of 23rd November.

By that time the co-operation of ships' guns with the Army was far ahead of anything contemplated at home. The enemy's batteries, trenches, bivouacs, etc., were fixed by aerial photography and other means, and excellent maps were issued to the firing ships. Indirect fire was developed to a high degree of accuracy, with the aid of aerial and shore observation. Mark buoys were laid, and aiming points, ranges and deflections were registered on to any position on which fire was required by the Army; indirect fire could then be opened at short notice without waiting for aerial observation. At Helles the ships had the great advantage of being able to engage the enemy from the front, both flanks, and from the rear, and were able to deny them many favourable positions for their batteries and continually forced them to change their positions.

As I have mentioned, General Davies had expressed warm appreciation of the value of naval gunfire in co-operation with a military offensive; his letter to Admiral de Robeck on the subject ran thus:

"16th November, 1915.

The excellent shooting of the cruiser and monitors yesterday undoubtedly contributed very largely to the ease with which our troops seized two important positions in the enemy's lines and added enormously to the moral effect and material damage done to the enemy.

All who saw it agree as to the accuracy and value of the monitors' fire, but the chief point is that it has been established that co-operation in an attack has now become a practical reality and that a system has been established which, with further development, will prove a powerful factor both in attack and defence.

As regards the fire of the batteries, there is, of course, no record as to the actual damage done, but the fact that

the Turkish artillery, though they fired more ammunition than they have done since our big attacks some months ago, have never fired more wildly and their fire did practically no damage and did not hinder either the capture of the trenches or the consolidation of them afterwards, is sufficient evidence of the success achieved."

Armed with this I went over to Helles and discussed it fully with General Davies and Brigadier-General Street. Admiral Wemyss then forwarded the following telegram (662) to the Admiralty:

"13th December, 1915.

On completion of evacuation of Suvla and Anzac a most serious situation will present itself at Helles.

The whole of Helles zone is exposed to artillery fire from the Asiatic shore and from the north of Achi Baba. The intensity of this fire is likely to be more than doubled on account of the number of guns released from the northern zone and the influx of ammunition and heavy howitzers from Germany may cause it to become so severe as to force the Army to evacuate.

The Helles position even with the addition of heavy artillery will be untenable unless the Army is in possession of Achi Baba; the capture of this position appears to me essential if we are to retain our footing on the Peninsula.

I consider the decision must be made at once and acted on without loss of time, and if possible before the Turks can move their artillery from Anzac and Suvla.

A policy of holding on to our present position at Helles and waiting until spring for offensive action will be suicidal for the Army. Better to evacuate that position immediately than to suffer a second and more decisive reverse by procrastinating.

The capture of Achi Baba position does not seem beyond our powers.

The G.O.C. 8th Corps attributes the capture of trenches on 15th November, with insignificant loss, to a great extent to the support afforded by the naval squadron consisting of one specially protected cruiser and three monitors, who, after careful registration, used indirect fire without the assistance of spotting by aeroplane, rendered impossible by high wind.

Fifteen miles of heavy net is available here now; with this it will be possible to guard an area off the left flank where battleships will be able to lie and support the Army in a sustained attack.

Once Achi Baba is in our hands we shall be in the position desired last April and the attack on the Narrows can be carried out with every hope of success.

I strongly hold that this is not a purely military matter but one of combined naval and military importance, and I therefore have no hesitation in putting forward my views and consider it my duty to do so as the Admiral Commanding at this critical moment."

A copy of this was sent to General Monro, who promptly telegraphed the following protest to Lord Kitchener:

"14th December, 1915.

I have just received a copy of telegram No. 662 which Admiral Wemyss sent yesterday to the Admiralty. In this telegram the Admiral deals with the military situation at Helles and urges an attack on Achi Baba without delay. I wish to dissociate myself from the views expressed by the Admiral. An attack on this position presents an undertaking the magnitude of which he is not in a position to appreciate. I hold the opinion that our military responsibilities, at any rate at the present juncture, in this theatre of war, should not be further increased, especially for such a problematical prospect as the Admiral foreshadows."

General Monro followed this up with another telegram to Lord Kitchener:

"15th December, 1915.

I think it would be well if Admiral here were to confine himself to an expression of opinion on naval matters. We work in complete harmony but he omits no effort to try and secure military support to his scheme of combined military and naval operations for forcing the Dardanelles. (*Surely that is what we were there for.*) I make no comment

on the naval problem, but I decline to offer military support unless ordered by you. As to his predictions that Cape Helles will become the objective of heavy bombardment on the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla, the Admiral does not realise the actual facts in respect to the effect of evacuation of Anzac and Suvla on the position of Helles. Turks have always been able to use as many troops on Helles front as they could deploy and there can be no change in this respect. Provided the necessary guns and ammunition be forthcoming it would always be possible for them to mass dangerously powerful artillery against Helles. Chief difference in new situation will be that whereas Turks would probably have massed against Suvla or Anzac if we had held them, while mainly containing us at Helles, they can now only mass against Helles. Of course, Helles being held by itself offers an attractive objective to the Turks, and it is quite possible that they may make a serious effort against it, but the capture of Achi Baba will not in any way reduce the dangers which the Vice-Admiral predicts so far as land defence is concerned and its capture is quite beyond our resources, and I contend a fruitless undertaking in the existing military situation, not even clearing the beaches at Helles so long as Turkish guns are maintained on the Asiatic shore. I would remind you of my paper submitted to you while you were here, pointing out the disadvantages of holding the Helles position alone and making it clear that I looked upon its retention only as a lesser evil than the retention of Anzac and Suvla as well as Helles."

A messenger brought a copy of this to the Admiral, and at the same time delivered a letter from General Monro covering a memorandum from General Birdwood, pointing out that it was essential for the security of the Helles Division that certain naval action should be taken, to comply with which would have meant the retention of a number of ships in close support of the Army continually off the Peninsula, including battleships held in readiness at Kephalo. Birdwood's memorandum clearly visualised the possibility of a big offensive in the spring and drew attention to the great value of naval gunfire, particularly

that of battleships, in the event of an offensive being ordered.

In reply to the memorandum, Admiral Wemyss assured the General that the Fleet would do all in its power to support the Army throughout the winter, but he pointed out the difficulties of maintaining monitors, cruisers and destroyers in the desired positions in stormy weather, or close to the Peninsula in the event of the enemy mounting long-range artillery, since these vessels were all unarmoured. He also sent the General a copy of the following telegram (670) to the Admiralty:

"17th December, 1915.

General Monro has given me a copy of a telegram he has sent to Lord Kitchener with reference to my telegram No. 662. He considers the question of the possibility of retention of our footing on Peninsula to be merely a military one. I regret I cannot concur in this. The important work of landing supplies for Army is a naval question, as is that of naval gun support. I am very surprised he does not consider that capture of Achi Baba would reduce dangers which I anticipate from enemy's increased artillery fire. As an observation station alone it is invaluable to whoever holds it. It has always been talked of by higher Military Commanders as the key of the southern position. With it in our hands, Gully Beach would be available for landing stores should increased fire from Asiatic batteries make this impossible on "W" and "V" Beaches. It would greatly increase effectiveness of naval gunfire by giving us an ideal observation station when spotting from aeroplanes will be impossible owing to weather. The reported advent of heavy German artillery in northern zone has increased anxiety of military commanders to evacuate as quickly as possible. It is hardly logical to neglect this contingency in the southern zone. Given suitable artillery, the enemy could drive supporting vessels out to a range from which their support would no longer be effective. The possession of Achi Baba would permit ships to lie close in to Gully Beach and render effective support by firing over heads of our troops.

General Monro states that the capture of Achi Baba is quite beyond our resources and he considers it a fruitless

undertaking under existing military situation. I believe he underestimates the support which the whole Fleet can give in a general attack under the present conditions and before the enemy's artillery can be reinforced. *If, however, his views are accepted, I am of opinion that evacuation of Helles should take place at once. To renew the attack after enemy has had free access to arsenals of Germany for some time would, I fear, be attempting the almost impossible.*

General Monro has always showed me every consideration and we work together with greatest amity. I regret exceedingly that my views should differ from his, but I should be lacking in duty were I not to place them fully before you."

This was Admiral Wemyss' last broadside, and Godfrey and I hoped that it would have the effect of bringing home to the Government the folly of further procrastination and result in the evacuation of Helles, since it was evident that nothing would induce General Monro to co-operate with us in our effort to force the Straits.

This telegram brought a prompt reply (471) from Mr. Balfour:

" 17th December, 1915.

Your views as to importance of capture of Achi Baba seem to me perfectly sound and were, I thought, held by all authorities, military and naval. What is in doubt is not whether it is worth capturing, but whether Achi Baba can be captured. This is a military and not a naval problem, and the soldiers seem now to have arrived unanimously to the conclusion that the position cannot be taken by direct attack."

Nevertheless our plan was put forward after consultation with General Davies and his Chief of Staff (Brigadier-General Street), who were prepared to carry it out if sanctioned.

On receipt of Admiral Wemyss' telegram and memorandum, General Monro wrote an apology which ended the matter:

" 18th December, 1915.

I regret having given you the impression that I considered the possibility of the retention of Helles solely a military question. The purely military question is the possibility of our capturing Achi Baba with the military resources at our disposal. I agree that the capture of Achi Baba would give us certain advantages, if it were possible, but it would not really reduce the essential danger, which is continuous intensive bombardment of our lines from three sides. With your main argument as to the dangers of the Helles situation I agree, but can only repeat that I see no prospect of success in an attack on Achi Baba. I concur in your opinion as to the necessity for the evacuation of Helles, but I have always understood that its retention was determined on in deference to the Navy's representations that it was necessary from a naval point of view to maintain a hold on the entrance to the Straits. I am sending a copy of this letter by telegram to Lord Kitchener."

The General having won his battle and the Admiral having lost his, they resumed cordial relations, but it is no use pretending that the wonderful good comradeship which had existed between the Naval and Military Headquarters, when both were animated by a determination to win a great victory, was not strained when their policies were diametrically opposed. However, fortunately for us and the Army in Gallipoli who had to carry out the evacuation, the new G.H.Q. did not concern themselves with the operation, beyond communicating the Government's decision to the Dardanelles Army Headquarters at Imbros; and there we were among friends with whom we had been associated from the outset in an alliance as close as that of Wolfe and Saunders off Quebec in 1759.

CHAPTER XXVI

EVACUATION

Collier sunk to complete harbour at Kephalo; All ships ordered to Mudros and boats to Kephalo; Frequent visits to Peninsula; Fine weather lasts until evacuation of Suvla and Anzac on 19th December; Sudden gale on 20th causes havoc; Admiral de Robeck returns; Discussions about Helles; Admiral Wemyss leaves; Evacuation of Helles ordered; Difficulties and anxieties; Heavy attack by Turks on 7th; Troops successfully evacuate Helles night of 8th January in rising gale.

WHEN Lord Kitchener sailed for England on the 23rd November and recommended the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla, the operation entailed the withdrawal of about 93,000 men, 200 guns, over 5,000 animals, and vast quantities of ammunition and stores.

By the time the Government's decision to evacuate was received on 8th December, surplus stores had been removed, and the blizzard and other causes had reduced the garrison to about 83,000 men. The date of the final evacuation was then settled for the night of 19th December, the last phase being divided over that and the preceding night.

On 13th December Admiral Wemyss arrived at Kephalo with his flag flying in the *Lord Nelson*. We were amused and surprised to learn that after our visit to Imbros on the 30th November—a report of which the Admiral sent to General Monro—General Birdwood had received a definite order that neither he nor his Generals were to hold any further communication with the Admiral except through G.H.Q. As General Birdwood had received orders to carry out the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla, and co-operation was essential from hour to hour, the earlier order had to be disregarded, and I think that there can be no better example of naval and military co-operation in history, than that of General Birdwood and Admiral Wemyss and their respective Staffs throughout the evacuation, or that of the Corps Commanders and the naval officers concerned, working out the local details.

General Birdwood's experience was, of course, unrivalled, and Aspinall, who had started the campaign as a captain on the Staff of Sir Ian, and had been intimately associated with the Naval Staff in the landings and subsequent battles, was an admirable Chief of Staff and an excellent colleague. The military plan was a masterpiece of good organisation.

When they started to work out the details of evacuation, Birdwood, Aspinall and other soldiers, including French officers, said that they did not anticipate any difficulty in a military withdrawal under modern conditions of trench warfare. General Godley went so far as to say that the withdrawal from Anzac would be effected without the enemy knowing anything about it, or the loss of a single man. They all agreed with us, however, that the naval part of the operation was simply an unknown quantity and, at that season, a gamble with the weather until the last moment.

A safe harbour of refuge at Kephalo was absolutely necessary, in order to shelter and hide, as far as possible, the vast fleet of small craft which was gathering there, and an air patrol was kept throughout the daylight hours to prevent hostile observation.

The Admiralty had demurred when Admiral Wemyss telegraphed to say he would sink one of the old battleships or the *Terrible*, and they assured him that one of the special service ships (dummy battleships) was being hastened out to act as a blockship. But we could not afford to risk another disaster like that caused by the northerly blizzard, so a large collier containing 1,500 tons of coal was moored head and stern across the gap in the Kephalo blockship breakwater, ready to be sunk if a northerly blow threatened before the blockship arrived.

On the 13th December, as the blockship was still some days away, the collier was sunk, much to the distress of her captain. A salvage vessel pumped water into her hold, the engine room and stokeholds being left empty, and her living quarters were above the water line when she had sunk. When the blockship eventually arrived to take her place, the collier was pumped out again and raised undamaged, and she steamed away none the worse for her immersion.

The battleships which had been sent out to reinforce the squadron but which had been engaged with a French Squadron

demonstrating against Greece, and all the vessels which could be spared from Salonika, were ordered to Mudros and their boats were sent to Kephalo. Officers and men of all ranks and ratings begged for employment and every boat and small craft which could be collected was brought into service to assist the evacuation. Officers who had particularly distinguished themselves were selected for special duties. Captain Boyle of the *Bacchante* and Captain Corbett of the *Glory* embarked in sloops and took charge of the vessels off Anzac and Suvla respectively. Captain Staveley—a most imperturbable officer—was principal Beach Master at Anzac, and Captain Unwin, V.C., of the *River Clyde* at Suvla. Among the selected beach masters was Mulock of the *Jed*, who took me up the Straits on the night of the 18th March to search for the *Ocean* and *Irresistible*.

I went frequently to the beaches in Gallipoli with Lambart during those days, and found General Byng very depressed and unhappy. He told me a month of hard fighting would have been much less trying than the last month of anxiety.

At Anzac one day I lunched with General Godley. I wrote that night (16th December):

> "The Anzacs are full of fight and buck; they say that with two more divisions they believe that they could break out across the Peninsula, and that they are thoroughly disgusted at the utterly unnecessary evacuation. Of course, they did not suffer like the troops at Suvla. They believe both at Anzac and Suvla that they will get away without any loss, and it seems quite possible *if* the weather keeps fine. They told me that there was great competition to be the last to leave the front-line trenches. Those who had been on shore longest claimed it as their right; on the other hand the newest arrivals claimed the right to be given an opportunity of acquiring merit."

I found that they still had 1,900 mules and donkeys at Anzac, and they feared that they would have to kill at least a thousand. We then made desperate efforts and during the next three nights embarked all except about 70, which were required to supply the front-line trenches until the last.

The weather remained wonderfully fine and calm, except for a stiff north-easterly blow on the 15th, which did not affect the beaches, but would have wrecked the small craft at Kephalo but for the collier. By the afternoon of the 18th, 44,000 men, 130 guns and several thousand animals had been embarked without apparently causing the slightest suspicion. Nothing was done until it was dark, and by dawn everything was normal again. There were still 40,000 men and 50 guns on shore, and it was arranged to withdraw 20,000 men and 30 guns on the night of the 18th if the weather looked promising. Thus throughout the 19th the whole front would be very lightly held by 20,000 men and 20 guns with a force of about 100,000 enemy in close proximity. In some places the opposing trenches were only a few yards apart.

Generals Byng and Godley were each provided with a sloop from which to direct the retirement, and at either flank of the two positions cable connections from every point of command were brought off to buoys, which could be picked up by the Corps Commander's sloop. Wireless communication was reserved for the fire control of the supporting ships, which was of the utmost importance in the absence of artillery.

Everything went without a hitch during the night of the 18th. On the morning of Sunday, 19th, I went over to the Peninsula with Lambart and General Birdwood, and after landing the latter at Anzac we went to Suvla, where I spent some hours walking round with General Byng, who was cheerful and optimistic. He had spent the night on board his sloop. His Chief of Staff, Brigadier-General Read, would remain there to keep in cable communication with the front, but he told me that he intended to spend the night of 18th on shore and be the last to leave. I told him that he would have trouble with Unwin, who would claim the Navy's prerogative, since the last to leave must be the naval beach party. He said that he would gladly give way to Unwin, for whom he had an unbounded admiration.

I congratulated him on the wonderful arrangements for evacuation at Suvla; there seemed to be nothing for his Corps to do but march down to the boats and set light to the bonfires —large piles of provisions, stores, fodder and petrol, which it was decided to abandon rather than prolong the evacuation. He said, "Don't congratulate me; my Chief of Staff has thought of nothing else but evacuation for the last four months!"

The naval arrangements were excellent; Unwin had provided for every possible contingency. Thanks to the long spell of fine weather since the heavy southerly blow at the end of November, it had been possible to make wonderful preparations for rapid embarkation; but one southerly blow would have wrecked everything. The blockship harbour on the north shore of Suvla Bay, which was connected by a light railway with the depots inland, was equipped with piers, pontoons and ramps, which enabled guns, heavy wagons and lorries to run down to the lighters, and animals could walk straight on board. There were berths for five motor lighters, capable of carrying 500 men apiece. The main embarkation was to take place in motor lighters here, two adjacent beaches, and under Lala Baba where a new pier had been constructed. A number of steam pinnaces, each with two cutters in tow, were stationed along the foreshore ready to pick up any stragglers.

General Byng told me that the enemy had been seen digging, rolling out new wire, and generally preparing to resist an attack, and during the previous night two deserters had come into our lines with the same story of depression and low *morale*.

The field hospital tents were left standing, well equipped with medical stores and comforts, in which to leave the wounded who could not be embarked. It was hoped that we should be able to get the badly wounded off the following day under a flag of truce.

There was a certain amount of desultory shelling, and at about noon, the Turks shelled the beach under Lala Baba pretty heavily for about half an hour, evidently registering on to it. Otherwise it was a very quiet day.

The battleships *Cornwallis* and *Prince George* were anchored in Suvla Bay inside the nets, the *Theseus*, three monitors and two destroyers covered the position from outside. The *Grafton*, *Talbot*, *Humber*, two monitors and five destroyers were off Anzac. Several ships were standing by at short notice at Kephalo.

We could hear a battle in progress at Helles during the afternoon. General Davies had been ordered to carry out a minor offensive to distract the attention of the Turks from the northern area. After blowing up a series of mines on the left of our line, our troops delivered a successful attack, seized

several Turkish trenches and resisted all counter-attacks. They were supported by the *Edgar*, three heavy monitors and two destroyers, which greatly contributed to the success.

Lambart and I left Suvla about 2 p.m. and went to Anzac, where we remained until dusk. General Godley had embarked in his sloop during the previous night, and General Birdwood had returned to Imbros. I went round with an Australian Colonel.

It was distressing to find enormous piles of boots, clothing, stores and provisions, which might have been destroyed if arrangements had been made for bonfires, but I was told that they had orders not to run any risks, as the enemy, by a very short advance, could seize the position on the crest of a hill overlooking the beach, from which they could command it with machine guns at a range of less than 500 yards, if they discovered we were evacuating.

I suggested that they might make piles and surround them with fodder and petrol, as at Suvla, in order that we might destroy them by gunfire later, but they said they did not want to risk an accidental bonfire as the enemy were registered on to all the beaches and might open fire at any moment.

The main evacuation was to be carried out by motor lighters from the only two piers it had been possible to maintain on the exposed shelving foreshore, but the troops from the flanks were to be embarked in a number of pulling boats, towed by picket boats. On the right flank the embarkation would be in full view of the Turkish observation post on Gaba Tepe, which could bring down a devastating fire on to the beach. Captain Boyle had arranged for the destroyer *Rattlesnake* to lie off there and switch her searchlight on to the foreshore, to the southward of our most southerly position, at intervals throughout the night—and several preceding nights—thus making it impossible for the Turks to see through the screen of light she placed between them and our troops. Although the *Rattlesnake* had often been shelled, and had had to switch her light off and shift berth occasionally, the enemy were pretty well used to her by the night of the evacuation, and her intervention was invaluable to the troops, who were withdrawn unseen, though within full view of the Turks.

The Anzacs were determined to give the enemy a "shake up"

before they left, and had undermined Russell Top with a ton of ammonal, which was to be blown up ten minutes after it was evacuated.

The motor lighters were all in their berths before we left, and an armada of troop carriers and boats was approaching as we stood across to Kephalo in a destroyer. We joined Admiral Wemyss on board the *Chatham*, in which he had hoisted his flag, and embarked the General and his Staff. We spent the night off the northern area, where there appeared to be a normal amount of firing for a quiet night, but the time passed very slowly to us onlookers. At 3.30 a.m. there was a heavy explosion—the Russell Top mine—followed by a tremendous outburst of rifle and machine-gun fire in its vicinity, which went on for half an hour or so, but by that time the troops must have been well on their way to the beach. At 4.30 a.m. we learnt that the last man had left Anzac, where all was quiet for the rest of the night except for spasmodic rifle fire and a few shells on the beaches.

At Suvla our guns fired as usual for some time before withdrawing, and there was a certain amount of rifle fire. At 5 a.m. the bonfires were lit, Suvla Point was ablaze, and we knew that the evacuation had been successfully completed. The enemy fired heavily at the bonfires, presumably thinking that our people would be endeavouring to extinguish them. When dawn broke about 6.30, all the troop carriers and small craft were well on their way to Imbros and Mudros; only the covering ships were off the Peninsula. A mist hung over the beaches and it was not until about 7 a.m. that the enemy began to realise that something had occurred. Under cover of a very heavy bombardment small parties were then seen to advance, and our ships opened fire on them and on the piles of stores at Anzac and the burning dumps at Suvla. The enemy must have suffered heavily, particularly at Anzac, where our fire was withheld until they were well exposed.

Our total casualties on that last night were one man wounded early in the evening at Anzac. At Suvla not a gun, wagon or animal was left on shore. The stores were completely destroyed by fire, and the only things that fell into the enemy's hands were the hospital tents and equipment.

At Anzac a vast quantity of valuable material was left behind,

and though the ships made every effort to destroy it by gunfire, a good deal must have been serviceable to the enemy. It was not, however, until nightfall that they could examine their capture with comparative safety; even then they were frequently disturbed by destroyers running in to very close range, switching on their searchlights and opening fire with guns, machine guns and rifles. Twenty mules and 50 donkeys which were required until the last moment were killed. Nine old howitzers and guns were left behind, as they were considered necessary for the security of the position until the end; they were practically worn out and were destroyed. All the ammunition which could not be brought away was thrown into the sea.

Although every available small craft was brought into service the main evacuation had to be carried out in three trips, and there was a very small margin for either a naval or a military error in the time-table, if the work was to be completed before dawn. However, everything went like clockwork, and to quote the German military correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung*: "As long as wars last this evacuation of Suvla and Anzac will stand before the eyes of all strategists as a hitherto unattained masterpiece."

The *Chatham* returned to Kephalo after taking part in the shelling of Anzac, and the Admiral transferred his flag to the *Lord Nelson*. Lambart and I went over to Helles in a destroyer to see what we could do to help them there, now that we had greatly increased resources.

I wrote that night (20th December):

> "We were well shelled on landing at 'W' Beach. I had tea with General Davies and told him the whole story of our efforts to be allowed to force the Straits, and begged him to bear in mind the tremendous naval support which we could *now* afford him from behind nets, but *not* continuously throughout a long winter. He told me that he was very keen to get on and capture Achi Baba, and that with four good divisions he could do it. Well, we have nine available now; at least four of these are really good ones, but the Authorities will never agree, unless some miracle lifts the scales from their eyes, so the only thing is to evacuate Helles before it is too late."

It came on to blow very hard suddenly that night, and 16 hours after the last man embarked a heavy southerly gale completely wrecked all the piers and stages which had been built at Anzac and Suvla and almost destroyed the harbour at the latter. Several small craft, including four motor lighters and two picket boats, which were returning to Mudros after the evacuation, were lost, but their crews, with the exception of one man, were saved by their escorts. At Helles the gale caused havoc. It was a timely reminder of the great risks that had been run. Had the gale commenced so suddenly 48 hours earlier, it would have caused disaster; 24 hours earlier it would have caused great loss of life and material.

Admiral Wemyss had intended to sail during the night to Mudros, but an enemy submarine was reported outside and as there was a bright moon he decided to wait until daylight, when the *Lord Nelson* could be screened by a destroyer escort. The following day we returned to Mudros in a howling gale and learned that Admiral de Robeck was expected to arrive on the 22nd.

Admiral Wemyss told me that he simply could not settle down to the humdrum grind of his job at Mudros after his month of high command. To his delight, on the morning of the 22nd, he received a telegram from Mr. Balfour offering him the appointment of Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies, which he told me was what he most wanted in the world, but thought it had been intended for someone else, as no doubt it was, but Wemyss had proved himself such a big man during the past month and the fighting ones at home must have delighted in the spirit shown in his telegrams. Nothing ever perturbed Wemyss, and having recommended a step on which he had staked his reputation, his fleet, and his life, he would go to bed and sleep peacefully for eight hours. He was indeed a delightful person to serve, as having made up his mind, no thought of responsibility ever worried him.

Admiral de Robeck arrived that afternoon in the yacht *Eileen*. I had written to him a few days before to say that if he came out again it was out of the question my remaining as his Chief of Staff. I had done everything in my power to bring about the forcing of the Straits, and since it was obvious that the Government would never sanction that now, I had done every-



"W" BEACH (WEST)



"W" BEACH (EAST)

thing I could think of to hasten the evacuation of Helles, both of which were in direct opposition to his views and recommendations. I hoped that he would select Commodore Heneage, who was in command of the minesweepers and submarine-hunting craft, as his Chief of Staff, and that he would give me that command, as long as the Army was in Gallipoli. We had no idea that he was returning so soon, and the letter missed him, so I had to say it all, which was not too easy. He was as charming as ever and insisted on my remaining as his Chief of Staff, which was very generous of him. I felt it my duty to do so while the campaign lasted, though I was not too happy about it, as I found that he was still determined to hold on to Helles, and I could not bear the thought of it, unless we were prepared to force the Straits.

The *Eileen* was commanded by Captain Sir Alfred Paget, R.N.R., one time Vice-Admiral Commanding the Coast of Ireland; he had volunteered directly the war broke out, for service in small craft in any rank, like so many Admirals "Dug Out." He begged me to send him to Gallipoli, and I did so. Fortunately—since he liked it—the beach was being heavily shelled; a lighter alongside the pier on which he had landed was sunk while he was there and the pier was smashed by a shell a few yards behind him. He came back delighted and most grateful.

On the 23rd Admiral de Robeck received a telegram from Mr. Balfour asking him what new circumstances had arisen to modify the decision to retain Helles; which was unanimously recommended by Lord Kitchener, General Monro and himself a few weeks previously; as Wemyss and Monro now both advised immediate evacuation.

Admiral de Robeck replied that Monro had informed him that he was led to this opinion by the statement of Wemyss that the retention of Helles was of no naval importance, and that the military value was not sufficient to warrant holding the position. He added that his own opinion was that Helles was of great naval value and that if the Army could hold it, its retention should be insisted upon. He telegraphed later that he had consulted Birdwood, who declared that he and Davies considered that Helles could be held. He went on to say that there had been considerable shelling of the beaches, which

would probably continue as long as the enemy thought that we were about to evacuate. If evacuation was ultimately decided upon, it should not take place for some time. He concluded: "Personally I maintain that the holding of Helles is of great naval importance." I profoundly disagreed with this and called his attention to the daily casualty list, which was considerable (about 80) on even the quietest day.*

That evening *E*11 came safely out of the Straits, having spent 47 days in the Marmora, during which Nasmith was responsible for the destruction of a destroyer, 11 steamers, five large and 30 small sailing vessels. This brought his total bag up to 100 vessels destroyed during 97 days in the Marmora.

On the 24th December Wemyss sailed for home in the *Eileen*, taking Lambart for a short spell of leave. Godfrey and I felt very sad.

Next day I had an amusing passage of arms with Lynden-Bell. To quote my diary:

> "He said it had been a great fight between us, and a good clean one with all our cards on the table. I said that they had missed the biggest thing in history. He said that they had done the biggest thing in history, to get 80,000 men away to Egypt; they were being wasted where they were. I said, 'Yes, since you would not let them fight, but surely you do not take any credit for it?' He said, 'Yes, some, but we give you the bigger share.' I said we wanted no credit, it was simply a matter of good staff work in which they had no share, but to God Almighty alone was the credit due. It might have been a shocking disaster, and would have been, had the weather broken 24 hours earlier. Also we owed some of it to the Turks, who were now a very poor enemy, as they would have found if they had attacked. He chaffed me about my 'Swan Song'—the offensive against Achi Baba. I said, 'Your telegram about it was rather offensive, and your appreciation of the situation was rotten from every point of view.' However, they had not got a rise out of us, and our answer was unanswerable, as their next telegram —which was a very civil climb down—showed. Apropos of the appreciation I said, 'You did land in Gallipoli once, Belinda, didn't you?' thinking he had accompanied Monro and not knowing at the time that he had *never* landed there. He replied, 'It was not necessary to land to make up one's mind about a show like that. We made up our minds before we left England, and Wully Robertson (who had just been appointed C.I.G.S.) will soon put a stop to that other rotten show at Salonika.'
>
> In an unguarded moment he gave everything away. If our naval attack succeeded, it would only be an embarrassment; troops would have had to remain to exploit our success. These side-shows were a mistake, the troops were wanted in France.
>
> Lynden-Bell said the nicest things about the fight we had put up, and said he wished to Heaven he could have backed me up, but I was wrong and Monro was right."

* After the evacuation, I had a table made of the daily casualties at Helles. During the 19 days which intervened between the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla and that of Helles—13 officers and 332 men were killed, and 42 officers and 1,141 men were wounded holding the line and on the beaches.

Much to my relief, on the 28th December orders were received to evacuate Helles. We were at Salonika at the time and returned to Mudros on the 30th.

General Monro had been appointed to command the First Army in France, and wished to go to Egypt before returning to England. He embarked in the *Cornwallis*, and before sailing held a farewell meeting—which de Robeck and I attended—to give his instructions to the Army for the evacuation of Helles. These he read from a Staff memorandum which closely resembled General Birdwood's instructions for the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla, but for naval reasons these would have to be departed from very considerably for the evacuation of Helles. After this he said good-bye to everyone—except me—and I did not see him again for about ten years, when we struck up a warm friendship, of which I have many pleasant memories—but we never mentioned Gallipoli!

The Admiral then took the *Lord Nelson* to Kephalo, and we remained there until the evacuation was completed.

I shall always look back on the next eight days as a nightmare. I wrote at the time:

> "The Admiral is convinced that the forcing of the

Straits could only have ended in disaster, and now that there is no chance of the fleet being subjected to such a risk he is optimistic and himself again. To me the evacuation of the Army is so much more frightening than the forcing of the Straits, because so much depends on chance and the weather, and there are such appalling possibilities of a ghastly failure; whereas the other is our proper job, and *offensive* which is the only way to win in war."

As evacuation was then inevitable, there was no object in risking submarines in the Marmora any longer, and the Admiral ordered Stocks to come out at his convenience. *E2* went in on 9th December and came out safely on 3rd January, having sunk a steamer and 19 sailing vessels.

Both *E2* and *E11* sighted enemy submarines in the Marmora, and *E11* was narrowly missed by a submarine's torpedo.

They both burst through a chain net off Nagara on the way down the Straits.

The following extracts from my diary give some idea of our life in those last days.

"One day (3rd January) I asked H.Q. at Helles to provide two horses, in order that I might ride round all the possible embarkation places, and I invited Millot to accompany me; he was always a good companion. There was a good deal of shelling, and we happened to ride past a field battery which was having a spirited duel with the enemy. Two cheery young subalterns told us that they had been there two months and their battery had not been discovered yet; they had a dummy one 200 yards ahead which, they said, got properly 'strafed.' They almost found the real one that day and we and our horses were glad to move on. We rode to Gully Beach, which the Admiral wishes to make full use of on the last night; then back to 'X' Beach and thence across the Peninsula to 'V,' now the French beach; and to the *River Clyde*, where our naval people live who are working there. The lieutenant in charge was from the *Zealandia* and had recently arrived. I asked him if he did not think it was better than the North Sea. He grinned and evidently thought so; they had just had a good shelling from Asia, and every now and then Asia dropped a few shells among the working parties. It was extraordinary how little attention was paid to them.

It came on to blow while we were on shore and we had a long, rough passage off to our destroyer, which had been driven well out to seaward by shell fire. Our picket boat was a very old veteran, with a broken stem and much shot about; she could only steam about three or four knots and as she chunked her way out in the rough sea one could hear the water surging about in her bilges. When she eventually reached the destroyer and lurched alongside, a large fender which hung over her side to take the impact, took it all right but stove her in and she began to sink. We all managed to scramble on board the destroyer, and the picket boat drifted astern almost perpendicular, and went down stern first. I suppose she knew her days were numbered and preferred to go down with her colours flying, off the beach she had served so well, rather than return to her parent ship, where she would certainly have been condemned to the scrap heap.

Staveley and Mulock came on from Anzac and are Principal and Assistant Beach Masters at Helles. The former is very good at making out detailed plans and he works very well with Davies's Staff, but we want a few Unwins to hustle things, and Unwin is on his way to Egypt. When I saw Byng after the evacuation he told me that on the way off in the last boat from Suvla, a soldier fell overboard and Unwin jumped in and saved his life. He said, 'You must really do something about Unwin; you should send him home; we want several little Unwins.'

With the exception of the crews of a few guns, six of which were worn out and were going to be destroyed, the French troops were all evacuated between the 1st and 3rd of January and their positions have been taken over by the Naval Division.

At present my chief anxiety is to get horses and mules off the Peninsula—there are still (5th January) 3,600 on shore. Last night I hoped that they would embark 1,000, but they only took 197. The day before only 28 owing to bad weather. When I last landed it was very unpleasant; a few shells fell among a number of mules waiting to be

embarked and several were killed. Then a bit later someone flashed a torchlight on board a lighter full of mules, which caused a stampede; the lighter capsized and was lost and several mules were drowned. A few nights ago it was beautifully fine, and a steamer called the *St. Oswald*, on her way over to embark 1,000 mules, was rammed and sunk by the French battleship *Suffren*. So we are not having much luck. They say that we shall have to leave at least 1,400. Not if I can help it. . . . In the gale last night we lost two picket boats, and a mule lighter with a lieutenant and a midshipman R.N.R. and 15 men is missing;* and a motor lighter and a trawler are stranded. I am going over to Helles in the morning, as the General wishes to alter the whole plan of embarkation for the last night."

Captain Mitchell, R.N., who had been on the staff of Sir Ian and was then with General Birdwood, came on board that evening to explain the change of plan. I gathered from Mitchell that they were very concerned at Birdwood's Headquarters at the slow progress of the evacuation of animals, stores and ammunition and wanted me to go over and look into things.

I wrote on the evening of the 6th January:

"I have been at Helles all day, a lovely fine day after a stormy, dirty night. It had originally been intended to leave 22,000 men until the last 48 hours and 15,000 until the last night. These were to be evacuated from Gully, 'X,' 'W' and 'V' Beaches. Gully Beach is close behind our lines; it and 'X' Beach are practically free from shell fire and the Admiral is anxious to make full use of these two on the last night.

Owing to the rapidity with which the Command changed at Anzac in the last phase, which added to our difficulties, General Birdwood arranged that Major-General H. Lawrence should take charge of the actual evacuation.

* The lighter was found the next day wrecked on a little rocky island. The people and some of the mules got on shore, but one of the muleteers died of exposure.



LORD KITCHENER GREETING GENERAL BAILLOUD AT "V" BEACH
NOVEMBER, 1915



OUTSIDE VIII CORPS HEADQUARTERS AT TEKKE BURNU, DECEMBER, 1915

Brig.-General Street, Commodore Keyes, General Davies, General Lawrence, Lieut. Millot and Colonel Aspinall

I found him a splendid person to work with, and this was an excellent arrangement.

We met in General Davies's H.Q., which is dug out of the cliff at Cape Teke. In addition to Davies's Staff, the following attended: Aspinall (representing Birdwood), Mitchell, Lawrence, Staveley and Admiral Fremantle (in command of the ships affording gunnery support to the Army), and I represented Admiral de Robeck.

The weather had been so bad that General Davies had come to the conclusion that as two consecutive fine days could not be counted upon, a sufficient number of men and guns must be left for the final night to hold our position for six or seven days if necessary. No doubt they were right, but the new plan entailed embarking 17,000 men on the last night, and we had not sufficient small craft to do this in two trips. They also wished to keep 64 guns for the last night but were prepared to destroy 17 old worn-out guns, including six French.

I found that Staveley had worked out the new plan on a basis of three round trips, using the same craft for each. I felt that was leaving too much to chance, and that it might well result in our being caught with the work uncompleted when day broke. The General also wanted to cut out 'X' Beach and limit the embarkation from Gully Beach to 700 troops—the last to leave the left flank. He was afraid that if the enemy saw our craft going into Gully Beach, they would suspect we were leaving. They must know that we are going. The only thing they did not know was the date, and if they discovered that we were actually leaving, they could drop thousands of shells *into* 'V' and 'W' Beaches, where the main evacuation must take place. Much better, he said, to try and sneak away from those two beaches unseen and unsuspected.

I undertook to get the motor lighters required for the troops from the left flank, unsuspected into Gully Beach by 9.15 p.m., after the moon set, by striking the coast well to the southward and towing them up with picket boats, thus avoiding the risk of the enemy hearing the noise made by the internal combustion engines of the

lighters. I pointed out, however, that Gully and 'X' Beaches would be impossible, if the wind was from the due north or had any west in it; it would have been out of the question to have attempted to embark from them, for instance, when I rode there a few days previously, and, if necessary, the troops on the left flank must be prepared to march to 'W' Beach under cover of the cliffs.

When we heard that the Army wanted to retain more men until the last night, the Admiral and I discussed it, and he authorised me to say that he would provide sufficient destroyers to take off the last 6,000 men, and at the meeting, on his behalf, I suggested that if they would improvise staging alongside the blockships, and repair the piers connecting them with the shore, I would guarantee that six destroyers would be lying ready to take them off. They could then march straight on board; the destroyers would have no difficulty in taking at least 1,000 each. All the other destroyers would be employed on the flanks to protect the retiring troops, firing on the enemy trenches, covering the boats looking for stragglers, etc. So it was arranged, and the Royal Engineers undertook to build the necessary staging and piers. The heavy south-westerly gale in November had swept away the causeway connecting the westerly blockships with the shore, and the R.E. had been able to do very little towards repairing it. So we sank a small steamer there that afternoon; this did not quite fill the gap and cases of biscuit and bully beef were thrown in to complete the causeway. Of course, a westerly blow would wash these away, but we hoped for the best. It was decided to construct a floating bridge to connect the outer blockship with the shore under cover of the breakwater.

We went back to Imbros that evening and were able to report to the General and Admiral that the new plan was satisfactory.

During the night the Garrison was reduced to 19,000 men and 63 guns. The next day (7th January) was calm and springlike and everything was peaceful and normal until about noon, when every battery in Gallipoli and Asia seemed to open fire. It was the most severe bombardment yet experienced; the enemy must have fired many tons of high-explosive shells, from Germany or Austria, probably brought across the Marmora in hospital ships.

Vessels were hurried out to reinforce the *Grafton*, *Raglan* and *Wolverine*, which were on duty off the Peninsula, and a brigade at Imbros was held in immediate readiness for transport to Helles. Fortunately the few guns remaining had unlimited ammunition, and the fire from the ships was intense; for instance, the *Grafton* fired 1,000 rounds of six-inch, and the *Wolverine*, lying close in shore on the enemy's right flank, fired every projectile, rifle and machine-gun cartridge in her magazine, before she was replenished by a consort.

After about four and a half hours there was a lull for some minutes, and then a terrific outburst for half an hour. Soldiers who had been in France said they had experienced nothing more severe there. At 5 p.m. the enemy evidently intended to deliver an overwhelming attack. The Turkish trenches were full of men with bayonets fixed, and officers could be seen trying to drive them forward, but very few could be induced to advance, and those that left their trenches were mown down by rifle and machine-gun fire. The attack fizzled out before 6 p.m. with terrible loss to the enemy. Our trenches were badly knocked about, but the cover was good and our casualties were comparatively light—about 164 killed and wounded by shell fire. We onlookers expected to hear of very heavy losses."

We know now that Liman von Sanders was determined that the evacuation of Helles, which was obviously in progress, should not be carried out with impunity, as at Anzac and Suvla. Specially trained troops were selected for the assault and the Turkish artillery was strongly reinforced by Austrian and other batteries set free from the northern area. Misled by the strength of our defence and the volume of our fire, much of which was attributed to our shore artillery rather than to the ships, the enemy came to the conclusion that we could not be going for some days.

"Although their attack was a complete failure, had it

taken place 24 hours later it would have thoroughly upset our arrangements for evacuation that night.

The night of the 7th was very quiet and 2,000 troops and nine guns were evacuated. On the morning of the 8th I accompanied General Birdwood to Helles. He told me he hated leaving so many animals to be slaughtered—on the grounds of humanity. I said, so did I. If he liked to stay for a few more days we could embark all the animals and many hundreds of tons of ammunition, stores, etc., which he would have to destroy if he went that night. If it remained calm we could get away a good many animals as well as the troops that night, including the teams of horses retained to bring down the guns. But in view of the very unsettled weather and the enormous increase in the enemy's artillery fire, I personally thought he was wise to go as soon as possible and sacrifice beasts if necessary.

The wind changed to the south-west during the day and we knew it was bound to freshen. Quite a moderate breeze from that quarter would make Gully Beach impossible and 'W' and 'V' very difficult. We passed a very anxious day watching the weather. The Admiral had to decide by about 6 p.m. one way or the other; the glass was high, but the glass gives very little indication in that locality, and it was a fearfully difficult decision in all the conflicting considerations. Eventually he made up his mind that we could complete the evacuation before it came on to blow too hard.

The Admiral, his Staff, and General Birdwood and some of his Staff embarked in the *Chatham*, and when it was dark we approached Gallipoli with a regular armada of vessels steaming towards Helles from Mudros and Imbros.

All the 'blistered' cruisers and monitors took up their positions previously fixed by buoys. The shore marks which were used for registering on their objectives were lit, and their guns were laid on the Turkish batteries, and the areas through which the enemy would pass if they advanced in pursuit of our retreating troops.

The *Triad*, which had just returned from her refit,

was anchored off Cape Teke and connected by telegraph and telephone with the whole front. General Davies then embarked in her and was able to keep in touch with his Chief of Staff and General Lawrence throughout the operation.

The wind freshened, clouds banked up to the southward and there was an ominous swell from that direction. About 11 p.m., to add to our anxieties, the Signal Station at de Totts reported that they could hear what sounded like the engine of a submarine on the surface standing down the Straits.

By 2 a.m. the weather was very bad, but the enemy had not been shelling the beaches to anything like the extent they usually did on a normal night, and they were evidently not in the least suspicious. About that time two white rockets shot up, which meant that an enemy submarine had been sighted. The *Prince George*, which had just embarked 2,000 men of the Naval Division, reported that she had been struck by a torpedo which did not explode.* The *Mars*, with 2,600 men on board, was close to the *Prince George*, and we stood over towards her at once fearing the worst. By that time all the other troop carriers had sailed, and there were only 3,200 men left on shore to come off in four destroyers.

As at Anzac and Suvla, hospital tents were left fully equipped for the wounded, and the dumps were not to be fired if any wounded were left behind.

At 3.55 a.m., to our intense relief, the bonfires were lit, which meant that the last man had left the shore. Five minutes later our store dumps were in a colossal blaze.

At last the enemy realised that we were really going, scores of rockets shot into the sky from Asia and Gallipoli. Every enemy gun burst into flame and the beaches and piers, which half an hour before were crowded with men, were smothered with hundreds of bursting shells. Our ammunition dumps all over the Peninsula, exploded by time fuses, contributed to the confusion; finally our main magazine blew up with a terrific roar.

* Despite a most circumstantial report, we now know there was no submarine there.

taken place 24 hours later it would have thoroughly upset our arrangements for evacuation that night.

The night of the 7th was very quiet and 2,000 troops and nine guns were evacuated. On the morning of the 8th I accompanied General Birdwood to Helles. He told me he hated leaving so many animals to be slaughtered—on the grounds of humanity. I said, so did I. If he liked to stay for a few more days we could embark all the animals and many hundreds of tons of ammunition, stores, etc., which he would have to destroy if he went that night. If it remained calm we could get away a good many animals as well as the troops that night, including the teams of horses retained to bring down the guns. But in view of the very unsettled weather and the enormous increase in the enemy's artillery fire, I personally thought he was wise to go as soon as possible and sacrifice beasts if necessary.

The wind changed to the south-west during the day and we knew it was bound to freshen. Quite a moderate breeze from that quarter would make Gully Beach impossible and 'W' and 'V' very difficult. We passed a very anxious day watching the weather. The Admiral had to decide by about 6 p.m. one way or the other; the glass was high, but the glass gives very little indication in that locality, and it was a fearfully difficult decision in all the conflicting considerations. Eventually he made up his mind that we could complete the evacuation before it came on to blow too hard.

The Admiral, his Staff, and General Birdwood and some of his Staff embarked in the *Chatham*, and when it was dark we approached Gallipoli with a regular armada of vessels steaming towards Helles from Mudros and Imbros.

All the 'blistered' cruisers and monitors took up their positions previously fixed by buoys. The shore marks which were used for registering on their objectives were lit, and their guns were laid on the Turkish batteries, and the areas through which the enemy would pass if they advanced in pursuit of our retreating troops.

The *Triad*, which had just returned from her refit,

was anchored off Cape Teke and connected by telegraph and telephone with the whole front. General Davies then embarked in her and was able to keep in touch with his Chief of Staff and General Lawrence throughout the operation.

The wind freshened, clouds banked up to the southward and there was an ominous swell from that direction. About 11 p.m., to add to our anxieties, the Signal Station at de Totts reported that they could hear what sounded like the engine of a submarine on the surface standing down the Straits.

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* Despite a most circumstantial report, we now know there was no submarine there.

Then the enemy realised that we had gone. But I think they had every right to consider that the evacuation of the whole army, which had withstood their attack on the previous day, should have been a physical impossibility on that stormy night.

The only casualty was one bluejacket killed by a piece of falling debris, as the last boat plunged her way to seaward in the teeth of what was, by that time, a sou'westerly gale."

We learnt later that one motor lighter at Gully Beach had stranded on the lee shore. General Maude, commanding the 13th Division, which had provided the rear-guard on the left flank, after putting as many men as possible on board the surviving motor lighter, ordered the remainder to march to "W" Beach. He brought up the rear with his Staff Officer and batman, who had returned with him to the stranded lighter to recover his valise. By the time he arrived embarkation was very nearly impossible. Seas were sweeping over the causeway, the pontoon bridge connecting the western blockship to the shore had been smashed, and the troops had to be ferried over to the destroyer waiting for them. At "V" Beach the blockships had given excellent shelter and the rear-guard were able to march on board the destroyers lying alongside them.

When the last soldier had embarked, Staveley and his Staff followed; he had been the last to leave Anzac and now had the honour of being the last man to leave the Gallipoli Peninsula.

After the evacuation of Gallipoli was complete, General Headquarters prepared a dispatch for Sir Charles Monro, which was published in the *London Gazette*. Their short stay in the Mediterranean had taught them nothing about the brotherhood into which the campaign had welded the fighting soldiers and sailors, nor their respective roles and responsibilities in amphibious warfare.

A soldier who had played a distinguished part throughout the campaign read the dispatch to me, and when he came to the end, he paused for a long time.

I fancy his thoughts turned with mine to that last anxious, stormy night, so little understood by General Headquarters a thousand miles away in Egypt.

The beach lashed with breaking waves—lighters and boats crashing against the fragile piers and stagings. The skill and devotion of the officers and men working on the beaches and manning the troop carriers, trawlers, drifters, lighters and boats. The admirable seamanship displayed by the destroyer captains, as they manœuvred their frail vessels in pitch darkness on a lee shore, in order to pluck the rear-guard from the inferno that might be let loose at any moment. Seamen all—from every branch of His Majesty's Sea Service, Mercantile Marine and Fishing Fleet.

I expect he was pondering over these and many unrecorded things. After a long interval he looked up at me with a friendly and understanding smile and said, as he laid down the dispatch: "And then the Army swam to Mudros."

CHAPTER XXVII

AND AFTER

ADMIRAL WEMYSS spent a few days in England before taking up his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies Station. The following is an extract from a letter he wrote to me at that time :

> " Mr. Balfour was most sympathetic and assured me that he had been in sympathy with our policy and plans from the very beginning. . . . He told me that he had been outvoted all round, and ended up by saying : ' Well, it is no use crying over spilt milk.' I said there was no doubt the milk *had* been spilt, and with a vengeance, and asked him if there was any point that I had missed in the various telegrams. He said no, that we had used every possible argument. Jackson told me that the Admiralty had been fully prepared to order the naval attack if only the soldiers had played up in any way, but they didn't and wouldn't and that after mature consideration they (the Admiralty) had felt they were not prepared to go into the business single-handed again."

This seems hardly fair in view of the Admiralty's attitude towards Lord Kitchener's belated effort on 2nd December, 1915.*

I remained in the Eastern Mediterranean for five months after the evacuation of Gallipoli. During much of this time the Admiral stayed at Salonika, where a great Allied Army was constructing an entrenched camp, extending from the Gulf of Orfano to the Vada River, to defend Salonika from an attack which was never delivered, and was probably never seriously contemplated by the enemy, who no doubt were well aware that they could not occupy Salonika in the presence of a hostile fleet.

* See pages 481-490.

I had many opportunities of visiting the front, which covered a distance of about 74 miles and was strongly fortified at vital points with heavy artillery, including some naval guns. One day the Admiral and I rode with General Sir Bryan Mahon, who commanded our Army, for forty miles along the British front, from Salonika past Lakes Langaza and Beshik, which were occupied by British motor boats, to Stavros, where our right flank rested on the sea and was supported by " blistered " cruisers and monitors. Another day we accompanied General Sarrail —who commanded the Allied Army—along the whole French front, connecting a chain of veritable fortresses, with its left flank resting on the Vada River.

All sorts and conditions of people gathered at Salonika, which was a hotbed of intrigue in those days. My hospitable Admiral entertained liberally, and one heard all kinds of views expressed at his table. One night when General Sarrail was dining on board the *Lord Nelson* I had a long conversation with him, and tried to find out what he hoped to do with his army. Apropos of the desperate and fruitless fighting on the Western Front, he said he felt that before long our authorities would realise that it was not good enough to attack there under conditions of modern trench warfare, and that they would seek a new field for offensive action ; here, for instance, holding our line in France and Flanders in sufficient strength, and sending him a large army. He went on to say that he would require an enormous army to achieve decisive results, and there was no sign of sufficient troops being sent yet. It would take time ; transport by sea was a lengthy proceeding, and transport in Macedonia was a difficulty owing to the single railway line and lack of roads. Until roads were constructed our army was almost immobile, with its lavish commissariat, dependent to a great extent on motor lorries for transport. He told me he hoped to have over 100,000 Serbians before long.

I said I supposed his main object would then be Constantinople He dwelt on the difficulties of making an attack on Constantinople under modern conditions from this direction, but said that our holding Salonika was a terrible thorn in the side of the German-Austrian-Bulgarian group.

If that was all, it seemed to me a pretty poor outlook for which to have sacrificed the Gallipoli Campaign. So I opened

fire, and told him exactly what I thought about our lost opportunities. How for weeks we had counted on him coming to our aid with his six divisions. I had accompanied his Staff officers to Tenedos to point out the area we would net for his transports, but was not surprised, after seeing the preparations which had been made to resist a landing, that he had abandoned his campaign in Asia, but why could he not have come to Gallipoli with his army and burst through the Turkish defences from Suvla? I gathered from his reply that as he had commanded the Third Army in France he could hardly be expected to serve under Sir Ian.* I told him that Sir Ian would have been quite prepared to serve loyally under his command, if that was a condition for the co-operation of the French reinforcements in Gallipoli.† Sarrail was incredulous. I swore that it was true and that Sir Ian had told me so at the time. I said that Sir Ian had only one thought and that was the success of the enterprise; he was quite ready to efface himself to that end. If he (Sarrail) had come with his six divisions, we would have been in Constantinople by now. The Fleet had last fought on the 18th March and the Army on the 21st August; since then the campaign had been allowed to peter out. His Salonika Campaign had assisted to kill ours. I told him that he had missed the opportunity of a lifetime; if he had only come to Gallipoli he would have been "Sarrail de Constantinople." I am sure that he believed me. He sat glum and frowning and said: "Je le crois, Commodore." In the record I wrote of this conversation that night I concluded: "I don't think Sarrail sees his way clear to any big achievement here."

It was torment to me to think of what might have been if that splendid army, which was employed for several months digging entrenchments and making roads in a malaria-infested country, had only been allowed to co-operate with the Fleet in forcing the Dardanelles.

In 1919 Mr. Balfour told me that after his conversations with me in London in 1915 he had always felt convinced that I was

* I did not know until I read "Military Operations, Macedonia," Vol. I, page 37, that Sarrail had originally been appointed to succeed General Gouraud, when the latter was badly wounded, but had declined to serve under Sir Ian, and had insisted on an independent command.

† "Gallipoli Diary," Vol. II, page 194.

right about forcing the Dardanelles; I was then a comparatively junior officer: was I still of the same opinion in the light of my more recent experience? I replied that the forcing of the Straits with armoured ships would have been child's play to one hour within range of the Belgian coast. He repeated that he had always felt certain of it, but how many ships would we have lost? I said I really could not say; two or three, possibly more, possibly none if we were lucky; but we would have had 19 battleships, quite independent of the vessels which were supporting the Army. If we had merely steamed steadily through at a moderate speed in line ahead, with the anti-mine devices we had developed, quite sufficient ships would have got through into the Marmora to achieve our object; and we could have done much better than that with all the experience we had gained.

Why could he not have trusted Admiral Wemyss, who was backing it with everything that mattered in life? He said that he was a constitutional minister and had to be guided by his Sea Lords, and that they had declared that we should lose twelve ships.

I could not refrain from retorting that not one of his Sea Lords had any experience of the Dardanelles, or had ever seen a shot fired in war. But supposing that they were right, and we had lost twelve ships, which was absurd, seven would have been enough to do the business in the Marmora, and even twelve obsolete battleships would not have been too high a price to pay for all that could have been accomplished.

The Allies would have had free access to Russia, and might well have saved the unhappy Russian people from the agony through which they passed, and their ghastly fate.

The Turkish armies in Gallipoli and Asia Minor would have been cut off from their sole source of supply, and Turkey would have been forced to make a separate peace, as she was two and a half years later. But in the meantime vast British armies had acted on the defensive in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Macedonia, and when they eventually took the offensive they had had to fight long drawn out, costly campaigns before Turkey was at length driven to sue for peace.

In the light of our knowledge today, can anyone doubt that the forcing of the Dardanelles would have shortened the war by two years, and spared literally millions of lives?

APPENDIX AND INDEX

APPENDIX

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON DURING NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS, FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 1915

		Armament.		
Battleships:				
Queen Elizabeth	8 15in.	12 6in.	guns.	
Lord Nelson .	4 12in.	10 9.2in.	„	
Agamemnon .	4 12in.	10 9.2in.	„	
Cornwallis, *Irresistible*, *Ocean*, *Albion*, *Canopus*, *Vengeance*, *Majestic*, *Prince George*	4 12in.	12 6in.	„	
Swiftsure, *Triumph*	4 10in.	14 7.5in.	„	
Battle Cruiser:				
Inflexible . .	8 12in.	16 4in.	„	
Cruisers:				
Dartmouth .	8 6in.	guns.		
Dublin . .	8 6in.	„		
Doris . .	11 6in.	„		
Amethyst .	12 4in.	„		
Sapphire . .	12 4in.	„		
Blenheim Destroyer Depot Ship . .	4 6in.	2 4in.	„	
Destroyers:				
8 "Beagles"				
8 "River" class				
Submarines:				
5 "Bs"				
1 *AE2* (Australian "E" class).				

Minesweepers :
35 Trawlers.

Seaplane Carrier :
1 *Ark Royal*

French Squadron :

Suffren .	Flagship of Contre-Amiral Guépratte.	
Charlemagne		
Gaulois .	4 12in.	12 5.9in. guns.
Bouwet .		

Destroyers : 6.

APPENDIX II

TURKISH DEFENCES OF THE DARDANELLES

Outer Defences :

European side :

1.	Cape Helles . .	2	9.4in.	Krupp
1B.	Tekke Burnu .	4	4.7in.	howitzers
3.	Sedd el Bahr. .	2	11in.	Krupp
		2	10.2in.	,,
		2	9.4in.	,,
		4	3.4in.	Q.F.

Asiatic side :

4.	Orkanie . .	2	9.4in.	Krupp
6.	Kum Kale . .	2	11in.	,,
		2	10.2in.	,,
		2	9.4in.	,,
		1	8.2in.	,,
		2	5.9in.	,,

New Intermediate Defences :

European side :

48 howitzers, mortars and siege guns of 2.9in. to 5.9in. including 3 long range 5.9in. Q.F. in Battery 7.

10 8.2in. howitzers and a few field guns.

Asiatic side :

16 5.9in. and eight 8.2in. howitzers.

6 5.9in., 3 of which were modern long range Q.F. guns mounted in Battery 8, 3 Krupp mounted in a new battery above White Cliffs, and a few field guns.

Old Intermediate Defences prior to 3rd November, 1914. were :

European side :

10 small field guns.

Asiatic side :

2 5.9in. Q.F. modern long range guns (Battery 8).
10 2.2in. to 3.3in. Q.F.

Inner Defences :

European side :

22.	Derma Burnu .	6	9.4in.	Krupp
17.	Namazieh . .	1	11in.	,,
		1	10.2in.	,,
		11	9.4in.	,,
		3	8.2in.	,,
		3	5.9in.	howitzers
16.	Hamidieh II . .	2	14in.	Krupp
13.	Rumili Medjidieh .	2	11in.	,,
		4	9.4in.	,,
9.	Yildiz . . .	6	5.9in.	,,

Asiatic side :

33.	Nagara . .	2	10.2in.	,,
		5	9.4in.	,,
		5	5.9in.	,,
24.	Anodolu . .	3	11in.	,,
00.	Medjidieh . .	4	10.2in.	,,
		2	9.4in.	,,
		2	8.2in.	,,
		3	5.9in.	,,
23.	Medjidieh Avan. .	6	8.2in.	mortars
20.	Chemelik . .	2	14in.	Krupp
		1	9.4in.	,,
		1	8.2in.	,,
		4	5.9in.	howitzers
19.	Hamidieh I . .	2	14in.	Krupp
		7	9.4in.	,,

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