THE GALLIPOLIAN

THE JOURNAL OF THE

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION



HMTS 'RIVER CLYDE' AT V BEACH 25 APRIL 1915

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The GALLIPOLIAN

The Journal of the

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION

(Founded in 1969 on the campaign of 1915)

PRESIDENT	Brigadier B B Rackham CBE MC DL
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	H J Sayers
	F T K Woodworth
	Major A G Coulson (Associate Member)

IMPENDING CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Within the next few months, the Honorary Secretary's address is expected to be changed. At the change-over there may be some disorganisation and delay in correspondence over a period of a few weeks.

Members' tolerance is solicited.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR GREETINGS from
Lieut-Col Lord Rowallan, Vice-President
former Chief Scout

I remember Christmas 1915 at Helles - but not many happy memories of that day. We wondered what was going to happen to us. The silent periods were gradually lengthening from five minutes or so, soon to be about half an hour, when not a shot was fired under any circumstances. The bigger guns from Salonika had been brought around to deal with us and the whiz-bangs were making life unpleasant. Could it be possible that we could be lucky too? It certainly did not seem likely. Could it be that the Turks would be only too glad to see us off? Anyway, it was rumoured that Christmas puddings would be available. The ones for my Troop had got safely as far as the cookhouse. Anticipation was keen and the dixie was on its way. A whiz-bang arrived and cut clean through the handle of the dixie and that was the end of the Christmas pud. The poor unfortunate cook was not too badly damaged, by a miracle, but when the Troops saw what had happened there was quite a lot of back-talk and not of the most kindly character.

I suppose we will soon be museum pieces but the number of nonogenarians is extraordinary.

It would be appropriate to have the Black Prince's speech before Crecy, although perhaps we did not see it in an historic light at the time.

Good luck to all who took part, and may the happy memories of comradeship and courage overcome the memories of mud.

Billy Rowallan

Lord Rowallan

As most members will know, Lord Rowallan is a former Chief Scout and we are proud to number him among our membership.

LETTER FROM MAJOR GENERAL R C MACDONALD

Received following the 6th Annual Dinner when he had been our Guest of Honour

'I am writing to thank you so very much for the invitation to attend your annual dinner. It was a most enjoyable evening and I feel very privileged to meet so many interesting and distinguished members of the Gallipoli Association.

'I would be most grateful if you would kindly pass on my thanks to Brigadier Rackham, the Committee and the members for inviting me as their guest. I count it a great honour.

'I wish the Association all good fortune, and it is good to know that you are still finding new members.'

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TELEGRAM FROM WINSTON S CHURCHILL MP. Received at Dinner

'GREATLY REGRET GENERAL ELECTION PREVENTS ME BEING WITH YOU THIS EVENING. IN THIS CENTENARY YEAR OF MY GRANDFATHER'S BIRTH I SEND YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH WHICH HE WAS SO PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED BEST WISHES ON BEHALF OF MY FAMILY'

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Prior to the Dinner a flower arrangement was sent to Lady Winston Churchill, and a gracious letter of thanks received from her in acknowledgement.

SIXTH ANNUAL DINNER

This was held on the 3rd October at the Royal Air Force Club as usual. Fifty-six attended. Again as usual all members present were announced individually to the President and Guest of Honour.

Our Guest of Honour was to have been Mr Winston S Churchill, MP, but due to the forthcoming General Election he was unable to be present. His place was taken by Major-General R C Macdonald CB DSO OBE, the Deputy Colonel (Warwickshire) Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, who graciously proposed the toast to the Association.

Lieutenant General Sir Reginald Savory, a Vice-President replied and the President then proposed the toast to the guests. For the first time we had a padre present and he, the Reverend Gordon Taylor, VRD, Honorary Chaplain to the RND kindly responded.

Telegrams were read from (1) HM The Queen, in reply to the Association telegram, (2) Mr Winston S Churchill, who regretted his unavoidable absence and (3) Mr D E G Morris (158) who also regretted his inability to attend. The dinner finished, as from time immemorial, with Turkish Delight served with the coffee. Later, members adjourned to the ante-room for more re-unions.

GALLIPOLI TOUR 1975 (Tranmer Rovers?)

Thanks to the good work put in by Mr Tranmer, the tour is on, subject to any difficulty over the Cyprus trouble. Those on the list have already been notified of the position to date and calling for their deposits. Due to some members having had to withdraw there is room for new names and all interested should write to Mr Tranmer. The party leader will be Major G B Horridge who was a member of the 1971 party and who has been back several times and is well familiar with the place.

MALVERN Worcestershire

As usual, Captain W Corbet Williamson MC (37) very kindly and enterprisingly provided and laid a wreath for the Association at the local War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, 10th November.

EVENTS IN 1975 - Diamond Jubilee Year

GALLIPOLI DAY 25 April 1975

Annual Luncheon and AGM at the Duke of York's HQ, as usual.

This coincides with the Anzac Day ceremony at the Cenotaph. Please note that this is NOT an Association parade. We are invited to join the Anzacs.

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29th Division Memorial Service 1975

To be held on Sunday 27th April at Holy Trinity Church, Eltham, London S E 9. Service at 6.30.

All Association members are invited.

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ANNUAL DINNER 1975

This will be held at the Royal Air Force Club, London, on Thursday 2nd October.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS 1975

Annual subscriptions will be due on 1st January 1975 and members are asked to help by forwarding their subscriptions to the Honorary Treasurer as soon as convenient. New members who joined since 1st July 1974 are already paid up until the end of 1975 so that numbers 584 onwards do not pay. Some members have already paid in advance. When remitting more than one year's subscription it would be helpful if members would state if the amount is for one or more years.

Bankers' Order forms are available on demand.

The Honorary Treasurer thanks members in advance for their help. Receipts are not sent, to save office work.

Please make cheques payable to the GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION and send themdirect to the HONORARY TREASURER.

NEW MEMBERS (Up to 1 November 1975)

In the original printed journal this section contains names and full addresses of new members.

For reasons of data protection and personal privacy, this content has been omitted.

OBITUARY

532 Major A J Skinner MC BSc ND DO MAeA (RE)
339 Lt-Col D B Watson MC (2/10 Middlesex R)
64 Sqn-Ldr A Swinton-Vaughan RAF (Middlesex Y)
433 P Williamson (RE Signals)
35 W E Davey (City of London Y 2 Mtd Div)
159 Major C O Read TD CEng MIMechE (3 Co Lon Y)
204 J W Calvert (RND Collingwood Bn)

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THE GALLIPOLIAN

The stock of articles and stories is running down and further items are solicited. As before, these can vary from the fairly long authoritative article by an expert to the short personal account by an individual giving his own war story.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM MEMBERS

Brigadier R B Rathbone (267) writes:

With reference to Lt-Col Thuillier's article in the last issue (15) I wonder if he can be the Captain Thuillier I knew in Bangalore in 1934-35? It is not correct to say that the 13th Division 'landed' at Suvla. Originally only the 10th and 11th did. The 13th first went to Helles in June and were then moved to Anzac, where they took part in the fight for Sari Bahr, 8th-10th August. Some of my old battalion, the 6th Loyal North Lancashires of the 38th Brigade reached the summit with the Ghurkas. It was only after that that the 13th Division was moved to Suvla. There, on 6th September, I joined my battalion. They were on the Karakhol ridge in the 9th Corps Reserve. Of those officers who had been with the battalion on the 8th-10th August only the 2nd in command (and he had a job on the beach), the Adjutant and the Quartermaster had survived'.

SOME GALLIPOLI MEMORIES

By Lieutenant-General Sir Reginald Savory
KCIE CB DSO MC DL JP (69)
late 14th King George's Own Sikhs of the
29th Infantry Brigade

(Copyright by Sir Reginald Savory)

Continued from the GALLIPOLIAN Autumn 1974 (15)

On the 9th August we heard that our regimental mules had at last come ashore. We would now be able to bring up water and ammunition without having to manhandle them. Colonel Palin sent me down to find them. They were at the mouth of the Aghyl Dere. An improvised brigade cook-house and ammunition dump had been established there. I found our men working like beavers. They had dug themselves into a small re-entrant in the side of the ravine, lit their fires and were preparing the first cooked meal we were to taste for four days. Our regimental aid-post was also nearby, under the able direction of a sub-assistant surgeon. Our doctor, Cursetjee, had been wounded at Cape Helles on the 28th June and had not yet been replaced. His 'locum tenens', a thick set Sikh, named Bhagwan Singh, was of priceless worth. Fearless, efficient, cheerful, indefatigable, he was more than a tower of strength. Sikhs, Gurkhas, New Zealanders

Australians and British, all were in his dressing-station. He was not a qualified doctor, but had passed an army course and knew his work. Many a wounded man owed his life to him.

I also made an unexpected discovery. The mess-cook, whom we had first brought with us, had gone sick, while we were at Imbros. He was an elderly Egyptian; we had engaged him when on the Suez Canal. Poor old boy; he should never have been allowed to come. When we paid him up, quite handsomely, in Imbros, and said goodbye to him in hospital, our consciences were all relieved. But there was no one to cook for the British officers, and we had been wondering what to do. Our men would have been only too happy to have shared their rations with us. There was plenty to spare; there always is, when casualties are heavy. But there are limits to which a European stomach can absorb chuppaties, dhal, ghi, and, when available, goat. We had of course our bully-beef and on that we had been subsisting for the past four days or more; but it was lukewarm and not palatable; it would be better warmed up some way or another. But no Sikh would touch the 'sacred cow'.

My discovery was a tall, gaunt Australian who was hanging around. I suspected that he was hoping to swap or wangle some chuppaties and dhal. I spoke to him. What was he doing here? 'Oh, nothing; just having a look at those Indians'. 'Can you cook?' 'Sure. I'm a bonzer cook. I can fry bacon and eggs; do up some bully; and make dampers.' (I had yet to learn what a damper was). I engaged him on the spot. Was he a deserter? A straggler? Or just a scrounger? I knew not, nor cared. From then on, Wally Kidd (for that was his name) became not our only mess-cook, but our friend and jester. He was never despondent; never at a loss; and if our mess menus, at times, contained items more appropriate to a London hotel than to a Gallipoli mess, we never enquired. Later that night, when I led the mules up to the regiment with ammunition, water and food, I was able to include a special 'extra' for the officers. (Wally Kidd's appointment was later 'regularised'. He was attached to us, temporarily, and no more was said.)

At least it was satisfactory to know that however confused the situation at the front may have been, it was beginning to improve behind.

While I was waiting at the dump for the mules to be loaded, I looked in at brigade headquarters to learn the latest news and take up any fresh orders. In a very fragile dug-out sat the brigadier, Major-General H V Cox, with his staff, working by the light of a hurricane lantern. I had scarcely reported when in came Major Cecil Allanson. General Cox had sent for him. Allanson had been wounded, but was just able to get about. He made his report. The 6th Gurkhas had indeed been blown off the top of Hill 'Q'. They had suffered severely; no British officer remained except the regimental medical officer, Captain Phipson, who had taken off his red-cross armband and taken over command of what was left of the battalion. General Cox told Allanson that he was going to recommend him for the Victoria Cross. Allanson replied that he had done the best he could, but was sorry to have failed. What an understatement! It was no fault of his. I regarded him then, as I do now, as one of the bravest men I have ever met, and the 1/6th Gurkhas as the outstanding battalion of the Gallipoli campaign. The Distinguished Service Order, which he subsequently received, instead of the Victoria Cross, must surely stand out as being more than exceptional. I was fortunate in being present at this short meeting.

That evening, I sat down and scribbled a pencilled note to my mother. '...we have been up in the midst of things... and one literally had not a minute to spare. Great goings on nowadays...we are in a new place now and have got out of that infernal trench warfare, which has also developed into mountain warfare; over very high country with dense scrub, in places six feet high and, as you can imagine, perfect for defence, but damned hard for the attackers. Anyhow, we go on slowly and I hope surely and ought soon to have the Turks in a very nasty position. If this show is a success, the problem of the Dardanelles will have been solved...We had a great bayonet charge yesterday, with Australians alongside of us; all going for all we were worth and it was really great fun, up to a point where we got hung up under a precipice with the Turks on top and had a pretty stiff time of it, so had to come back. which was annoying, as we know the lie of the land now. The Australians are great; when it is a case of going bald-headed, there is really no one like them; and a combined charge by them, the Gurkhas and ourselves was great fun.

I haven't enjoyed myself so much for some time; excepting of course when we got hung up by that precipice, which was pretty nasty...We have no kit with us, not even a pack, as it is too hilly to carry them; so we are not over comfortable and it gets infernally cold at nights, just before dawn...This mountain warfare is devilish tiring work and is accompanied by large casualties, chiefly from their infernal machine guns. None of us are very hard after three months enforced inactivity in the trenches and consequently when attacking up a very steep rough slope, which rises 900 feet in a very short distance. We all get so done, that we have to stop for a bit to rest and though partially hidden by the scrub, the bullets come whistling through all right. When you read of all this new development in the papers, you may realise what a perfectly marvellous show it is, from a fighting point of view, as well as from that of organisation. The whole show was done with the utmost secrecy and it was not until we had actually started our march, in the middle of the night, that we realised what we were in for. The Turks just cleared out and left their camps, etc., standing, just as they were; consequently there was lots of loot going, of which the Australians and Gurkhas took full advantage. I found one or two interesting things, but as it is such an infernal sweat carrying them about, I left them alone or gave them to someone else.' Perhaps some of this was for home consumption, but thus I wrote.

By dawn I was on my way forward again with my mules. It may seem odd that the adjutant should have been thus employed, but British officers were few and I was the only one who knew the way. At that time I was, in effect, combining the duties of both adjutant and quartermaster. An intense fire had broken out on the top of Sari Bahr, and it was becoming clear that another crisis had come. The monitors, out to sea, were firing their 14-inch guns and their shells were bursting right on top of the ridge; machine guns and rifle fire spread all along the front; bombs were bursting. I clambered slowly up with my string of mules, led by Sikh drivers. There was no danger; the branch of the Aghyl Dere along which we were wending our way, was narrow and deep; only stray or spent bullets could reach it. As I was reaching a point where the Aghyl Dere was joined by one of its many subsidiaries, a panic-

stricken crowd of soldiers, led by an officer with ginger hair and without a hat, came streaming round the corner. He and his men seemed to have thrown away their arms. They were a terrible sight. Screaming and shouting, 'Go back! The Turks are after us!' they tried to pass. My Sikhs with the stubbornness of their mules, stood firm, and edged into the side of the ravine. I shouted to the officer to stop. He only yelled the louder. 'The Turks are coming. Go back, go back..' Panic is infectious; I had seen it before. Something had to be done. I pulled out my pistol and threatened him. He took not the slightest notice, but rushed on. I fired at him, and missed. He and his men swept on, down towards the beach.

Thank God my own men stood staunch. I left them on and up; found my regiment occupying a position just behind the 5th and 10th Gurkhas; and delivered my consignment.

THE GENERATION GAP

The following is an extract from an address given by the President of the Pennysylvania State University to graduates in 1969, with kind acknowledgment. He asked his audience to look around at the 'oldies' in the hall, then he addressed them as follows:

'These, your parents and grandparents, are the people who in just five decades 1919 to 1969, have by their work increased life expectancy to approximately 50 per cent and who in cutting the working day by a third, more than doubled the per capita output. These are the people who have given you a healthier world than they received, and because of this you no longer wear epidemics as they did: influenza, typhoid and scarlet fevers, diphtheria, smallpox, measles or mumps. The dreaded 'polio' is no longer a medical factor, and TB is now almost unheard of.

'I would remind you that these remarkable people have lived through history's greatest depression. Many knew what it was like to be poor, hungry and cold. Because of this they determined it should not happen to you, and that you would have a better life, ample food and milk to eat and drink, vitamins to nourish you, a warm home, better schools, and greater opportunities to succeed than they did.

'Because of them you will work fewer hours, learn more, have

more leisure, travel to more distant places, and have a greater chance to follow your life's ambitions. These are also the people who defeated 'Hitler and tyranny', and who, when it was all over, had compassion and spent millions of dollars in helping their former enemies to rebuild their devastated cities, and through the United Nations Forum helped nations to solve their problems by meeting together and discussing them. It was their representatives too, who built many thousands of High Schools, trained and hired thousands of better teachers and made higher education a very real possibility for millions of youngsters, where once it was only a dream, except for a wealthy few.

'These generations made more progress by the sweat of their brows than any other people in any other era. If your generation can make as much progress in as many areas, then you should be able to solve a good many of the world's ills. But it won't be easy and you will not do it by negative thought, or by tearing down or belittling the work of past generations.'

HELLES REQUIEM

by W J Crawford (1/6th H L I 52nd (Lowland) Div) (438)

Does the sun coming up out of Troy
Still kiss you good morning
In the corpse filled trenches that serve
You as tomb where you sleep with your former foe.
And at the close of day,
In the brief sunset glow,
Do you still say good-night to the Isles of Greece,
Imbros and Tenedos, Lemnos and Samothrace,
As we did in the long ago?

* * * * *

Lord Rowallan sends a good story of an experience in 1915 during the blizzard. The Second-in-Command shared a dugout with the M O and the Quartermaster. The 2 i/c started to complain when the water level reached his shelf when the M O said to him: 'Oh, shut up. If you don't want to go to sleep, we do', obtaining the plaintive reply: 'It's all very well for you fellows, but I'm not used to this sort of thing.' The ice melted !

A LANDING 1915

By Harry Moody (5 Connaught Rangers) (233)

A troopship called the *River Clyde*
With two thousand British troops inside
Sailed away to Gallipoli
To fight the Turks across the sea.

T'was all planned safely on the map,
But they sailed away into a trap.
The Turks were hidden on the hill
Waiting for the easy kill.

As out poured men from the *River Clyde*
When the ramps were opened on her side,
Turkish guns blazed all around
And many of our soldiers drowned.

No chance had they - no chance in Hell !
As out they came - so they fell.
Killed or wounded on the spot,
Without even having fired a shot.

Only a few there was to land
Within the beach, a ridge of sand.
For under the water, near the shore,
Barbed wire planted, trapped some more.

The sea ran red along the beach,
The beach that many failed to reach.
T'was safely planned - the plan that died
With many a lad from the *River Clyde*.

* * * * *

A Gallipoli veteran, travelling by railway sleeper shortly after the war, when things had not returned to normal, found that he had been bitten in his bunk in the night. He wrote and complained and received a courteous letter of apology. It was most unusual; it was most disturbing to the railway company and steps would be taken that the blankets on the train were taken off and disinfected; all very polite. But by accident a departmental chit had been included in the envelope, reading:
'Send this fellow the usual bug letter.'

A HELLES CONUNDRUM

by W J Crawford MBE (1/6 HLI) (438)

I suppose that most of us who served on Cape Helles did not at the time pay overmuch attention to the nomenclature of our sphere of operations. If we survived long enough, we gradually became acquainted with the geography of the area and its naming system, during our tours in and out of the trenches and on fatigues, carrying parties, etc. I expect however, that some of us have, in the long retrospect since 9th January 1916, occasionally pondered over the circumstances in which some of the places we knew so well acquired their names. We had no trouble with clearly indigenous Turkish names like Achi Baba, Krithia, Morto Bay, Eski Lones, etc., nor with trenches like Plymouth Avenue or Sauchiehall Street, which clearly owed their names to the units whose blood, sweat, toil and tears had first fashioned them. Mule Trench should have belonged to this category but I assume so many units participated in its construction that it could not be named after any one individual grouping. Gurkha Bluff and Lancashire Landing also furnish examples of places named after their original occupants, and places like Pink Farm, Cross Cut and the infamous Vineyard are self-explanatory in their meaning.

One name puzzled me for a very long time - Backhouse Post. The solution came when I read in a Gallipoli account that Backhouse - I regret I don't recall his rank - was an officer in the R.N Division.

But I still have one name to ponder over and it concerns the Helles place that, in memory, seems the most important of all. I refer to that well on the right of and close to the entrance of Achi Nullah. When we first made its acquaintance it bubbled joyfully atop a little knoll about 100 yards to the right of the nullah, and sampling its nectar in daylight was not without danger, because if more than two, or maybe three, collected at the well, a few bursts of shrapnel invariably followed. Shortly afterwards, however, the R. Engineers piped the water supply from the exposed knoll into the nullah proper and made a very efficient watering point in comparative safety where six, or maybe eight, water bottles could be filled concurrently and water wastage was avoided. The name of the well ?

ROMANOS - or should it be ROMANNOS ? And that is my Helles conundrum. Who or what was Romano ? None of the survivors of my old battalion - there are still a few of us - can help. I have never seen the name in print and I never saw, nor have I seen since - any Helles trench maps which might have included the well. It's many years since I first started pondering over the origin of the name and in the interval I have come across two small points only which might serve as clues.

First, there was around the beginning of the century a well known and fashionable restaurant in London's West End known as Romanos. Secondly, about a year ago I came across a reference in a magazine article to a place somewhere to the south of Edinburgh named Romannos Bridge. That area is clearly Royal Scots country under the old regimental system. And I know that one battalion of Royal Scots - the 1/5th Territorial - was in the 29th Division at the original landing and probably made early acquaintance with the famous well. And if the Royal Scots were indeed responsible for the name of my well - who more fitting than the 1st of Foot, the Right of the Line, Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard ?

I hope that some fellow member knows the solution to my conundrum and can set my mind at rest.

THESE MEN I KNEW (by Rosita Forbes)

An excerpt of a book published by 'The Right Book Club', (sent by E A Wright (71))

Extract from an interview with Mustapha Kemal

I always knew what to do - even at Gallipoli that first day on April 25th 1915. When taken by surprise my pickets were forced to retire by Australians already two thirds up towards the crest of Chunuk Bahr. I had no idea anything was happening. I was in the middle of some ordinary manoeuvres with one regiment - lucky it was our best, the 57th. We were going home to an early breakfast when the pickets caught up with us. We had expected an attack at Bulair, where my chief, the German von Sanders was in command. I didn't even know if we had ball or blank ammunition, but I was prepared to fight with either. I only had a small scale

map with half the positions unmarked. It was no use to me. The only thing to do was to see what was on the other side of the ridge. I ran. How I ran. Two hundred men scrambled after me, but they couldn't keep up with me. When I looked over the top, there were the Australians - barely 400 yards away! And behind me there was a lot of panting and grunting, but only twenty seven rifles. If your people hadn't thought they were facing the whole Turkish Army, they could have taken the crest from a land full of winded men who hadn't enough breath to shoot straight.

Chunuk Bahr held the road to Constantinople. Beyond it was Greece, Roumania, and Bulgaria were undecided.

Had you advanced just four hundred yards more that day - against nothing at all - the way to Russia would have been open.

With his own hands he dragged the first gun into position. He called up the reserves guarding the supposed vital point. He put every man into the front line. We hadn't a boy or a sporting gun in reserve. It was all there on the top of the ridge, and everyone was worn out. We hadn't eaten since the previous night. We hadn't the ammunition we needed. You thought you were up against our first line of defence, but there was no other.

Kemal held his exhausted Turks on the ridge, but he could not dislodge the Australians. If they had their way, we would have lost Chunuk Bahr. If they had been half a dozen of them, we couldn't have got a spade into the earth. As it was, we dug at night, and shot when it was absolutely necessary the next day.

* * * * * * *

A soldier from Gallipoli was shell shocked and had the hallucination that he was a dog. He went away for some sort of psychiatric treatment and on his return was of course asked how he was. He replied, 'I'm fine; thanks. Feel how cold my nose is ! '

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THE FAIRGROUND ORGAN

By Harry Moody (5 Connaught Rangers) (233)

To the Fair they went - three little boys
Sharing the fun, enjoying the noise.
Music loud music filling the air
Stalls and sideshows everywhere.
They passed and repassed the gingerbread stall
They had no money - no money at all.
At last they came to the merry-go-round
With startled wonder at what they found.
For the beautiful organ began to play
A military march - remembered today.
The three abreast gallopers went round and round
To the thrill of the organ's wonderful sound.
And the bandmaster's baton moved with the tune
And the boys' departure came all too soon.

To the Fair they went, the two young men
The war had taken its toll by then
On the roll of honour - their boyhood friend
Whose life e'er started - found its end.
They remembered him then, near the merry-go-round,
For didn't they stand on this very ground !
And the organ played both loud and clear.
It seemed the absent friend was near !
And a military march filled the air
As two young men stood - at the fair.

To the Fair he went, an old army man
Carrying on as best he can
Another war won ? Another friend lost
And a mother's tears counting the cost
No more years could the old man carry
He, the last of Tom, Dick and Harry,
And on this day, on his very last stroll
The great Sergeant Major was calling the roll
He held his head proudly - there at the end
And knew that his pals would welcome a friend
The sound of the organ was the call he heard
As his soul flew away on the wing of a bird.

The 'March of the Gladiators' was over.

BRIEF ENCOUNTER

by Charles Watkins (6 Lan Fus 42 Div) (167)

If Gallipoli had never happened I'd never have had the good fortune to be a member of this special Gallipoli Brotherhood of ours. And I'd never have met this tinker chap - this rabid lover of the English countryside - and of the Kentish countryside in particular. In my conceit - the insufferable conceit of the very young - I had thought I was the only person specially selected by God to really appreciate this Kentish countryside. That was, until I'd met this tinker chap.

I think it was Sir Walter Scott who best said it - about the love of one's own country:

'Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said
This is my home - my native land' ... etc., etc.

This love of the countryside - it's something you've got - or you haven't got. If you've got it, it's a bit like first falling in love except that this love of the countryside persists with increasing intensity, making everything else seem of secondary importance. All Nature seems to combine to produce a msterpiece of perfect harmony - the sweet smell of the grass and flowers, the hum of the bees, the tinkling notes of hidden streams, bird songs, the incredible and artless beauty of the trees, the gentle breeze rustling the ripening corn fields into rolling waves of gold. All this, and more, I learned from this tinker. Not that he was very articulate - but some chaps don't seem to need the gift of words - he breathed and exuded his passionate love of England in every pore of his skin. I guess that some of you yourselves have met chaps like this - men who don't need to say a lot - or can't - but who in some mysterious way seem to convey everything they feel by some magic telepathy.

A simple, unassuming sort of bloke - this tinker chap. They're a dying race today - in fact probably quite extinct now, for who wants to have a kettle or pan mended, or scissors ground and sharpened when you can buy these darned things so cheaply in the stores. But years ago tinkers were a fairly common sight - picturesque, untidy

little men, fiercely independent, who carried on their trade quietly, giving offence to no one. Ex some Lancashire regiment, he'd served on Gallipoli until he 'bought' one in the August offensive, but he stuck it out in other Middle East theatres of war until the end, when he was finally invalided out and with the usual miserly pension for his disability of a few shillings a week. Before the war he worked in some dim and unhealthy trade connected with tinning - close confined work in a badly lit and badly ventilated backroom. The war over, he decided not to go back to that life again. Like he said, 'Well mate, after all that fresh air and Middle East sunshine - well, y'know yerself, mate, how a man feels when he gets back to Blighty.' So he decided to roam around for a bit, finally coming down to Kent where he stayed, getting his living as a travelling tinker, mending kettles and pans, etc., a craft for which his previous trade training had given him a certain dexterity - canvassing the housewives in the villages in his own particular 'pitch'. 'Love every minute of it, I does, mate. England's a bloody good place to see when yer travels around - the countryside - and all that - bloody lovely it is. Beats me why other folk don't wander round more and see it. I guess they must be bleedin' blind.'

I'm glad I met him. I met him quite by chance when I was living in Canterbury just after the First War. This tinker chap wasn't the only one who had fled, appalled from his previous occupation. The muck and grime of old Lancashire and after some 4½ years of the Middle East, shocked me, so I moved on to Kent and settled in Canterbury. Why Canterbury? Oh! It was just pure chance - a flying visit to an old wartime chum in Tunbridge Wells - an invitation to see a bit of Kent before settling down again in Lancashire. Not that I got much chance of seeing Kent in that short week-end, especially as it poured with rain the whole time. That didn't worry us too much - it's always fine weather in the Saloon Bar. But before leaving for home, he pressed me to have a look at Canterbury - told me I'd find it a bit different from looking at factory chimneys. It was still raining hard when I arrived rather late in Canterbury in the evening, and I was fortunate enough to find good digs - just under the shadow of the ancient and historic Westgate Towers, but the next day and

for the following fortnight the kindly gods - and with sly humour, must have conspired together to bring about my complete undoing - faultless sunny days, soft balmy nights heavy with the scent of blossom and the green, green grass of England. There's no scent in all the world like it. Those of you who know Kent need no eulogy from me to extol its unbelievable charm just after the First War - and especially to an ex-Lancashire mill-hand. I couldn't believe it was real. All counties have their own especial appeal but it so happened I had stumbled on the Kentish countryside - and Canterbury - about Maytime - the blossom laden orchards, the bronzed faced land girls training the hop vines around the hop poles - oh ! there's no end to the catalogue of enticing charms of this countryside. For me it was a case of total seduction by this corner of Paradise and I never tired of exploring its charms. It was one evening later in June that I'd met this tinker chap just on the outskirts of the city, attracted by the makeshift little tent and the glow of his little bivouac fire. There's no need for me to tell any other old soldier how a little camp fire pulls you towards it like a magnet - or maybe it's a hangover from the cave days. So I stopped and we chatted. Those were the days - before TV and radio had battered us into a state of moronic imbecility - they were the days when men found their pleasure in talking to their fellow men. So we talked, and smoked, and talked and talked till the stars came out and all the time his wife - or woman - brooded anxiously over him like a hen over a sick chick - especially when he got an extra bad fit of coughing. It seems a bit of Turkish shrapnel had done his lung a bit of no good but he shrugged it off as of no importance - this persistent cough of his. In an indiscreet moment I remember asking him didn't he want something better than what he was doing, but his reply silenced me. It was one of those soft balmy June nights where everything seemed to hang quivering halfway between heaven and earth - the sort of nights you only get in an English summer. The chimes from the distant Cathedral bell Harry tower echoed on the night air, soft as a Gregorian chant, and emphasising still more the ecclesiastical tone of this ancient and beautiful city of Canterbury. He drew a deep sigh and after a time said solemnly, 'Can there be owt better in the

world that this?' Then he gave a merry laugh and added, 'I reckon God Himself spends his annual holidays round these parts.

So I 'hushed my big mouf' and listened while he talked, and talked. All about his every day roaming the lanes and by-ways, soaking up the beauty of England like a sponge. Occasionally his talking would be interrupted by that goddamned cough of his and the woman moved to put some more wood on the fire. 'What the hell did you do to him out there?' she said to me angrily. 'A right strong young fellah he was afore he went out there, and now...' And she gave a dëep sigh that seemed to come up right from the bottom of her battered and worn shoes..

'Wanted to live all his days' the tinker told me, 'doing nothing else but what he was doing now.' And when he died, he said, he wanted to die - not in a hospital bed, but where he could see his beloved land for the last time. I try to recapture his sentiments in the following poem (!) - (and may God and my fellow Gallipolians forgive me !!)

Just take off my coat and fold it
And prop it high under my head
And sit by me there, and wi' your hands in mine,
Just sit by me there.....till I'm dead.
Nay, don't fret yerself, lass,
And don't pipe yer eye.

This way I wanted to die.

A'top of this hill, and under a tree,
Where all around me I can see
This dear, dear land of England.
The hedges an' farms and fields by the score
An' the long winding roads, an' the woods and the streams,
The parks an' the manors - the Gentry's abodes.
An' see the white smoke curl up from cottage and inn
...The littler dwellings o' men and their kin.
I've roamed every by-way and lane to the end
Wi' my scissors to sharpen and kettles to mend.
...All this 'as bin my 'pitch'..as far as yer eye can see,

An' belongs only to England ... an' me.

What ! crying, lass? Nay - don't weaken like that.
It's bin a good life ... an' I've bin kinda lucky wi' you as a wife.
I've 'ad ups and downs ... and a good share of fun,
Tho' I've done many things I didn't oughter 'ave done.
But I've learnt on my 'pitch' all the Rules of the Road,
Like ... 'elping a bloke when he's down.
An' learning' to carry my share of the load.
...that a frown and a scowl ain't worth not the half of the worth of a smile
In helping a bloke to do the Last Mile.
An' I've learnt that these things, an' some more now an' then,
Are part o' the strong golden friendship of men.

It ain't much, I agree, but it'll 'elp me, mebbe
When I goes up aloft and I stands before ... Him.
... When I stands, cap in hand ... an' a shufflin' my feet
...and remembring my sins,
An' his welcome won't seem half so grim.
He'll frown ... maybe clout me a bit ...
Then He'll gimme His hand.
And say 'Damme, yer naught but a tinker,
Yer didn't understand.'

THE EVACUATION OF ANZAC

(And Those We Left Behind)

By G L Scott (AIF 4 Bn 1 Div) (378)

My own battalion, the 4th, went by the *Euripides*. while the *Banalla* was the ship which brought me back to England in July, 1919; and I should dearly like to contact any member who was a fellow passenger on either ship. As a result of my previous contribution I have had some interesting correspondence with Harold Hudson (244), who wrote 'Landing from the *Galeka*' in the Christmas issue. I am hoping very much that we shall meet in Newark, my home town, next summer and, with my great friend, George Dale (53) make a jolly Gallipoli threesome. As I have explained to our very hardworking secretary, Major Banner, I am unable to attend our London dinners owing to arthritis. And so our journal means a lot to me.

It was my good fortune to stay the course from Landing to Evacuation, and I remember that as we drew away from Anzac's beach the thoughts of many turned to the pals we were leaving behind. Three War Graves books I now have contain the names and details of Aussie comrades whom I well remember. Many of them now rest in what is named, somewhat strangely, as the '4th Battalion Parade Ground' - I recall no 'parades!' One is Lt Col J Onslow Thompson, our Battalion Commander. His first resting place, as I remember, was in the side of the communication trench leading to Johnson's Jolly, with his name, etc., on the end of a wooden casing which covered his knee boots. A very gallant gentleman, kind and fatherly. Also left behind was 4th Battalion Captain Stewart Milson, G I 7, killed at Lone Pine, and Lt Col MacNaughton, our new C O, whose body he saw, surrounded by dead Turks and Aussies - and unashamedly and openly wept. The two were Scots, and real buddies; Col Mac thought the world of his Captain, and rightly so.

Then there was C Q M Sgt Archie Bowers, killed by a shell fragment while shaving in the trench - prior to going down to the beach to be commissioned. In my No 11 article he was the N C O who found our A W L Aussies in the Eden Palace Hotel and marched them ignominiously back to Mena Camp. He would have made a first class officer. Another grave listed in Fourth Parade Ground Cem is that of my great friend, Tom Harness, whose English home was at Medlam, near Revesby, Lincs. Shot through the eye, he died in my arms at Johnson's Jolly, conscious just long enough to mutter: 'Can you do anything for me, Darb?' (My nickname). He was one of the four, mentioned above, marched home by Archie Bowers.

Such memories make sad things to write about, as most of my readers will realise. But such is the stuff of war, and I fail to believe that the affectionate recalling of such memories of old comrades is in any way morbid. As we all say in Remembrance Services, 'We will remember them', and I know that all old soldiers will continue to do just that.

Pat, another absentee, met his end while he and I were on fatigues in Victoria Gully. We had tossed up to decide who should wait for a dixie of bully stew, not quite ready. I lost, and so waited. Pat was 100 yds on his way back when he died. Luck ? Fate ? Take your choice. I'm an

octogenarian; Pat was twenty-two. Pat, too, was another of the aforementioned four A W L s. As Irish as Paddy's Pig, he spoke really good French. He tried it on Archie Bowers when the latter ordered: 'Come out!' - from Eden Palace in the middle of the night. It didn't work; and Pat had to save his French for the C O. He was a great lad, a good soldier and a fine friend to have.

I shall never forget Cpl Don Roberts (killed 22nd Jul 1915, in exactly the same manner as poor Tom Harness) and known to me in civvy street as a fine athlete, with a great sense of humour, and philosophical at times. He and I were returning from a spell of guard duty for Gen Ian Hamilton at Imbros. It was a lovely day, the sun shining hotly from a cloudless sky; and we two lying together on the deck, taking it easy. Suddenly Don said: 'Scottie, one of these days our souls will go whizzing up there.' A premonition? Or just a casual remark? Anyway, poor old Don's end came very shortly afterwards.

I have good reason to especially remember the death of poor Jack Howard on May 5th 1915. After his wounding I got him down to the Battalion doctor, being asked to do so by Lt Milligan. Alas ! Jack was dead when we arrived. So poignant, because he was a middle-aged man with several children. Like all Aussies he was a volunteer.

We were resting in Victoria Gully, till then untouched by Turkish shellfire, when I was called away to watch a 'Two-up' game - and maybe hoping to try my luck as well ! Suddenly a newly arrived howizer battery (Austrian it was said) dropped one amongst the five or six I had just left. All died; amongst them I found Sgt Jack Herbert just alive. Before he died he whispered: 'They've got me downstairs, Scottie - no more fun for me.' So they had, and you can interpret that for yourselves. Jack lies in Ari Burnu Cem.

Alan Drew, the fourth member of our 1914 Christmas 'absentees', was a special friend, we worked together in Sydney and joined up together on August 28th 1914, after an amusing incident. Both being horsemen, we approached the Australian Light Horse, but were told that they were 'full up'. Not true, as we found later; they were out for more P B I. So we tried the 3rd Battalion infantry,

asking for information from a chappie busy washing in a canvas bucket. 'Stand to attention when speaking to an officer!! ' he said. After that we felt that the 3rd was not for us; went next door, as it were, and joined the 4th. (Incidentally, the officer who missed - with due modesty - two very fine soldiers was C E W Bean, the official historian.)

Alan's regiment number was 718; mine was 720. We climbed together - l/cpl, cpl, sgt. Alan won the M M and died later at Bapaume. How well I remember that Anzac night when we were both on night patrol in no-man's land; we with Cpl Pritchard, I with Cpl MacDonald. It ended for Alan when he was shot in the backside while entering the sap, 100 yds out, and I still hear his shout: 'You know the patrol was out, you daft ...! '

At times we did quite a bit of sniping, generally accompanied by an officer with a telescope. That was exciting work and we got quite bloodthirsty at times. I remember, too, with rather less pleasure, the endless fatigues, brightened one day by a close view of the great Kitchener - what a surprise! And then the evacuation - the quiet mouselike creeping down to the beach; the boarding of the S S *Simla*; the very welcome donation (from the ship's officers?) on a bottle of scotch. And then, back to Egypt. Which reminds me of our grief when seeing so many jars of rum being smashed on the beach, when we had seen so little of it in the trenches.

And so it was Christmas 1915 in the Adriatic, instead of Constantinople. No - we never got there, but Johnny Turk knew how well we had tried. And let it be said that Johnny himself was a worthy opponent and put up a real good show.

* * * * * *

After the war, a young Gallipolian got married and went on honeymoon. He didn't want people in the hotel to know they were just married and gave the chambermaid a good tip not to say they were newly married.

But a 'nice old lady' asked the chambermaid, who, wanting to earn her tip, replied:

'Oh, no mum, they're only just good friends.'

* * * * * *

THE GALLIPOLI GAMBLE

By Les Lawrance 5 R Inniskilling Fus 10 Div (436)

Continued from the Gallipolian, Autumn 1974 (15)

SUVLA BAY LANDING

Now back to Suvla and the job at hand.
On August sixth at half past three our guns
At Helles opened up to pin the Turks
South west, and thus prevent them moving east
To reinforce their army on the ridge.
Here Aussie and New Zealand troops would land.
The Powers that be had settled on a plan
Whereby these troops would spread out like a fan,
And thus establish contact with our force
Located on the right, east of the toe.
The left spread of the fan should contact with
New landings by the tenth at Suvla Bay.
Sir Ian planned to form a battle line
Along the north-west coast, and then to make
A general attack against the ridge.
The Anzac Corps had wonderful results -
At right and left each flank made firm advance,
But not the centre. Here the Turk held firm.
And yet the gain held hope of some success,
Resultant upon troops at Suvla Bay
Securing hold of Anafarta Ridge,
And thus protecting Anzacs at their right.
'Tis not surprising that at first they failed
To gain the ground expected - after all
This was their first experience of war.
On August sixth the Navy opened up
Bombardment all along Cape Helles front,
While Aussies and New Zealanders attacked
To occupy defenders and distract,
So landings could commence at Suvla Bay.
The Plan for landings up at 'A C' Beach
Was set for August sixth - eleven pm,
And all that afternoon the troops embarked
On lighters, trawlers and the beetle-boats,
Protected by the Navy's mighty arm.
The Aegean Sea was littered with our craft,
And from their decks the Irish sang their songs

Of love and glory. 'Where's the Turk?' they cried.
Yes, where's the Turk? Nobody seemed to know,
At least not then, but he was there all right.
Again it seemed that something went awry,
For many of the troops did not reach land
Until next day - too late for a surprise.
So when they landed Johnny Turk was there
Strategically hidden in the scrub,
Backed by machine guns and artillery.
No pen, least mine, could picture August sixth,
The day confusion reigned as ne'er before.
The plan so ill conceived had died at birth,
And with it all the hopes of Britain's youth.
They'd trained for one whole year, and Kitchener
From whom they took their name had placed great faith
In these his eager pink cheeked volunteers.

He called us up in '14 on a sultry August morn,
He knew darn well we'd answer him, for we were
British born.
D'yer remember how you trained us, we raw sons of
the soil ?
I never shall forget those days - my God, you made
us toil.
It was jab and point and parry, don't tickle 'im,
kill 'im dead.
This aint no bloomin picnic the Sergeant Major said.
And we stood for slams I'll tell you we wouldn't
stand today.
And all because Lord Kitchener called, 'Come let us
to the fray.'

And so at beaches 'A and C', these lads
Determined, grit their teeth. This was the task
They pledged that they would do for hearth and home.
Britain's sons, of whom Sir Henry Wilson
Scoffed and thought ridiculous, now faced their
Foe. Knee high they waded with their rifles
Up above their heads. An easy target
For sharp shooting Turks. And as they fell face
Upward to the sky, their crimson blood burst
Forth into the Aegean waters blue, to blotch
And speckle it. Calmly they floated there,
Then sank beneath the blue and blooded sea.
The wounded and the whole pressed forward t'ward

The land where scrub seemed hopeful shelter from
The murd'rous fire. But contact with the short
Brought no relief, for well ranged shrapnel fire
Racked up and down that beach, and once again
The youthful blood from home spilled out and soaked
Deep in the Turkish soil in crimson stain.
To stay was death, so onward - what to lose ?
And so they ran, they crawled, they clambered on
To seek some respite from the endless fire.
A rock - a ledge - a clump of gorse, each seemed
A God-sent spot to rest their bursting lungs,
Or look around and see who else had lived -
To ponder briefly - oh so briefly, and
To take the chance of whispering, Thank God.
But even here the sniper picked them off,
And those who dared advance met booby traps
Or contact mines which blew them up beyond.
Yes - German-Turk Intelligence had planned
A hot reception for this ill-conceived,
Foolhardy and impractical campaign.

ROSES IN DECEMBER

By Lt W Corbet Williamson MC RM (37)

A December 1973 letter to a grandmother who in 1918 was a VAD nurse in an officers' hospital in Palace Green just behind Kensington Palace, where the writer had arrived on a stretcher from Passchendaele in late 1917. The next room was occupied by Capt Sir Basil Brooke, who had been on the staff of the IXth Army Corps at Suvla Bay on the west coast of the Gallipoli Peninsula: later, he was better known as the Right Hon Viscount Brookeborough, who, although a busy man, found time to join the Gallipoli Association before he died.

Dear Nurse B,

Thank you for your Christmas card. I will send you a copy of the Malvern Gazette which has a brief reference to myself as a member of the Gallipoli Association attending Remembrance Day services at Malvern on the 10th and 11th November 1973.

You see, I was a classical scholar at Malvern College, and was in camp with the Officers Training Corps, Junior Division

at Frimley, near Aldershot when war with Germany broke out on the 4th August, 1914. We cadets were sent home at once, the camp equipment was needed for the B E F, and the Guards officers who had been training us rejoined their regiments. Years later, in Victoria, British Columbia, I met our adjutant, then Lieut Alexander of the Irish Guards, who in the meantime had become Field Marshal Earl Alexander, Governor-General of Canada, at a reception for men held in the daytime at the Parliament buildings, Victoria, BC. It was a pleasant change from the formality sometimes found at such occasions. There were no invitations, one just took one's place in the queue which shuffled into the proper part of the 'Buildings', edging forward until one's turn came. A Canadian military officer then called out one's name, one stepped forward, bowed, shook hands, bowed again and backed out. Not long ago, I was looking up something in the Malvern Library when I came across the name 'Sir James Horlick', and wondered if sixty years ago he had been Lt Jimmy Horlick of the Coldstream Guards who commanded the company of cadets I belonged to at Frimley in August 1914. I looked up the name in Who's Who, and my guess seemed right.

In September 1914, the Royal Marines started recruiting volunteers for 'short service', three years or the duration of the war. At Stonehouse Royal Marines Barracks, Plymouth, I was among the first four hundred short service recruits accepted. We wore blue broderick caps, and RMLI blue active service uniforms. There were twenty squads, each of twenty men, and as my number was PLY S.371 (the S standing for Special Short Service) I was in the 19th Squad commanded by Sgt Nightingale, called up from the Reserve. We spent the first week or two on the barrack square doing drill without arms, drill with arms, learning to march in the light infantry step, metronome and pace-stick assisting us, attending lectures on first aid, etc., and weekly route marches behind the band of the Plymouth Royal Marines, when Plymouth girls cheered us, and, when marching at ease, we blew them kisses.' While drilling on the 'Longroom' ground, I saw the arrival of the First Canadian Division. I counted fourteen liners at intervals to the horizon, and more were beyond, I expect.

On the Sunday, the Canadian Scottish paraded with their pipe band on the Hoe. When the 3rd Royal Marines Brigade of the RN Division returned to England from the Antwerp expedition, the Plymouth (11th) Battalion, came to Stonehouse Barracks. Khaki field service uniforms were issued to the four hundred 'Short Service' marines, and we were drafted into the Plymouth Battalion, which marched to Tavistock, where we did field training. Later, I was among those selected for the Royal Marines Divisional Cyclist Company of the RN Division. We went to billets in Gosport, bicycles were issued to us, and our training included cycle drill, map reading, semaphore signalling, etc. Our final move was to Snillingstone, near Blandford, Dorset. At Blandford, with the RND, we marched past King George Vth and the RM Cyclist Company was inspected in Blandford Square by Mr Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty.

On the last night of February 1915, the Cyclist Company embarked at Avonmouth in the troopship *Somali*. We did not know where we were going, but we were on our way to a milder climate, if the issue of sun helmets meant anything.

The sea was pretty rough till we got into the Mediterranean, where the white buildings on the distant North African coast looked rather attractive. I was told that distance lent enchantment to the view; although we had fired a musketry course in England, we had a certain amount of rifle practice at sea. It was hoped that aimed rifle bullets would cause spray round the periscope, and thus 'blind' any German submarine that came our way. However, this theory was never tested, and in due course we reached Malta. We did not stay long in Valetta harbour, and there was no shore leave for us, but we were interested, one might almost say fascinated, by the bumboats selling fruit, shawls, tobacco, etc. I bought some oranges from a priest, who came aboard and told me that the oranges were from a monstery garden. True to tradition, church bells were sounding all the time.

Soon we were on our way again, and in the darkness we continued to sail without lights. Accompanied only by the throb of the ship's engines and the wash of the sea, miners, Welshmen, Geordies, and other singers with lovely voices sang part songs. We saw the light from the Cape

Matapan lighthouse in the south of Greece. In the dawn the Aegean Islands looked wonderful. Homer's personification, 'early-rising, rosy-fingered, golden-haired Dawn' was a marvellous description of the beauty of the Aegean sunrise.

Eventually we arrived at Lemnos. With its emptiness, the natural harbour looked huge. I was thrilled by the whole proceeding, especially on the 18th March 1915, when we were standing by, out of sight or sound, during the terrific bombardment of the Turkish forts in the Narrows by naval guns. I was told later that the engines of the hastily recruited North Sea fishing craft for mine sweeping were not powerful enough to make any headway against the swift current in the Dardanelles. Where we were, the sea was far too rough for landing operations; we lost three war-ships, *Irresistible, Ocean* and the French *Bouvet*, so I was not surprised when we went to Port Said, where the ships could be reloaded for an opposed landing. We pitched our tents on a sandy, desert strip of land within easy walking distance of Port Said. In the morning we woke up and found our camp surrounded by a (relative) metropolis of Egyptian vendors' stalls. I do not think I shall ever forget the chant of the iced lemonade vendors, 'very nice, very sweet, very clean, very cheap', iced lemonade, the best drink in the camp. In the evening, Port Said buzzed with some thousands of service men who had been cooped up in ships for some time: I thought the troops behaved very well, I saw nothing to compare with the 'rough house' element I saw in other places when the usual climax of a night out was a grand piano being thrown from a top storey apartment.

I believe some units of the RND went up the canal to guard against any possible Turkish attack, but the rest of the RND was inspected by General Sir Ian Hamilton. In the march past, the RM Cyclist Coy., taking the place, I suppose, of divisional cavalry, led the division, and so avoided the clouds of dusty sand raised by marching infantry. Perhaps due to sleeping in the sand, I developed a skin complaint of which the name was, I think, erysipelas. Anyway, I had to go to a Port Said hospital. The CO of the RM Cyclist Company said he was sorry to have to leave me behind, but without proper treatment my complaint might get much worse. 'Proper treatment' is just what I got at the hospital: quiet, kind, efficient, Roman Catholic nuns, under

the direction of foreign doctors, did the nursing; and did it very well, so well that I hoped a chance would come of repaying their kindness. The captain of a French warship sent his band to entertain us, local people helped, and when some twenty of us left by train for Alexandria, English ladies came to see us off, giving us refreshments for the journey.

Two years later I did have a chance of repaying the kind attention I had received in the hospital at Port Said. I was the senior of six newly commissioned, reinforcement, temporary second-lieutenants spending a week or two at Stonehouse, RM Barracks before going to Blandford en route to the 63rd RN Division in the BEF. My seniority rested on the fact that my name had appeared first in the list of the six of us in the London Gazette. We had simple duties, and were given a good deal of help in making correctly-worded reports, for instance correctly-worded reports were available for our guidance. I was only officer-of-the-day once, and found it a wonderful opportunity of learning something of the organisation and procedures of barrack life. A regular captain showed us round and explained things. 'And on Sunday, of course', he went on, 'there is the Church of England church parade. If there are sufficient Roman Catholics for an officer's party of twenty-five, there is a Roman Catholic church parade. If there is no Roman Catholic officer available, a Church of England officer volunteers to take the RC church parade.' I thought of Port Said, and found myself saying, 'I would like to take a Roman Catholic church parade.' Our guide jotted down a note, and said, 'If your services are required, you'll see your name in orders.' And that is why I took the RC church parade. Later, I was surprised to find that this experience helped my attitude when living in, or visiting RC countries.

While I was in Alexandria, the landing in Gallipoli took place on the 25th April. The Alexandria newspapers were full of it, and soon boatloads of Australian and New Zealand wounded began to arrive. In Alexandria, an Australian soldier told me that an Australian sapper of my name had died in Cairo, but it was not until a few days later that I saw my brother's obituary in the 'Morning Post' which confirmed this sad news. Dominion Forces

were glad to get men with service technical skills, and my brother had learned his signalling at Osborne and Dartmouth RN Colleges. In early May I sailed from Alexandria in the liner *Franconia*, and on arrival at our destination near Cape Helles I was taken in a lighter from the *Franconia* to the *River Clyde* which had been run ashore on the 25th April. With a small party of RND personnel who for one reason or another had been left behind in Egypt, sub-Lieut Startin RNVR marched us to RND HQ. After all the stuff I had read in the Alexandria newspapers, it was more than a surprise, it was a shock to me to find divisional headquarters so close to the beach. However, we had arrived, and a few Turkish shells bursting near us showed us that we were at the front.

For the moment, my chances of cycling into Constantinople began to look remote. However, we were at any rate on Turkish soil, and the sun was shining. That's all for now.

With best wishes from, W.

PS. I expect you know the quotation:- 'God gives us memory so that we may have roses in December'.

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The twenty-one year old son of a Gallipoli veteran, whose father held an important embassy post, was called on to sit in for his father at a dinner given for some local big-wigs, including native chiefs. With the idea of being friendly, he said to his neighbour, a black man, 'You likee soupee ?' His neighbour nodded gravely, without speaking. Shortly afterwards the man was called on for his speech, which he made in flawless English, much to the discomfiture of the young Englishman. On sitting down afterwards, the man said to his neighbour, 'You likee speechee?'
While the above story may well be true, the following was given as authentic: Some young officers were out on a walk round Catterick shortly after the first war. They came on a large estate with an elderly man suitably attired, cutting the hedge in front of the house. One officer - with visions of world-wide travel, asked the man if he had been around at all, expecting that he had been the gardener there all his life. He answered, 'Well, yes, I was the Viceroy of India for some years.'

Lt W Corbet Williamson RM (37) writes:

(1) From 'The First World War' by Richard Thoumin

'Who will ever forget the sight ! The narrow beach packed with stores, ammunition, transport, animals and human beings as thick as bees round a hive. Generals and privates lived side by side, in exactly the same manner, eating the same food, and exposed to the same risks. General Birdwood occupied a little dug-out close to the landing stage which could hardly be distinguished from any other.

A new arrival one day found himself on the beach, and part of his kit missing at the dinner hour. In truly colonial fashion, he went to work to find it by hunting through the neighbouring dug-outs.

Birdwood and his chief of staff were engaged in earnest conversation when they were suddenly interrupted by a head being pushed through the fly-net which covered the entrance, and a voice saying, 'Now which of you two blighters has stolen my canteen?'

This incident, Commander-in-Chief being accused of theft by a private, is probably unique in the annals of war.

The above reminded W C W of the following story heard soon after the end of the 1914-1918 war.

(2) At a dinner party in London, General Birdwood happened to tell a Gallipoli experience.

'I was about to walk round a traverse in the Anzac front line when an Australian private shouted, 'Duck your bloody head, Birdie?'

Another guest at the party was shocked. 'And what did you do?' he asked.

'Oh,' said General Birdwood, 'I ducked my bloody head! '

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The majority of members have an Association tie.

Do you ?

GALLIPOLI Remembered

Captain Eric Bush's book is to be launched with the title 'Gallipoli' on the 3rd April 1975, by the well-known publishers Messrs Allen & Unwin. It will probably be the last word on the campaign from a combatant's point of view.

Bush, the youngest member of the Association, was Midshipman of the *Bacchante's* picket boat in the original landings at Anzac and Suvla, and in subequent operations and can contribute his own impressions. Recently, in his capacity of guide on educational cruises to the area, he has been able to refresh his memory and note such changes in the scene as time has brought about.

Aided by his experience of combined operations in World War 2, Bush is singularly well equipped to assess what was attempted and what was achieved. Moreover, throughout his distinguished career he has made a point of meeting and talking to men and officers who served at Gallipoli and has also had access to a vast quantity of unpublished reports, letters and diaries.

In the opinion of the publishers, Bush's 'Gallipoli' is 'profoundly moving'; which will be no surprise to those members of the Association who have already read his 'Bless Our Ship', 'The Flowers of the Sea' and 'Salute the Soldier'. It portrays the hopes and fears of the men who fought there and their commanders, both naval and military.

It is fully illustrated, has five maps and will be reviewed in the Spring number of the 'Gallipolian'.

E H W B

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