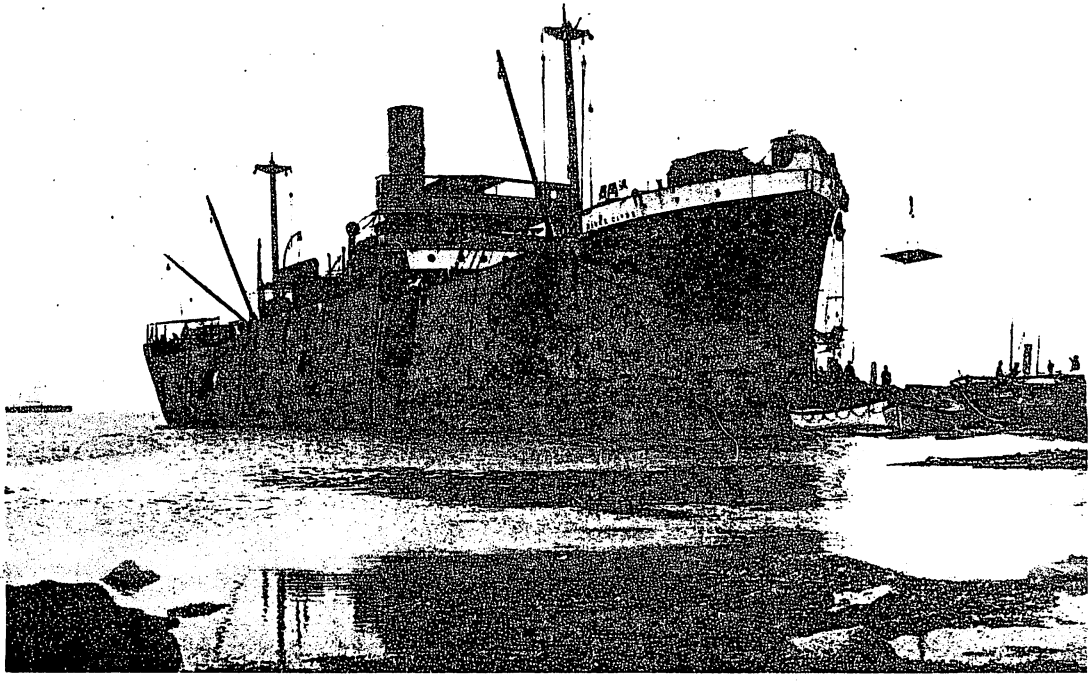
See Page 9

THE GALLIPOLIAN

THE JOURNAL OF THE

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION



HMTS 'RIVER CLYDE' AT V BEACH 25 APRIL 1915

PRICE TO NON-MEMBERS 25p No 20 SPRING 1976

The GALLIPOLIAN

The Journal of the

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION

(Founded in 1969 on the campaign of 1915)

PRESIDENT Brigadier B B Rackham CBE MC DL

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Lt General Sir Reginald Savory
KCIE CB DSO MC
Vice-Admiral Sir Peverill B R W
William-Powlett KCB KCMG CBE DSO
Lt Colonel Lord Rowallan
KT KBE KStJ TD Hon LlD
Major General T H Jameson CBE DSO
Colonel Lord Barnby CMG CBE MVO
Vice-Admiral E W Longley-Cook
CB CBE DSO RN

CHAIRMAN & HON SECRETARY & EDITOR OF THE GALLIPOLIAN
Major E H W Banner TD MSc FInstP CEng FIEE FIMechE
Delphi Maresfield Park
Uckfield East Sussex TN22 2HB
(Uckfield 4949 STD 0825 4949)

HON TREASURER J B Bennett
Fairways East Mersea
Colchester Essex CO5 8UW
(West Mersea 3247 STD 020 638 3247)

COMMITTEE F T K Woodworth
Major A G Coulson (AM)
Vacancies

* * * * * * *

The GALLIPOLIAN format

The small-type pages introduced in numbers 18 and 19 seem to have been favourably received by most members on account of the increased reading matter per page. However, some members find it trying and so for this issue, the old full-size type has been used, pending a discussion on the matter at the AGM.

LUNCHEON Thursday 22nd April 1976

This will be at the Duke of York's Headquarters, Kings Road, Chelsea, SW3, near Sloane Square. Underground routes to Sloane Square station. Bus routes 11, 19 and 222 pass the gates. Ample room for cars. Members are asked to wear their Association ties, if in possession. It is helpful for ready identification if members wear a small card on the lapel bearing their name and former unit. This can be worn above the medals or miniatures. As normal practice.

The cost will be 80 pence, payable at the table. Drinks will be obtainable at the bar from 12 noon, payable in cash.

APPLICATIONS: Please write to the HONORARY SECRETARY if you intend to be present. This is necessary for catering purposes, otherwise some members may not find seats although having booked. DO NOT send any money with the application. Subscriptions must be up to date for 1976. When writing, please write legibly in BLOCK LETTERS and give your number to avoid mistakes.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will follow the luncheon and members are welcome even if they do not come to the luncheon.

The Minutes of the last A G M were circulated last autumn and will be taken as read. Reports will be given and members may raise any matter pertaining to the Association on giving 14 days notice in writing so that the Committee may give consideration.

The two functions give an opportunity for members to foregather and meet old pals and make new ones.

ANNUAL DINNER

As already notified, this will take place on the 7th October at the Royal Air Force Club and details will be given in number 21, Autumn 1976.

GALLIPOLI BOYS GROW UP

A member on sending in a typed manuscript added that he had 'borrowed my great-granddaughter's typewriter.'

ANZAC DAY PARADE AT THE CENOTAPH 25 April

This parade is organized by the Anzacs and as usual they kindly invite our Members to attend. A wreath will be laid on behalf of the Association. Members attending should be present at the Cenotaph by 10.45, looking for the marker. Medals and Association ties should be worn if possible.

As the 25th is a Sunday this year it is not practicable to meet at the Duke of York's for lunch, hence the luncheon and AGM being held on the 22nd.

It is not necessary to notify the honorary secretary of your intention to parade.

NEW MEMBERS (Up to 1 March 1976)

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 (at 1 March 1976)

With deep regret the following names are recorded :

Col R H Sayer OBE DCM RFA (251)
J Whitelaw 8 Scottish Rifles (147)
G A Shephard Dorset Y (202)
Sqn-Ldr A N Stratton 2/4 Queens R (474)
H F Goodwin RNAS (226)
B H A Eames Q O Dorset R (341)
W C Clark 3 Lon RF & R Dublin Fus (576)
Capt J Scott Underwood City of Lon Y (87)
W W Aumonier RAMC (265)
C J Brand RE & Essex R (629)
J E Pettit Suffolk Y (303)

Erratum: The obituary notice in number 19 referring to Major Whittall (240) is an error. It should refer to another member of the family who is not a member. (With apology for the error)

NON-MEMBER RECIPIENTS OF THE GALLIPOLIAN

It is gratifying to know that a number of ladies are interested in receiving the Gallipolian regularly. These are mainly widows of members, sisters of members or just well-wishers who know something of the campaign and wish to keep in touch.

All pay £1 per annum and although this may appear to be a lot of money for such a small weight of material, evidently they feel it worth while and they are contributing to our funds so we are very grateful. They do not constitute a new class of membership.

WANTED - Your Experiences

Although the GALLIPOLIAN is fairly well stocked for main articles by established authors for the foreseeable future, there is a need for short articles of a personal nature from members, giving their own experiences at particular times and places. The sort of thing that takes up perhaps a quarter or half a page which can be fitted in between longer articles. The merit of this is that after reading a long article it is restful to the mind to be diverted by a fellow-member's personal account of what appears to be a simple affair not worth writing about - until the story is read and appreciated. As before, sorry no money in it, and preferably written very legibly (or typed) and on one side of the paper if possible.

MONEY FOR (Plum and Apple) JAM

You may yet make some money out of your old Gallipoli diary if you have not already done so.

In February Phillips the auctioneers in London were able to realise £300 on the sale of two diaries, one on Gallipoli in 1915 and the other on the Western Front in 1916. The diaries covered about 25 thousand words and were written by Private Horace Bruckshaw of the Royal Marines. The name of the buyer was undisclosed but the Royal Marine Museum was the runner-up. No further information is available here and interested members should approach a bookseller or an auctioneer dealing with books direct. The books raised double the estimated value. We are indebted to Fred Woodworth for this information. E H W B

OUR GALLIPOLI TIE

On occasions members meet for the first time by recognizing the tie worn by both of them. Accounts can be of interest and the editor invites such stories for publication. One such case occurred a year or two ago. General Aran, our Turkish Honorary Member who was so helpful to us on our 1971 Tour, was in England on holiday with his wife. It was arranged that he and his wife, the President and his wife, and the chairman and his wife would meet for lunch at the President's club. Brigadier Rackham and General Aran had not met before and it so happened that they, the four of them, travelled to the West End on the same bus. After some preliminary glances they spoke and found that not only were they connected with the Gallipoli Association but were actually on their way to meet each other !

PRICE INCREASE: With regret, the price has had to be raised to £1.10.

Rejuvenation: Many members may not be aware that our tie is made of a material which is readily washable in warm water and a little soap powder, then ironing while still damp with a cloth on top of the tie.

PAYMENTS TO THE ASSOCIATION

When sending subscriptions and other moneys, please make cheques payable to the GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION, not to named individuals. When sending postal orders, please cross them for payment through a bank. Do not make them payable to an individual and do not enter the name of a Post Office

* * * *

A nice young officer came back from Gallipoli to hospital. A kind aunt sent him her good wishes for an early recovery, together with a present - a bottle of cherries in brandy. He was well brought up to acknowledge gifts by appreciating that a gift should be regarded as a kind thought, rather than for its practical use. So he wrote to thank, including 'thank you for your kind thought, not only for the cherries but for the spirit in which they were sent!.'

EXTRACT FROM 'LOST ENDEAVOUR'

By Charles Watkins 6 Lan Fus 42 Div (167)

THE BAPTISM

From the moment we set foot ashore we felt the strangeness and magnitude of the task. Unlike our brothers of the glorious 1st Battalion, we were not battle-trained. The narrow beaches were swept continuously by shrapnel fire, taking a heavy toll of us at first. I will admit we wilted a bit under our first baptism of fire. This was not at all like we had been led to expect in war.

The psychological shock was profound.

Back in Egypt our training had consisted of long gruelling marches in the desert, open-order skirmishing, followed invariably by a fixed-bayonet charge at a non-existent and mythical enemy. None of us had ever heard a shot fired in anger, much less been on the receiving end of a bursting shell. It was like landing a bunch of tough Boy Scouts on a battlefield. The heavy staccato of enemy machine gun fire didn't sound a bit like the more ladylike cracks of the blank cartridges we had fired with such enthusiasm in our mock skirmishing. But worst of all was the low raking fire of the shrapnel which tore holes in our ranks. There was consequently indescribable confusion, quite a bit of panic, and after the first shock we did what we should have done in the first place - what we should have been told to do before landing - dodged for whatever shelter we could find in the lee of the low cliffs, and crouching behind every stone and blade of grass. Looking back, I am astonished that none of us had been given the least guidance from higher authority of what to expect of what to do. Presumably we were just to land - and the rest was up to the Almighty to sort out. This lack of planning, lack of direction, became for me all too evident as the campaign developed. Or maybe I didn't see enough of the larger picture. I dunno. Matters weren't improved by the supporting guns of the ships firing on too low a sight. To be caught between enemy guns and your own is an experience that would unnerve the stoutest soldier. I have a vivid recollection of our

Battalion Commander, Lord Rochdale, harassed and shaken - but not more shaken that I was - wondering how to tell the ships to lengthen their range. A rumbustious type of Lord of the old school, this Lord Rochdale, whose full figure and florid complexion was already showing the strains of the Mediterranean heat. I was a lean rangy type of youth myself and the heat didn't bother me none. Eventually I found a battalion signaller and brought him along to our Battalion Commander. I often wonder if this pathetic little 'flag-waggler' ever managed to get his shaky message through to the ships, or was it just coincidence that the ships' guns mercifully lifted their sights soon after.

A great bloke - this Battalion Commander of ours - veteran himself of the South African war, where - when he was then a mere Sir George Kemp, and before he became 'His Lordship' - he had commanded a troop of local yeomanry. I was too young to see the return of those yeomanry in those more picturesque war days, but they tell me that as they rode through the town on their return, sun-burnt, slouch-hatted, clattering hooves, and sheathed sabres swinging from the saddle - they tell me it was a sight fit to bust your heart with jingoistic fervour. But of the realities of the present campaign he was as ignorant as the Generals above him in rank. Still, I'll not hear a word said against him. He did his best, and his ignorance of the existing war conditions was no more than many of his superiors.

Whenever I think of this particular Lord, I am always reminded of a meeting my father took me to when I was quite a youngster, just to hear this, then Sir George Kemp, address it. After his long and well received speech about something or other - blest if I remember what it was all about - probably something political - anyway, it's not important. But what I do remember vividly is the anecdote he told at the end of it to illustrate some point he was making. A story about the interment of some cowboy who had bitten the dust in some saloon gun brawl. His mates were searching their hearts for some virtue or other to write on the rough wooden cross over his grave, as was the custom, Western fashion. But search as they

would, they couldn't in all honesty recall one single virtue of the deceased to scrawl on the bit of biscuit - box wood from which the rough cross was fashioned. He was a wife-beater, a drunkard, horse thief, bank robber, rustler - in fact, everything a decent cowboy didn't ought to be. But they couldn't send him on his last round-up without some word of praise. Finally, they settled on: 'He dun his damndest - Angels could do no more'.

In war, there's all sorts of soldiers, good soldiers, bad soldiers, but most of us twixt and between. You might think of a better epitaph for any one of them - but I'm blest if I can.
Gawd ! the way these old soldiers do natter on. At this rate it'll be 100 years before I get this book finished. But I'd be a right surly dog if I let this moment pass without some tribute to a beloved Battalion Commander.

'Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said
We are the ones he loved and led,
A few still alive - but most of us dead.'

Maybe it is that a Territorial Unit such as ours feels a closer attachment to its Commanding Officer than does a Regular unit. CO's of regular units tend to get posted away to other units. A CO of a Territorial Unit like ours was the same CO we had in peacetime, as well as in wartime. We went abroad with him as a close-knit town unit. Our comrades were the same boys we had played with as kids, grown up with, worked with and scrapped with. So it's natural we should all feel tightly attached. And the CO himself was, as one of our chaps said - 'one of us, like - a chap from the same town'.

Beloved in war by his gang of boy soldiers. Beloved, too, in the days before the war, by our fathers. They - these older chaps - our dads, loved him mainly because he was all that tradition said a real live Lord should be - 'hail-fellow-well-met', flamboyant, goodhearted, 100% for King, country and the British Empire (and to Hell with all Wogs). In appearance bucolic, smiling or stern as occasion demanded, a good employer, a healthy 'port wine' complexion, and with a nice sense of the dramatic - even to

the distinctive red or white carnation he always wore in his button hole as he was driven daily to his woollen mills - Kelsall & Kemp - in the centre of the town - in open landau drawn by two high stepping horses. Hats would be touched respectfully as he passed and if you happened to be the lucky one, he acknowledged by an old-fashioned and courteous lifting of his hat - well - you'd be boasting about it all night in your favourite pub.

The hard-baked, hard-swearing, hard-drinking numerous navvies would straighten their toilsome backs as he passed, and smile happily as they touched their forelocks. They adored him - these hard-drinking navvies and claimed him as one of their own. 'One of the lads' they dubbed him. Maybe, too, they adored him because he was a 'traditional' Lord. Or maybe because he was the reputed author of that scandalous couplet that appeared in our local paper during the height of the town's Temperance campaign. Lasted a whole bloody month, that campaign did, and with lurid posters splashed all over the town on the evils of the Demon Drink. At school, as kids, we sang lustily little songs of the Joys of Total Abstinence. I even remember giving my own father a childish lecture on the evils of drink. 'Beer,' I told him, 'makes your liver get all bloated and swell out.' 'And whisky,' I further informed him, 'makes your liver shrivel up and get all knotted.'

'Will I be all right then, son, if I mix them?' he asked me solemnly. But I didn't know the answer to that one. And, what's more, I mistrusted that owlish twinkle in his eye.

But it was an uncomfortable month for the hardened drinkers - they tended to slouch in at the back doors of the pubs instead of swaggering in via their front glossy portals. I think it was that couplet that restored their self-respect:

'Damn his eyes,
Whoever tries
To rob a poor man
Of his beer.'

'Pure poetry that,' said my Dad - himself an ardent devotee of the product of the Divine Hop.

And this particular Lord was the bloke who was our Battalion

Commander. No wonder we thought ourselves specially privileged. In battle, arrogant and contemptuous of danger - almost as if he thought, 'Damn their temerity - thinking a bullet could hit me - me, of all people,' but always terribly concerned for the safety of his men.

PATROLLING OFF THE PENINSULA

By W G Cave BEM CPO HMS Dublin (457)

Here is another unpublished story on the lines of that published in number 18. It concerns two light cruisers of the Town Class. HMS *Dublin* was heavier in armament and displacement, 8 6-inch guns, 5400 tons and HMS *Dartmouth,* 2 6-inch guns and several 4·7 in. Both ships had top speeds of about 28½ knots but at a pinch could almost touch 30. The date of the following episode was the middle of October 1914, both ships patrolling a few miles off shore, separately and on a line about NE to SW, with HMS *Dublin* on the northern leg and HMS *Dartmouth* on the southern, the whole being to the north of Imbros. The length of each leg was approximately 80 miles. This worked very successfully until one very dark night with no moon, I, at my range-finder (my gunnery rating at the time was range-taker) at about 0200 suddenly thought I could make out some ghostly form of a ship and as I had a very 'handy' habit of thinking aloud, I said to myself I thought it looked like a ship. Captain Kelly, of whom you will read more later, had apparently been dozing in his special deck chair, exclaimed: 'What's he thinking now?' This was his favourite expression on occasions when I would spot, or thought I had spotted something probably miles outside any telescope or binocular range. My nine-foot high-powered range finder had a rubber surrounding faceplate and on these occasions I would keep my eyes glued to the image, real or imagined, so that I would not lose the suspected image. Now to diverge for a moment, my instrument was trained on roughly the port beam and had arrived at a turning point and without taking my eyes off I was instructing my trainer to keep on as I directed, when I blurted out: '*Breslau!* ' Captain Kelly immediately shouted into his voice-pipe to guns and torpedo flat: 'Flood port tube: Out bar: Stand by: All guns A P shell: Load ! ' Up to this point I

was still the only one who had seen anything, but the Yeoman of Signals, Jackie Fisher, had challenged the ghost ship and received no reply. The challenge code was an arrangement on the yard-arms of red, white or green lights with the code changed every four hours.

Now, why I had said: '*Breslau*', the only other light cruiser with four funnels in the Mediterranean, ours or German, was HMS *Dartmouth* and she, to all intents and purposes was, or should have been, 80 miles away doing her turn. Just at this moment I shouted, 'Belay everything'. The gunnery officer had, as soon as Captain Kelly had given the order, said to me, 'What is it, Cave?' Things had moved so quickly and I now had a more distinct view though no-one else had yet. Captain Kelly shouted: 'Good God, what's going on?' I was then able to tell him: 'It's the *Dartmouth*', and at the same time a tiny flicker of a candle-lit boat's signal lamp tappling out in Morse from the bridge of HMS *Dartmouth* identifying herself. She had had a boiler explosion while executing her turn some hours earlier and had the whole of her electrical and wireless transmission put out of action, thus unable to inform us of events; also a wireless silence was automatically observed. Now the actual space of time between my original spotting of the enemy ship and now was just over thirty seconds and to put this on paper describing it has taken me well over an hour to describe.

Why my change of report ? I had, as it turned out, been on the right side, though it was quick thinking; I had just managed to note the low freeboard and the short raking funnels, whereby the *Breslau's* funnels were taller and not so raking. She was luckily still tied up at 'Constant'.

Well, we got close to *Dartmouth* and sent our medical staff over to assist as required. The stokehold crews in the remaining boiler room had now effected such repairs as required and isolated the damaged compartment, then limping back to Mudros. We never saw her again as, apparently, after temporary repairs she went to Malta dockyard for complete repairs. If she came back to the Peninsula again, I guess it was after the *Dublin* was withdrawn from Y Beach in early June, as we were ordered to Brindisi to join a light station cruiser squadron;

the *Marsala, Ninobixio* and Italian destroyers on our first sortie. Well, that was another story, but not Gallipoli.

Now for some explanatory notes, particularly for non-naval 'types'. 95 per cent of warships at that time were coal-burning and very few had alternative means of radio contact. All *Dartmouth's* auxiliary plant was knocked out. HMS *Dublin,* after joining the Italian fleet was torpedoed after a night raid on the now Yugo-Slav coast and we just managed to make our Brindisi base, 80 miles away, make a temporary patch-collision mat and shores, then to Taranto dockyard. After a month of sea trials we were still no good and were ordered to Spezia dockyard for dry-dock and new plating, taking us four months on to early December, still leaking badly and so home to Harland and Wolf's at Belfast for New Year's Eve, 1914-15.

EARLY DAYS OFF CAPE HELLES

By Major H M Whittall RND RE (240)

Perhaps never before has such a large force been landed so far from its base on to well defended hostile beaches. There must have been some 200 ships assembled off the peninsula.

The sea was turmoil, - all around to the horizon transports were coming and going, destroyers rushed in and out, tons of boatloads and barges landing men and materials from the transports to the shore. There was a continuous roar of the guns from the battleships, the whirring of shells overhead, shells bursting on the shore and the never ending rattle of musketry from the land.

The country gradually rose up to Achi Baba and its two wings running down East and West to the Straits and the Aegean. Just to the West of the hill lay Krithia, now a deserted village.

In the afternoon *Q E* steamed out to the West and opened fire with her 15-inch guns. Four flashes, and rolls or smoke poured out from her flanks, a roar of guns, the song of the shells flying through the air and then the thud, thud, as the shell struck the ground and exploded

bursting into flame and throwing up columns of earth, smoke and dust. In the air, all along the line hung the small white puffs of shrapnel and the rattle and crackle of machine gun and rifle fire droned on in endless succession.

Towards evening as it grew dark, everything quietened down as if ships, men and guns were tired out by the racket and din of the day.

Now the island Imbros looked damson blue outlined against the golden red evening sky, so serene and aloof in the distance. On the Asiatic shore the setting sun was reflected from the windows of the deserted houses of Kum Kale and from beyond, Mount Ida, rising up to the sky, looked down austerely on this scene of revelry, wondering what had possessed man to come again after so many years of peace and quiet, to disturb the slumbers of her children lying there at her feet in the fields of troy.

A 'MEDICAL'S' MEMORIES

By F H (Tom) King RAMC 11 CCS 29 Div (640)

We were a very small unit, only 8 Officers and 71 O.R.s, but we were destined to be the only British Casualty Clearing Station at the Cape Helles end of the Peninsula to receive and evacuate all British casualties east of Anzac.

We were a regular unit, composed, as regards the O.R.s, mainly of men who had already seen war service in France or the Far East - Keachow and Tsing Tao - with a few younger ones who, like myself, had enlisted in the first month of the War and after our initial training had been employed on disembarking casualties at Southampton.

Six officers and their batmen, if my memory is correct travelled to Alexandria in comfort, if not luxury, in the *Arcadian* but the rest of us left Aldershot on 16th March 1915, to embark, with all our stores, at Avonmouth on the old steel-decked cargo vessel *City of Edinburgh*.

We shared this ship with the 'details' of the 29th Division, including horse transport and our messdeck, where we ate and slept, the lucky ones in hammocks, the rest on the deck, had an open hatchway from the horse-deck

immediately below. Sea-sickness took a heavy toll of the horses, resulting in 30 or more having to be shot and dumped overboard before reaching Alexandria.

On arrival there, we were as surprised to meet the other members of the unit as they were to see us, since Dame Rumour had it that both vessels had been torpedoed en route.

After Easter at Alexandria came orders to re-embark, travelling rather more comfortably this time in the troop-ship *Dongola*, with - again I rely on my memory - the Essex Regiment.

We lay in Mudros Harbour and at last, on the afternoon of Saturday, 24th April, we were each issued with our Personal Note fromMajor-General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, CB, DSO, to each man of the 29th Division on the occasion of their first going into action together - I still have my copy.

And who that was present will ever forget the sight as each transport steamed out of harbour in the early evening to the cheers of the naval personnel lining the decks of the warships for the final rendez-vous off Gallipoli.

Not much sleep for us that night. In the early hours our complement of infantry were about and by daylight we found ourselves anchored some distance from the *Queen Elizabeth* and with a good view of the battle at W Beach, henceforth to be known as Lancashire Landing, and the *River Clyde* at V Beach.

In the afternoon we got our orders to land and established a very makeshift hospital right under the cliffs on the left or Western side of W Beach. As, throughout the night, we carried the wounded to lighters- we ducked as we passed the only path up from the beach as bullets sang past us to spend themselves with a very audible 'plop' in the water. And we wondered whether dawn would see us still on the beach or pushed off Gallipoli - indeed it was said that at about midnight a staff officer had been clamouring for every man who could use a rifle to go into the front line, but was told by our colonel that every man of our unit was badly needed for the purpose for which he was there. However, when it came to my turn for a couple of hours kip - no more - I had no

difficulty in getting off to sleep stretched out on the sand.

Well, we were still on the beach in the morning and stayed there for some days and I well remember the reception we got when it was decided that we should establish a more permanent hospital above the cliff. The site selected was in full view of Achi Baba and the moment our Jack and Red Cross flag were unfurled, Jacko sent over a couple of shells, very uncomfortably close. Needless to say, it was soon decided that the site was unsuitable and another was chosen over the ridge and immediately above the eastern end of the beach, with the original first line Turkish trench as the boundary. There we ran up our large E P I P tents as wards and bell tents for ourselves, until the afternoon when Jacko managed to riddle all the latter and we took to dug-outs. And there we stayed until December, when we moved up, within sight of Achi Baba this time, so that Jacko could see us until the last of us was evacuated.

THE (FIRST) GREAT WAR FOR CIVILISATION 1914 - 1918

By B W Boddy 2/4 Queen's Royal West Surrey R (111)

As will be known by most of us 'older ones', Britain declared war on Germany (and her allies) on 4th August, 1914.

It took me a whole week to fully realise it ! So, on 11th August 1914 I quit my office boy job without, I regret, giving notice to my employers (having started work March 1914 at 7s 6d a week and rising quickly - by July - to 10s 0d a week with no tax, health or any other deductions - until I got home to mother !).

On August 12th I went to Croydon Barracks (without telling Mother or Dad) and asked to join the Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment. The Recruiting Sergeant said: 'How old are you son ?' I replied, '17, Sir.' He said, 'You're not, you're 18'. I was in fact 16 years and 5 months old but had no intention of arguing with a Sergeant, so replied, 'Sorry, Sergeant, I made a mistake. Yes. I'm 18.' He thereupon signed me in.

But I was not deemed sufficiently trained (or perhaps old

enough) to go with the 4th Battalion The Queens to India in 1914 to relieve the Regulars there for them to come to Europe.

So I, and others, had to wait some months for uniforms and guns. These came about November as I remember and early 1915 along came Japanese rifles (and Lord Kitchener to inspect us in Windsor Great Park).

Our turn came at last in June 1915 when we embarked at Devonport for an 'unknown destination'. After some weeks we were in Alexandria then, early August, we sailed for Gallipoli. (The name now makes me shudder !) We (the 2/4th Battalion Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment) landed, under fire of course - the Turks seemed to resent our arrival !

To show their disapproval, within 12 hours of landing I was being carried on a stretcher back to the beach with shrapnel wounds. I found myself in hospital in Cairo where the wounds healed reasonably quickly.

So, back to Gallipoli early October and to The Queens in the trenches. All fairly quiet for a while except that life was not pleasant at Suvla Bay. There were millions of flies, lice, scorpions, scorpion-spiders, chameleons, centipedes, frogs and crickets incessantly croaking at night with many other crawly creatures. We used to put a few lice in the centre of a piece of notepaper and gamble which would reach the edge first, but then, 'All Hell!' I quote from an article in 'The Gallipolian' of Spring 1973 (the journal of the Gallipoli Association). It is written by Mr M E Gray (Sergeant R A M C, 1/2 Field Ambulance 53rd Infantry Division of which the Queens, with the Sussex, Middlesex and West Kents formed one Brigade):

'Then came a terrific blizzard and we were not prepared for it. In fact we were clothed in drill shorts and tunics. Hundreds of our boys died from exposure, pneumonia, dysentry and other diseases. It was very trying to be in charge of a marquee packed with unconscious men, some badly wounded and to be helpless to do anything useful for them. On several occasions I was on night duty trying to get some warmth and life into frozen limbs and bodies. When we saw that one of the boys was

breathing his last we would call the medical officer. On more than one occasion I have been told, 'Don't worry, Corporal, if he came round he would soon die as he has double pneumonia.' Some of the boys in the shallow trenches got hold of jars of rum, which proved to be the end.'

'Some of the boys' referred to were me and two comrades, huddled together on Lala Baba, a small hill behind the trenches in a so-called dugout. In fact, we just called it a 'scrape-out'. It afforded no protection against the blizzard and we suffered this for three days and nights. (With no rum!). Never heard anything further about my two comrades and later came to the reluctant conclusion that they did not survive.

I did not expect to either until I 'came to life' unexpectedly on a bug-ridden hospital ship en route to Malta. Some kind rescuer (I never discovered who it was) must have carried me hundreds of yards to the beach and got me away. Bless him !

So - Malta and bed for Christmas 1915 and bed for 3 months until some sort of circulation returned to my legs (toes to knees) and hands. Then, convalescence in Malta until thought fit for battle again. Two eggs among 12 of us in the ward in hospital for Christmas Day breakfast. I did not draw one in the 'sweepstake' !

I rejoined the Queen's, then well south of Cairo. (In the lovely hot sun).

But off again to the Suez Canal when we fought on foot all the way across the Sinai Desert via Gaza, Beersheba, Nazareth, Jerusalem, etc., etc., to Beirut and we'd finally beaten the Turks and driven them out of Palestine. This in order to beat Germany's ally and, as it now seems, though we did not know it at the time, to make way for the present occupants, from whom I'm still awaiting a word of thanks. But perhaps that was included when I was demobilised at Wimbledon on my 21st birthday 1919? I think I received (as a Lieutenant as I then was) around £50. My pre-war employers didn't want to know me when I asked to come back to work !

At the risk of boring readers (if any !) may I add that I served in H M Army again 1940-45 in London and Italy - a glutton for punishment - and still suffer mightily at 75 (and 58 years later) with cold feet and hands day and night. No cure, it seems. I've tried everything including battery-operated socks imported from U S A (which didn't work) and the Department of Health and Social Security, but 'no go'.

Consolation ? Yes - we saved civilisation (one of my medals says so!) - or did we ?

The 2/4th Queen's Old Comrades Association, started by Sergeant Harry Mann in 1920 is still going strong though of course many members have 'fallen by the wayside'.

WHAT ABOUT WELFARE ?

By R M Gale (R N D) (113)

Most of the contributions to the Gallipolian have to do with bullets and bangs. We had plenty of these, of course, just as there were flies and smells. So far as I can remember no writer has mentioned WELFARE. Perhaps that is because most of us had never heard of it or expected it. Personally, I never heardthe word. Our canteen on W Beach could rarely supply luxuries. Occasionally a tin of milk, once or twice a few eggs and I seem to remember a solitary tin of sardines.

But what entertainment was there for the rank and file ? No concert parties. No sing-songs. No trips into the town. (What town ?) It would be interesting to hear from members who experienced any sort of relaxation which provided a break in the shell-dodging, fly-swatting monotony.

I recall a Church Service in the middle of July. One Sunday evening a padre arrived in our camp and handed out hymn books to all of us who happened to be around. It was dusk and already too dark to read, but it gave us a nice feeling to hold the books. We had no musical instrument of course, but that was not too important because all the hymns were well known ones and the singing went quite well. We sat around on the parapets and listened to his homely little talk. I do not remember

anything he said and to what denomination he belonged I cannot say. But at least one of his congregation enjoyed that 45-minute service. Perhaps it was because we lived so close to the next world that we were emotional. We ended with 'Abide with Me' and the background of small arms-fire no doubt added to the sincerity of our singing.

On 9th July word came round that Divisional Sports would be held the following day. (Only a crazy mob like the RND would have thought that one up!) However, some of the Section put their names down for various events and the meeting opened at 4 pm on the day appointed. We lined up for the bicycle race which was the first event. I was sadly out of practice and was not placed! Other events included a sack race, wheelbarrow race and some sprints. Unfortunately the Turks were not sportsmen or perhaps they suspected us of training for a new form of attack. After half a dozen shells reasonably near, we had to abandon the Meeting but we had made our point. Whatever that was! There were no casualties but morale had suffered! Officially the events were only postponed until the following Monday. However, Monday proved to be one of those days when witty people used to say that the Johnny had opened a new box of shells and so far as our section was concerned we hardly left our funk-holes.

I remember another occasion in which a padre figured. He rolled up one evening and we gathered round expectantly. He began by saying that the ground on which we stood was famous in ancient history. He went on talking about Helen of Troy, the Wooden Horse, Ulysses and his battles and travels. I was fascinated. Like most boys of my social class I had left school early to earn a living and that lecture opened a new world to me. When I got home I purchased Homer's works - and I can still read them.

INTERLUDE

The Chairman and Honorary Secretary and their wife will be away on holiday for two weeks from 17 May and beyond postal reach

Printed by Promotion House, Edenbridge, Kent