



THIRD SUPPLEMENT

TO

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MONDAY, 10 APRIL, 1916.

War Office,
London, S.W.,
10th April, 1916.

The following despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from General Sir C. C. Monro, K.C.B. :—

Headquarters,
1st Army,
France,
6th March, 1916.

MY LORD,—

I have the honour to submit herewith a brief account of the operations in the Eastern Mediterranean from the 28th October, 1915, on which date I assumed command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, until the 9th January, 1916, when in compliance with your directions, I handed over charge at Cairo to Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Murray, K.C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O.

On the 20th October in London, I received your Lordship's instructions to proceed as soon as possible to the near East and take over the command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force,

My duty on arrival was in broad outline :—

- (a) To report on the military situation on the Gallipoli Peninsula.
- (b) To express an opinion whether on purely military grounds the Peninsula should be evacuated, or another attempt made to carry it.
- (c) The number of troops that would be required,
 - (1) to carry the Peninsula,
 - (2) to keep the Straits open, and
 - (3) to take Constantinople.

Two days after my arrival at Imbros, where the headquarters of the M.E.F. was established, I proceeded to the Peninsula to investigate the military situation. The impressions I gathered are summarised very shortly as follows :—

The positions occupied by our troops presented a military situation unique in history. The mere fringe of the coast line had been secured. The beaches and piers upon which they depended for all requirements in personnel and material were exposed to registered and observed Artillery fire. Our entrenchments

were dominated almost throughout by the Turks. The possible Artillery positions were insufficient and defective. The Force, in short, held a line possessing every possible military defect. The position was without depth, the communications were insecure and dependent on the weather. No means existed for the concealment and deployment of fresh troops destined for the offensive—whilst the Turks enjoyed full powers of observation, abundant Artillery positions, and they had been given the time to supplement the natural advantages which the position presented by all the devices at the disposal of the Field Engineer.

Another material factor came prominently before me. The troops on the Peninsula had suffered much from various causes.

(a) It was not in the first place possible to withdraw them from the shell-swept area as is done when necessary in France, for every corner on the Peninsula is exposed to hostile fire.

(b) They were much enervated from the diseases which are endemic in that part of Europe in the summer.

(c) In consequence of the losses which they had suffered in earlier battles, there was a very grave dearth of officers competent to take command of men.

(d) In order to maintain the numbers needed to hold the front, the Territorial Divisions had been augmented by the attachment of Yeomanry and Mounted Brigades. Makeshifts of this nature very obviously did not tend to create efficiency.

Other arguments, irrefutable in their conclusions, convinced me that a complete evacuation was the only wise course to pursue.

(a) It was obvious that the Turks could hold us in front with a small force and prosecute their designs on Baghdad or Egypt, or both.

(b) An advance from the positions we held could not be regarded as a reasonable military operation to expect.

(c) Even had we been able to make an advance in the Peninsula, our position would not have been ameliorated to any marked degree, and an advance on Constantinople was quite out of the question.

(d) Since we could not hope to achieve any purpose by remaining on the Peninsula, the appalling cost to the nation involved in consequence of embarking on an Overseas Expedition with no base available for the rapid transit of stores, supplies and personnel, made it urgent that we should divert the troops locked up on the Peninsula to a more useful theatre.

Since therefore I could see no military advantage in our continued occupation of positions on the Peninsula, I telegraphed to your Lordship that in my opinion the evacuation of the Peninsula should be taken in hand.

Subsequently I proceeded to Egypt to confer with Colonel Sir H. McMahon, the High Commissioner, and Lieut.-General Sir J. Maxwell, Commanding the Forces in Egypt, over the situation which might be created in Egypt and the Arab world by the evacuation of the Peninsula.

Whilst in Egypt I was ordered by a telegram from the War Office to take command of the

troops at Salonika. The purport of this telegram was subsequently cancelled by your Lordship on your arrival at Mudros, and I was then ordered to assume Command of the Forces in the Mediterranean, east of Malta, and exclusive of Egypt.

Consequent on these instructions, I received approval that the two Forces in the Mediterranean should be designated as follows:—

(a) The original Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, which comprised the Forces operating on the Gallipoli Peninsula and those employed at Mudros and Imbros as the "Dardanelles Army," under Lieut.-General Sir W. Birdwood, K.C.B., etc., with headquarters at Imbros.

(b) The troops destined for Salonika as the "Salonika Army," under Lieut.-General Sir B. Mahon, K.C.B., with headquarters at Salonika.

The Staff of the original M.E.F. was left in part to form the Dardanelles Army, and the remainder were taken to make a General Headquarters Staff for the increased responsibilities now assumed. Other officers doing duty in this theatre with the necessary qualifications were selected, and, with no difficulty or demands on home resources, a thoroughly efficient and adequate Staff was created.

Mudros was selected as being the most suitable site for the establishment of headquarters, as affording an opportunity, in addition to other advantages, of daily consultation with the Inspector General, Line of Communications. The working of the services of the Line of Communications presented difficulties of an unique character, mainly owing to

(a) the absence of pier and wharfage accommodation at Mudros and the necessity of transferring all Ordnance and Engineer Stores from one ship to another;

(b) the submarine danger;

(c) the delay caused by rough weather.

Close association with General Altham was therefore most imperative, and by this means many important changes were made which conduced to greater efficiency and more prompt response to the demands of fighting units.

A narrative of the events which occurred in each of the two Armies is now recorded separately for facility of perusal and reference.

SALONIKA ARMY.

Early in October the 10th Division, under Lieut.-General Sir B. Mahon, K.C.B., was transferred from Suvla to Salonika, and fully concentrated there. The dislocation of units caused by the landing on the Peninsula and the subsequent heavy fighting which occurred prevented this Division being despatched intact. The organisation of the Infantry and the Royal Engineers was not disturbed, but the other services had to be improvised from other Divisions as found most accessible.

The arrival of the 10th Division had been preceded by two French Divisions under General Sarrail, whose Force was subsequently augmented by another Division. These three Divisions were then moved into Serbia under the understanding arranged between the Allies Governments, which was to the effect that the

French Forces were to protect the railway between Krivolak and Véles, and to ensure communication with the Servian Army, whilst the British were to maintain the position from Salonika to Krivolak, and to support the French Right. If communication with the Servian Army could not be opened and maintained, the Allied Forces were to be withdrawn.

With this object, two Battalions of the 10th Division were moved from Salonika on 27th October, and took over the French front from Kosturino to Lake Doiran. The remainder of the Division was sent to Servia on 12th November and following days, and took over the French front eastwards from Kosturino.

The task of moving troops into Servia and maintaining them there presented many difficulties. No road exists from Salonika to Doiran, a few miles of road then obtains, which is followed within a few miles by a track only suitable for pack transport. Sir B. Mahon had therefore to readjust his transport to a pack scale, and was dependent on a railway of uncertain carrying power to convey back his guns and all wheeled traffic in case of a withdrawal, and to supply his troops whilst in Servia.

Very soon afterwards reinforcements commenced to arrive. The disembarkation of these new divisions was an operation which taxed the powers of organisation and resources of the staff at Salonika to the highest degree possible, and it speaks highly for their capacity that they were able to shelter and feed the troops as they arrived.

During November and the early part of December the 10th Division was holding its position in Servia, and the disembarkation of other divisions was proceeding with difficulty.

In order to gain time for the landing of the troops, and their deployment on the positions selected, I represented to General Sarrail and Sir B. Mahon the urgent need of the divisions withdrawing from Servia being utilised as a covering force, and retaining their ground as such until the Forces disembarking were thoroughly in a position to hold their front.

It had been evident for some time that the power of resistance of the Servian Armies was broken, and that the Allied Forces could afford them no material assistance. It was also clear from all information received that the position of our troops was becoming daily more precarious owing to a large German-Bulgarian concentration in the Strumniza Valley. I, therefore, again pressed General Sarrail to proceed with his withdrawal from the positions he was holding. The British Division operating as it was, as the pivot upon which the withdrawal was effected, was compelled to hold its ground until the French Left was brought back.

Before our withdrawal was completed the 10th Division was heavily attacked on the 6th, 7th, and 8th December, by superior Bulgarian Forces. The troops had suffered considerably from the cold in the Highlands of Macedonia, and in the circumstances conducted themselves very creditably in being able to extricate themselves from a difficult position with no great losses. The account of this action was reported by wire to you by General Mahon on the 11th December: no further reference is therefore necessary to this incident.

As soon as I was informed that the 10th Division was being heavily pressed, I directed Sir B. Mahon to send a Brigade up the railway line in support, and to hold another Brigade ready to proceed at short notice. The withdrawal was, however, conducted into Greek territory without further opposition from the Bulgarians.

Meanwhile, the operation of disembarkation at Salonika was being carried out with all possible speed, and the Greek Authorities through their representative from Athens, Colonel Pallis, were informed by me that we intended to proceed to the defensive line selected. This intimation was received in good part by the Greek Generals. They commenced to withdraw their troops further to the East where they did not hamper our plans, and they showed a disposition to meet our demands in a reasonable and friendly spirit.

Whilst dealing with the events above enumerated, I desire to give special prominence to the difficulties to which General Sir B. Mahon was exposed from the time of his landing at Salonika, and the ability which he displayed in overcoming them. The subjoined instances, selected from many which could be given, will illustrate my contention, and the high standard of administrative capacity displayed by the G.O.C. and his Staff:—

(a) From the date on which the 10th Division first proceeded into Servia until the date of its withdrawal across the Greek frontier, personnel, guns, supplies and material of all kinds had to be sent up by rail to Doiran, and onwards by march, motor lorries, limbered waggons and pack animals. This railway, moreover, was merely a single track, and had to serve the demands of the local population as well as our needs. The evacuation of the wounded and sick had to be arranged on similar lines, yet the requirements of the troops were fully satisfied.

(b) The majority of the Divisions were sent without trains to Salonika, most units without first line transport; in spite of this, part of the Force was converted into a mobile condition with very little delay.

(c) The complications presented by the distribution and checking of stores, supplies, ammunition, etc., discharged from ships on to quays, with insufficient accommodation or storehouses, and with crude means of ingress and egress therefrom, and served by a single road which was divided between the French and ourselves, constituted a problem which could only be solved by officers of high administrative powers. I trust, therefore, that full recognition may be given to my recommendation of the officers who rendered such fine service under such arduous conditions.

THE DARDANELLES ARMY.

On my arrival in the Mediterranean theatre a gratifying decline in the high rate of sickness which had prevailed in the Force during the summer months had become apparent. The wastage due to this cause still, however, remained very high.

The Corps Commanders were urged to take all advantage of the improved weather conditions to strengthen their positions by all available means, and to reduce to the last degree

possible all animals not actually required for the maintenance of the troops, in order to relieve the strain imposed on the Naval Transport Service.

During the month of November, beyond the execution of very clever and successful minor enterprises carried out by Corps Commanders with a view to maintaining an offensive spirit in their commands, there remains little to record—except that an increased activity of the Turkish artillery against our front became a noticeable factor.

On the 21st November the Peninsula was visited by a storm said to be nearly unprecedented for the time of the year. The storm was accompanied by torrential rain, which lasted for 24 hours. This was followed by hard frost and a heavy blizzard. In the areas of the 8th Corps and the Anzac Corps the effects were not felt to a very marked degree owing to the protection offered by the surrounding hills. The 9th Corps were less favourably situated, the water courses in this area became converted into surging rivers, which carried all before them. The water rose in many places to the height of the parapets and all means of communications were prevented. The men, drenched as they were by the rain, suffered from the subsequent blizzard most severely. Large numbers collapsed from exposure and exhaustion, and in spite of untiring efforts that were made to mitigate the suffering, I regret to announce that there were 200 deaths from exposure and over 10,000 sick evacuated during the first few days of December.

From reports given by deserters it is probable that the Turks suffered even to a greater degree.

In this period our flimsy piers, breakwaters and light shipping became damaged by the storm to a degree which might have involved most serious consequences, and was a very potent indication of the dangers attached to the maintenance and supply of an army operating on a coast line with no harbour, and devoid of all the accessories such as wharves, piers, cranes and derricks for the discharge and distribution of stores, etc.

Towards the latter end of the month, having in view the possibility of an evacuation of the Peninsula being ordered, I directed Lieutenant-General Sir W. Birdwood, Commanding the Dardanelles Army, to prepare a scheme to this end, in order that all details should be ready in case of sanction being given to this operation.

I had in broad outline contemplated soon after my arrival on the Peninsula that an evacuation could best be conducted by a subdivision into three stages.

The first during which all troops, animals and supplies not required for a long campaign should be withdrawn.

The second to comprise the evacuation of all men, guns, animals and stores not required for defence during a period when the conditions of weather might retard the evacuation, or in fact seriously alter the programme contemplated.

The third or final stage, in which the troops on shore should be embarked with all possible speed, leaving behind such guns, animals and stores needed for military reasons at this period.

This problem with which we were confronted was the withdrawal of an army of a considerable size from positions in no cases more than 300 yards from the enemy's trenches, and its embarkation on open beaches, every part of which were within effective range of Turkish guns, and from which in winds from the south or south-west, the withdrawal of troops was not possible.

The attitude which we should adopt from a naval and military point of view in case of withdrawal from the Peninsula being ordered, had given me much anxious thought. According to text-book principles and the lessons to be gathered from history it seemed essential that this operation of evacuation should be immediately preceded by a combined naval and military feint in the vicinity of the Peninsula, with a view to distracting the attention of the Turks from our intention. When endeavouring to work out into concrete fact how such principles could be applied to the situation of our Forces, I came to the conclusion that our chances of success were infinitely more probable if we made no departure of any kind from the normal life which we were following both on sea and on land. A feint which did not fully fulfil its purpose would have been worse than useless, and there was the obvious danger that the suspicion of the Turks would be aroused by our adoption of a course, the real purport of which could not have been long disguised.

On the 8th December, consequent on your Lordship's orders, I directed the General Officer Commanding Dardanelles Army to proceed with the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac at once.

Rapidity of action was imperative, having in view the unsettled weather which might be expected in the *Ægean*. The success of our operations was entirely dependent on weather conditions. Even a mild wind from the south or south-west was found to raise such a ground swell as to greatly impede communication with the beaches, while anything in the nature of a gale from this direction could not fail to break up the piers, wreck the small craft, and thus definitely prevent any steps being taken towards withdrawal.

We had, moreover, during the gale of the 21st November, learnt how entirely we were at the mercy of the elements with the slender and inadequate means at our disposal by which we had endeavoured to improvise harbours and piers. On that day the harbour at Kephalos was completely wrecked, one of the ships which had been sunk to form a breakwater was broken up, and the whole of the small craft sheltered inside the breakwater were washed ashore. Similar damage was done to our piers, lighters and small craft at Suvla and Anzac.

Lieutenant-General Birdwood proceeded on receipt of his orders with the skill and promptitude which is characteristic of all that he undertakes, and after consultation with Rear-Admiral Wemyss, it was decided, provided the weather was propitious, to complete the evacuation on the night of the 19th-20th December.

Throughout the period 10th to 18th December the withdrawal proceeded under the most auspicious conditions, and the morning of the 18th December found the positions both at Anzac and Suvla reduced to the numbers

determined, while the evacuation of guns, animals, stores and supplies had continued most satisfactorily.

The arrangements for the final withdrawal made by Corps Commanders were as follows:—

It was imperative, of course, that the front line trenches should be held, however lightly, until the very last moment and that the withdrawal from these trenches should be simultaneous throughout the line. To ensure this being done, Lieutenant-General Sir W. Birdwood arranged that the withdrawal of the inner flanks of corps should be conducted to a common embarking area under the orders of the G.O.C., 9th Corps.

In the rear of the front line trenches at Suvla the General Officer Commanding 9th Corps broke up his area into two sections divided roughly by the Salt Lake. In the Southern Section a defensive line had been prepared from the Salt Lake to the Sea and Lala Baba had been prepared for defence, on the left the second line ran from Kara Kol Dagh through Hill 10 to the Salt Lake. These lines were only to be held in case of emergency—the principle governing the withdrawal being that the troops should proceed direct from the trenches to the distributing centres near the Beach, and that no intermediate positions should be occupied except in case of necessity.

At Anzac, owing to the proximity of the trenches to the Beach, no second position was prepared except at Anzac Cove, where a small keep was arranged to cover the withdrawal of the rearmost parties in case of necessity.

The good fortune which had attended the evacuation continued during the night of the 19th-20th. The night was perfectly calm with a slight haze over the moon, an additional stroke of good luck, as there was a full moon on that night.

Soon after dark the covering ships were all in position, and the final withdrawal began. At 1.30 a.m. the withdrawal of the rear parties commenced from the front trenches at Suvla and the left of Anzac. Those on the right of Anzac who were nearer the Beach remained in position until 2 a.m. By 5.30 a.m. the last man had quitted the trenches.

At Anzac, 4 18-pounder guns, 2 5-inch howitzers, one 4.7 Naval gun, 1 anti-aircraft, and 2 3-pounder Hotchkiss guns were left, but they were destroyed before the troops finally embarked. In addition, 56 mules, a certain number of carts, mostly stripped of their wheels, and some supplies which were set on fire, were also abandoned.

At Suvla every gun, vehicle and animal was embarked, and all that remained was a small stock of supplies which were burnt.

Early in December orders had been issued for the withdrawal of the French troops on Helles, other than their artillery, and a portion of the line held by French Creoles had already been taken over by the Royal Naval Division on the 12th December. On the 21st December, having strengthened the 8th Corps with the 86th Brigade, the number of the French garrison doing duty on the Peninsula was reduced to 4,000 men. These it was hoped to relieve early in January, but before doing so it was necessary to give some respite from trench work to the 42nd Division, which was badly in need of a rest. My intention, there-

fore, was first to relieve the 42nd Division by the 88th Brigade, then to bring up the 13th Division, which was resting at Imbros since the evacuation of Suvla, in place of the 29th Division, and finally to bring up the 11th Division in relief of the French. Helles would then be held by the 52nd, 11th and 13th Divisions, with the Royal Naval Division and the 42nd Division in reserve on adjacent islands.

On the 24th December, General Sir W. Birdwood was directed to make all preliminary preparations for immediate evacuation, in the event of orders to this effect being received.

On 28th December your Lordship's telegram ordering the evacuation of Helles was received, whereupon, in view of the possibility of bad weather intervening, I instructed the General Officer Commanding Dardanelles Army to complete the operation as rapidly as possible. He was reminded that every effort conditional on not exposing the personnel to undue risk should be made to save all 60-pounder and 18-pounder guns, 6-inch and 4.5 howitzers, with their ammunition and other accessories, such as mules and A.T. carts, limbered waggons, etc. In addition, I expressed my wish that the final evacuation should be completed in one night, and that the troops should withdraw direct from the front trenches to the beaches, and not occupy any intermediate position unless seriously molested. At a meeting which was attended by the Vice-Admiral and the General Officer Commanding Dardanelles Army, I explained the course which I thought we should adopt to again deceive the Turks as to our intentions. The situation on the Peninsula had not materially changed owing to our withdrawal from Suvla and Anzac, except that there was a marked increased activity in aerial reconnaissance over our positions, and the islands of Mudros and Imbros, and that hostile patrolling of our trenches was more frequent and daring. The most apparent factor was that the number of heavy guns on the European and Asiatic shores had been considerably augmented, and that these guns were more liberally supplied with German ammunition, the result of which was that our beaches were continuously shelled, especially from the Asiatic shore. I gave it as my opinion that in my judgment I did not regard a feint as an operation offering any prospect of success. Time, the uncertainty of weather conditions in the Ægean, the absence of a suitable locality, and the withdrawal of small craft from the main issue for such an operation were some of the reasons which influenced me in the decision at which I arrived. With the concurrence of the Vice-Admiral, therefore, it was decided the Navy should do their utmost to pursue a course of retaliation against the Turkish Batteries, but to refrain from any unusually aggressive attitude should the Turkish guns remain quiescent.

General Sir W. Birdwood had, in anticipation of being ordered to evacuate Helles, made such complete and far-seeing arrangements that he was able to proceed without delay to the issue of the comprehensive orders which the consummation of such a delicate operation in war requires.

He primarily arranged with General Brulard, who commanded the French Forces on the Peninsula, that in order to escape the disadvantages of divided command in the final stage, the French Infantry should be relieved as early as possible, but that their artillery

should pass under the orders of the General Officer Commanding 8th Corps, and be withdrawn concurrently with the British guns at the opportune moment.

On the 30th December, in consequence of the instructions I had received from the Chief of the General Staff to hand over my command at Alexandria to Lieutenant-General Sir A. Murray, who, it was stated, was to leave England on the 28th December, I broke up my Headquarters at Mudros and proceeded with a small staff, comprising representatives of the General Staff, the Quartermaster-General and Adjutant-General branches, on H.M.S. "Cornwallis" to Alexandria. The rest of the Staff were sent on in front so as to have offices in working order when my successor should arrive.

In the meantime the evacuation, following the same system as was practised at Suvla and Anzac, proceeded without delay. The French Infantry remaining on the Peninsula were relieved on the night of the 1st-2nd January, and were embarked by the French Navy on the following nights. Progress, however, was slower than had been hoped, owing to delays caused by accident and the weather. One of our largest horse ships was sunk by a French battleship, whereby the withdrawal was considerably retarded, and at the same time strong winds sprang up which interfered materially with work on the beaches. The character of the weather now setting in offered so little hope of a calm period of any duration, that General Sir W. Birdwood arranged with Admiral Sir J. de Robeck for the assistance of some Destroyers in order to accelerate the progress of re-embarkation. They then determined to fix the final stage of the evacuation for the 8th January, or for the first fine night after that date.

Meanwhile the 8th Corps had maintained the offensive spirit in bombing and minor operations with which they had established the moral superiority they enjoyed over the enemy. On the 29th December the 52nd Division completed the excellent work which they had been carrying out for so long by capturing a considerable portion of the Turkish trenches, and by successfully holding these in the face of repeated counter-attacks. The shelling of our trenches and beaches, however, increased in frequency and intensity, and the average daily casualties continued to increase.

The method of evacuation adopted by Lieutenant-General Sir F. J. Davies, K.C.B., Commanding 8th Corps, followed in general outline that which had proved successful in the Northern Zone. As the removal of the whole of the heavy guns capable of replying to the enemy's artillery would have indicated our intentions to the enemy, it was decided to retain, but eventually destroy, one 6-inch British gun and six French heavy guns of old pattern which it would be impossible to remove on the last night. General Brulard himself suggested the destruction of these French guns.

The first step taken as regards the withdrawal of the troops was the formation of a strong Embarkation Staff and the preparation of positions covering the landings, in which small garrisons could maintain themselves against attack for a short time should the enemy become aware of our intention and follow up the movement.

Major-General the Hon. H. A. Lawrence, commanding the 52nd Division, was selected to take charge of all embarkation operations. At the same time the services of various staff officers were placed at the disposal of the General Officer Commanding, 8th Corps, and they rendered very valuable assistance.

The General Officer Commanding, 13th Division, selected and prepared a position covering Gully Beach. Other lines were selected and entrenched, covering the remainder of the beaches from the sea north of Sedd-el-Bahr to "X" Beach inclusive. Garrisons were detailed for these defences, those at Gully Beach being under the General Officer Commanding, 13th Division, and those covering the remainder of the beaches being placed under the command of a selected Officer, whose headquarters were established at an early date, together with those of the General Officer Commanding, Embarkation, at Corps Headquarters.

As the withdrawing troops passed within the line of these defences they came under the orders of the General Officer Commanding, Embarkation, which were conveyed to them by his staff officers at each beach.

In addition to these beach defences four lines of defence were arranged, three being already in existence and strongly wired. The fourth was a line of posts extending from De Tott's Battery on the east to the position covering Gully Beach on the west.

The time fixed for the last parties to leave the front trenches was 11.45 p.m., in order to permit the majority of the troops being already embarked before the front line was vacated. It was calculated that it would take between two and three hours for them to reach the beaches, at the conclusion of which time the craft to embark them would be ready.

The Naval arrangements for embarkation were placed in the hands of Captain C. M. Staveley, R.N., assisted by a staff of Naval officers at each place of embarkation.

On the 7th January the enemy developed heavy artillery fire on the trenches held by the 13th Division, while the Asiatic guns shelled those occupied by the Royal Naval Division. The bombardment, which was reported to be the heaviest experienced since we landed in April, lasted from noon until 5 p.m., and was intensive between 3 p.m. and 3.30. Considerable damage was done to our parapets and communication trenches, and telephone communications were interrupted. At 3.30 p.m. two Turkish mines were sprung near Fusilier Bluff, and the Turkish trenches were seen to be full of men whom their officers appeared to be urging to the assault. No attack, however, was developed except against Fusilier Bluff, where a half-hearted assault was quickly repulsed. Our shortage of artillery at this time was amply compensated for by the support received from fire of the supporting squadron under Captain D. L. Dent, R.N. Our casualties amounted to 2 officers and 56 other ranks killed, and 4 officers and 102 other ranks wounded.

The 8th January was a bright, calm day, with a light breeze from the south. There was every indication of the continuance of favourable conditions, and, in the opinion of the Meteorological Officer, no important change

was to be expected for at least 24 hours. The Turkish artillery were unusually inactive. All preparations for the execution of the final stage were complete.

The embarkation was fixed at such an hour that the troops detailed for the first trip might be able to leave their positions after dark. The second trip was timed so that at least a greater portion of the troops for this trip would, if all went well, be embarked before the final parties had left the front trenches. The numbers to be embarked at the first trip were fixed by the maximum that could be carried by the craft available, those of the second trip being reduced in order to provide for the possibility of casualties occurring amongst the craft required to carry them.

The numbers for the third trip consisted only of the parties left to hold front trenches to the last, together with the garrisons of the beach defences, the Naval and Military beach personnel and such R.E. personnel as might be required to effect the necessary repairs to any piers or harbour works that might be damaged.

About 7 p.m. the breeze freshened considerably from the south-west, the most unfavourable quarter, but the first trip, timed for 8 p.m., was despatched without difficulty. The wind, however, continued to rise until, by 11 p.m., the connecting pier between the hulks and the shore at "W" Beach was washed away by heavy seas, and further embarkation into destroyers from these hulks became impracticable. In spite of these difficulties the second trips, which commenced at 11.30 p.m., were carried out well up to time, and the embarkation of guns continued uninterrupted. Early in the evening reports had been received from the right flank that a hostile submarine was believed to be moving down the Straits, and about midnight H.M.S. "Prince George," which had embarked 2,000 men, and was sailing for Mudros, reported she was struck by a torpedo which failed to explode. The indications of the presence of a submarine added considerably to the anxiety for the safety of the troop carriers, and made it necessary for the Vice-Admiral to modify the arrangements made for the subsequent bombardment of the evacuated positions.

At 1.50 a.m., Gully Beach reported that the embarkation at that beach was complete, and that the lighters were about to push off, but at 2.10 a.m. a telephone message was received that one of the lighters was aground and could not be refloated. The N.T.O. at once took all possible steps to have another lighter sent in to Gully Beach, and this was, as a matter of fact, done within an hour, but in the meantime at 2.30 a.m. it was decided to move the 160 men, who had been relanded from the grounded lighter, to "W" Beach and embark them there.

From 2.40 a.m. the steadily increasing swell caused the N.T.O. the greatest anxiety as to the possibility of embarking the remainder of the troops if their arrival was much deferred.

At 3.30 a.m. the evacuation was complete, and abandoned heaps of stores and supplies were successfully set on fire by time fuzes after the last man had embarked. Two magazines of ammunition and explosives were also successfully blown up at 4 a.m. These conflagrations were apparently the first intimation received by the Turks that we had withdrawn.

Red lights were immediately discharged from the enemy's trenches, and heavy artillery fire opened on our trenches and beaches. This shelling was maintained until about 6.30 a.m.

Apart from four unserviceable fifteen-pounders which had been destroyed earlier in the month, 10 worn-out fifteen-pounders, 1 six-inch Mark VII. gun, and 6 old heavy French guns, all of which were previously blown up, were left on the Peninsula. In addition to the above, 508 animals, most of which were destroyed, and a number of vehicles and considerable quantities of stores, material, and supplies, all of which were destroyed by burning, had to be abandoned.

It would have been possible, of course, by extending the period during which the process of evacuation proceeded to have reduced the quantity of stores and material that was left behind on the Peninsula, but not to the degree that may seem apparent at first sight. Our chances of enjoying a continuity of fine weather in the *Ægean* were very slender in the month of January; it was indeed a contingency that had to be reckoned with that we might very probably be visited by a spell of bad weather which would cut us off completely from the Peninsula for a fortnight or perhaps for even longer.

Supplies, ammunition and material to a certain degree had therefore to be left to the last moment for fear of the isolation of the garrison at any moment when the evacuation might be in progress. I decided therefore that our aim should be primarily the withdrawal of the bulk of the personnel, artillery and ammunition in the intermediate period, and that no risks should be taken in prolonging the withdrawal of personnel at the final stage with a view to reducing the quantity of stores left.

The entire evacuation of the Peninsula had now been completed. It demanded for its successful realisation two important military essentials, viz., good luck and skilled disciplined organisation, and they were both forthcoming to a marked degree at the hour needed. Our luck was in the ascendant by the marvellous spell of calm weather which prevailed. But we were able to turn to the fullest advantage these accidents of fortune.

Lieutenant-General Sir W. Birdwood and his Corps Commanders elaborated and prepared the orders in reference to the evacuation with a skill, competence and courage which could not have been surpassed, and we had a further stroke of good fortune in being associated with Vice-Admiral Sir J. de Robeck, K.C.B., Vice-Admiral Wemyss, and a body of Naval Officers whose work remained throughout this anxious period at that standard of accuracy and professional ability which is beyond the power of criticism or cavil.

The Line of Communication Staff, both Naval and Military, represented respectively by Lieutenant-General E. A. Altham, C.B., C.M.G., Commodore M. S. FitzMaurice, R.N., principal Naval Transport Officer, and Captain E. V. Simpson, R.N., Superintending Transport Officer, contributed to the success of the operation by their untiring zeal and conspicuous ability.

The members of the Headquarters Staff showed themselves, without exception, to be officers with whom it was a privilege to be associated; their competence, zeal and devotion

to duty were uniform and unbroken. Amongst such a highly trained body of officers it is difficult to select and discriminate. I confine myself, therefore, to placing on record the fine services rendered by—

Colonel (temporary Major-General) Arthur Lynden Lynden-Bell, C.B., C.M.G., Chief of General Staff, G.H.Q.;

Colonel (temporary Major-General) Walter Campbell, C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Quartermaster-General, G.H.Q., M.E.F.;

Lieutenant-Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) W. Gillman, C.M.G., D.S.O., Brigadier-General, General Staff;

Brevet Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) G. P. Dawnay, D.S.O., M.V.O., General Staff;

and whilst bringing to notice the names of these officers to whom I am so much indebted, I trust I may be permitted to represent the loyal, cordial, and unswerving assistance rendered by General J. M. J. A. Brulard, Commanding the French Troops in the Peninsula.

Before concluding this inadequate account of the events which happened during my tenure of command of the Forces in the Eastern Mediterranean, I desire to give a brief explanation of the work which was carried out on the Line of Communications, and to place on record my appreciation of the admirable work rendered by the officers responsible for this important service.

On the Dardanelles Peninsula it may be said that the whole of the machinery by which the text-books contemplate the maintenance and supply of an army was non-existent. The zone commanded by the enemy's guns extended not only to the landing places on the Peninsula, but even over the sea in the vicinity.

The beaches were the advanced depôts and refilling points at which the services of supply had to be carried out under artillery fire. The landing of stores as well as of troops was only possible under cover of darkness.

The sea, the ships, lighters and tugs took, in fact, the place of railways and roads, with their railway trains, mechanical transport, etc., but with this difference, that the use of the latter is subject only to the intervention of the enemy, while that of the former was dependent on the weather.

Between the beaches and the Base at Alexandria, 800 miles to the south, the Line of Communications had but two harbours, Kephalos Bay on the island of Imbros, 15 miles roughly from the beaches, and Mudros Bay, at a distance of 60 miles. In neither were there any piers, breakwaters, wharves or store houses of any description before the advent of the troops. On the shores of these two bays there were no roads of any military value, or buildings fit for military usage. The water supply at these islands was, until developed, totally inadequate for our needs.

The Peninsula landing places were open beaches. Kephalos Bay is without protection from the north, and swept by a high sea in northerly gales. In Mudros Harbour, transshipments and disembarkations were often seriously impeded with a wind from the north or south. These difficulties were accentuated by the advent of submarines in the Ægean Sea, on account of which the Vice-Admiral deemed it necessary to prohibit any transport or store

ship exceeding 1,500 tons proceeding north of Mudros, and although this rule was relaxed in the case of supply ships proceeding within the netted area of Suvla, it necessitated the transshipment of practically all reinforcements, stores and supplies—other than those for Suvla—into small ships in Mudros Harbour.

At Suvla and Anzac, disembarkation could only be effected by lighters and tugs, thus for all personnel and material there was at least one transshipment, and for the greater portion of both two transshipments.

Yet notwithstanding the difficulties which have been set forth above, the Army was well maintained in equipment and ammunition. It was well fed, it received its full supply of winter clothing at the beginning of December. The evacuation of the sick and wounded was carried out with the minimum of inconvenience, and the provision of hospital accommodation for them on the Dardanelles Line of Communication and elsewhere in the Mediterranean met all requirements.

The above is a very brief exposition of the extreme difficulties with which the officers responsible were confronted in dealing with a problem of peculiar complexity. They were fortunate in being associated in their onerous and anxious task with a most competent and highly trained Naval Staff. The members of the two Staffs worked throughout in perfect harmony and cordiality, and it was owing to their joint efforts that the requirements of the troops were so well responded to.

In accordance with the instructions received from your Lordship by telegram on 10/1/16, I had the honour of telegraphing the names of the undermentioned Officers who rendered most valuable and distinguished service in connection with the evacuation of Gallipoli, to be specially submitted for His Majesty's gracious consideration for promotion and reward, viz. :—

Colonel (temporary Major-General) Arthur Lynden Lynden-Bell, C.B., C.M.G., Chief of General Staff, G.H.Q., M.E.F.

Colonel (temporary Major-General) Walter Campbell, C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Quartermaster-General, G.H.Q., M.E.F.

Lieutenant-General Sir William Riddell Birdwood, K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., C.B., C.I.E., D.S.O., Commander, Dardanelles Army.

Major - General (temporary Lieutenant-General) Edward Altham Altham, C.B., C.M.G., Inspector-General of Communications, M.E.F.

Major - General (temporary Lieutenant-General) Hon. Sir Julian Hedworth George Byng, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.V.O., Commander, 9th Army Corps.

Major - General (temporary Lieutenant-General) Sir Alexander John Godley, K.C.M.G., C.B., Commander, A. and N.Z. Army Corps.

Major - General (temporary Lieutenant-General) Sir Francis John Davies, K.C.B., Commander, 8th Army Corps.

Brevet Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) George Fletcher MacMunn, D.S.O., R.A., D.A. and Q.M.G., Dardanelles Army.

Lieutenant - Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) Hamilton Lyster Reed, V.C.,

C.M.G., R.A., Brigadier-General, General Staff, 9th Army Corps.

Lieutenant - Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) Cyril Brudenel Bingham White, R.A., D.S.O., Brigadier-General, General Staff, Anzac.

Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) Robert John Tudway, C.B., D.S.O., D.A. and Q.M.G., 8th Army Corps.

Brevet Colonel (temporary Brigadier-General) Harold Edward Street, R.A., Brigadier-General, General Staff, 8th Army Corps.

Major (temporary Brigadier-General) Arthur George Preston McNalty, A.S.C., Acting D.A. and Q.M.G., 9th Army Corps.

Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Cecil Faber Aspinall, Royal Munster Fusiliers, Acting Brigadier-General, General Staff, Dardanelles Army.

ROYAL NAVY.

Captain F. H. Mitchell, D.S.O., R.N., Naval Adviser at G.H.Q., M.E.F.

Captain Edwin Unwin, R.N., V.C., attached to Headquarters, Dardanelles Army.

FRENCH ARMY.

J. M. J. A. Brulard, Général de Division, Grand Officier de la Legion d'Honneur.

In the course of a few days I propose to forward recommendations for gallant and distinguished conduct performed by officers and men in the period under reference.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's most obedient
Servant,

C. C. MONRO,
General.

