

THE FATE OF LITTLE KARABURNOU

By Pte STUART MARTIN

WE of "The Fifth" had grown to love Little Karaburnou. The very name "Little" conveyed a subtle, loveable charm. It was as if the petit fort at the end of the bluff was a fragile thing; something that needed to be cared for; something to be handled tenderly, intimately, as one would handle and love all little things.

We could stand at the end of the main road between the lines of the hospital and look across the slightly undulating ground towards the little fort which flashed back the sun's rays from its red brick walls. It had become "our" fort in imagination. It was barely half a mile from us. **LITTLE** Karaburnou! And this is the first true story of its fate. **OUR** Little Karaburnou.

In those days the Greek Royalist soldiers swaggered over its rough parade ground or loitered on the sward beside its walls. They took little, and even then a sort of supercilious, interest in us or our allies. Then the Revolution and the Venizelist Party came to town and set up their National Defence Committee. The Greeks at the fort ceased to swagger.

The capture of the fort by the newcomers was accomplished in a day and a night. They came one day in August after evening fell and startled our guard tent considerably during that night by bumming coffee at frequent intervals till dawn broke. In the morning we saw Cretans, in their skin-tight, abnormal pants, gathered together in hushed groups down by the sea front; and their comrades had entrenched themselves in the ditch that runs round the French sentries who didn't exactly know what to do with them. "We are Venizelists", the Cretans told us proudly. "We are fighting with the French and we are going to take that fort." Thus was the news broken to us that we were to see real war. They gave a victorious rustle and wave to their pants as they spoke, which clearly indicated that they were devils at taking forts.

Officers, Nursing Sisters, and the hospital staff came out to see the war. There was even some undignified scrambling to get a good view; it was quite like the real, kinematographic thing. Then about 200 Cretans took up their station outside our "S" wards.