



This is a sample of the almost back-to-the-savage methods of fighting at the Dardanelles, as described in Sir Ian Hamilton's report. Australian gunners on Gallipoli, stripped almost naked in the terrific heat, shelling a Turkish battery, from which they are themselves under fire.

ON GRIM GALLIPOLI

Wha We Have We Hold at the Dardanelles

By JAMES JOHNSTON

SINCE March, 1915, Dardanelles Straits and Gallipoli, leading to the Sea of Marmora, and to Constantinople, have been the greatest gamble of the war. Somebody blundered when the allied fleets were sent down there to "force" the passage—without land troops. Who? Some say Churchill—not Fisher. Why? To let out Russian wheat to the Allies and let in munitions to the Russians. Another reason—perhaps Russia was not to have it all her own way in the capture of Constantinople, the dream of Russian occupation since the days of Peter the Great.

Anyway, two months passed, when the Elizabeth and a host of smaller ships from two navies enacted picturesque war, beginning at Seddul Bahr. More theatrical pictures came from the Dardanelles than from either of the two great fronts of battle to the north. Great shells burst on forts that fired back; airships directed the attack; mines burst in the straits, blowing up warships; mine-sweepers went after the mines; submarines both British and German burrowed under the Straits under Marmora, blowing up ship after ship on both sides. And in two months that bombardment of the Dardanelles accomplished less than the nibbling of Joffre's armies against the German trenches.

Somebody had blundered. It was said that Fisher never believed it possible to force the Dardanelles without land troops co-operating with the navy. Churchill resigned as First Lord. Land troops were sent over in May; English, French, Australians and New Zealanders from Egypt—against the devilish Turks officered by Germans in German-built strongholds of all modern description under the cover of rockbound forts made into deadly arsenals by German engineers and gunners. Sir Ian Hamilton landed his troops. It was a deadly job. He spent weeks examining the beaches before he selected the landing places. And the landing of those troops in small boats against the deadliest of fire from the Turks on land, against the fort guns, was one of the greatest feats of daring and management ever set down to the credit of a British General. Sir Ian Hamilton had good commanders under him. He had fine troops; British and French, as good as any on the west front; Australians and New Zealanders, weary of waiting in hot Egypt and anxious to be up and at the Turks or any other enemy, in a part of the world just about as hot and a hundred times more deadly; Senegalese tirailleurs and Gurkhas with their knives; a gallant, motley and daredevil force of men against the worst odds of the whole war—and they knew it. They were engaged in the greatest gamble of the war—and they knew that, also; so did the commanders; so did the War Office and Kitchener; so did the Germans and the Turks.

It is now six months since Hamilton landed his troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Last week he was called home to make a further report. There had been wild guesses as to the date when the Dardanelles would be forced; when Constantinople would be in the hands of the Allies; when Russian wheat would begin to come out and the speculators' price would come tumbling down; when guns and

ammunition would be got in to the Russians and the Russian retreat from Galicia would turn again; when Lemberg and Przemysl would be retaken and Poland would be rid of German armies; when the Balkan States, waiting to see which way the cat jumped, would join the Allies and there would be a solid wall of enemy forces against the Germans and the Turks, and the Turks would get out of Europe.

Six months of pipe dreaming in the world at large; six months of desperate, devilish fighting for the troops on Gallipoli—such fighting as never was done for so long a stretch of time anywhere else in the war. Then Bulgaria kicked over, following the retreat of the Russians from Galicia and Poland. Greece kicked out Venizelos, and Roumania tightened her hold on the fence.

And then, because the Dardanelles looked as though by such methods it might be forced in ten years, it was considered that the first really important failure of the Allies had gone too far to be permitted to go any further without new methods and perhaps new men. It was never hinted that because of a worse failure the Kaiser might withdraw his armies from the western front because he had failed to do what he set out to do. The failure of the Germans to take Paris and the worse failure to take Calais is a worse fiasco than the failure at the Dardanelles. The Kaiser will never get either Paris or Calais. The Allies have not given up hope of forcing the Dardanelles.

The report of Sir Ian Hamilton for the first few months of the land operations on Gallipoli is the story of continuous daredevil deeds. Here is one:

SNIPERS IN TREES.

"Next morning (May 7) we opened with shrapnel upon the enemy's trenches opposite our extreme left, and at 10 a.m. the Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade began the attack. But our artillery had not been able to locate the cleverly sited German machine-gun batteries, whose fire rendered it physically impossible to cross that smooth glacial. Next to the right the 88th Brigade swept forward, and the 15th Royal Scots, well supported by artillery fire, carried the fir trees with a rush.

"This time it was discovered that not only the enfilading machine-guns had made the wood so difficult to hold. Among the branches of the trees Turkish snipers were perched, sometimes upon small wooden platforms. When these were brought down the surroundings became much healthier.

"The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, of the 87th Brigade, were pushed up to support the left of the 88th, and all seemed well, when, at 1.20 p.m., a strong Turkish counter-attack drove us back out of the fir clump.

"At 3 p.m. the Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade again reported they were definitely held up by the accurate cross-fire of batteries of machine-guns concealed in the scrub on the ridge between the ravine and the sea, batteries which also enfiladed the left flank of the 88th Brigade as it endeavoured to advance in the centre. Unless we were to acquiesce in a stalemate the moment for our effort had arrived, and a general attack was ordered for 4.45 p.m., the whole of the 87th Brigade to reinforce the 88th Brigade, and the New Zealand Brigade to support it.

"Despite their exhaustion and their losses the men responded with a will. The whole force, French and British, rose simultaneously and made a rush forward. All along the front we made good a certain amount of

ground, excepting only on our extreme left. For the third time British bayonets carried the fir clump in our centre, and when darkness fell the whole line (excepting always the left) had gained from 200 to 300 yards."

SPARKLE OF BAYONETS.

At first open fighting was the order. The General says:

"The French Corps reported they could not advance up the crest of the spur west of Kereves Dere till further progress was made by the British.

"At 4 p.m. I gave orders that the whole line, reinforced by the 2nd Australian Brigade, would fix bayonets, slope arms, and move on Krithia precisely at 5.30 p.m.

"At 5.15 p.m. the ship's guns and our heavy artillery bombarded the enemy's position for a quarter of an hour, and at 5.30 p.m. the field guns opened a hot shrapnel fire to cover the infantry advance.

"The co-operation of artillery and infantry, in this attack, was perfect, the timing of the movement being carried out with great precision. Some of the companies of the New Zealand regiments did not get their orders in time, but acting on their own initiative they pushed on as soon as the heavy howitzers ceased firing, thus making the whole advance simultaneous.

"The steady advance of the British could be followed by the sparkle of their bayonets until the long lines entered the smoke clouds. The French at first made no move, then, their drums beating and bugles sounding the charge, they suddenly darted forward in a swarm of skirmishers, which seemed in one moment to cover the whole southern face of the ridge of the Kereves Dere.

"Against these the Turkish gunners now turned their heaviest pieces, and as the leading groups stormed the first Turkish redoubt the ink-black bursts of high-explosive shells blotted out both assailants and assailed."

NEARLY THE LIMIT.

How the original idea of open fighting resolved itself into siege warfare of a most active character is outlined in the report:

"On May 11, the first time for eighteen days and nights, it was found possible to withdraw the 29th Division from the actual firing line and to replace it by the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade and by the 42nd Division, which had completed its disembarkation two days previously. The withdrawal gave no respite from shells, but at least the men were, most nights, enabled to sleep.

"The moment lent itself to reflection, and during this breathing space I was able to realize we had now nearly reached the limit of what could be attained by mingling initiative with surprise. The enemy was as much in possession of my numbers and dispositions as I was in possession of their first line of defence; the opposing fortified fronts stretched parallel from sea to straits; there was little scope left now, either at Achi Baba or at Kaba Tepe, for tactics which would fling flesh and blood battalions against lines of unbroken barbed wire. Advances must more and more tend to take the shape of concentrated attacks on small sections of the enemy's line after full artillery preparation.

"Siege warfare was soon bound to supersede manoeuvre battles in the open."

GHURKAS UP A CLIFF.

How the mad Ghurkas crawled hands and knees up a cliff to seize a position was one of the most frantic episodes of the earlier Gallipoli fighting.

"Already, before the new system of local efforts had come into working order, the 29th Indian Brigade had led the way towards it by a brilliant little affair on the night of May 10-11. The Turkish right rested upon the steep cliff north-east of "Y" beach, where the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Plymouth Battalion, Royal Naval Division, had made their first landing. Since those days the enemy had converted the bluff into a powerful bastion, from which the fire of machine guns had held up the left of our attacks.

"During the night of May 10 and 11 the 6th Gurkhas started off to seize this bluff. Their scouts descended to the sea, worked their way for some distance through the broken ground along the shore, and crawled hands and knees up the precipitous face of the cliff. On reaching the top they were heavily fired on. As a surprise the enterprise had failed, but as a reconnaissance it proved very useful."

THE DAREDEVIL ANZACS.

Australians and New Zealanders have done much of the heaviest fighting in the Dardanelles. Australian casualties total up to 29,000. How highly Sir Ian Hamilton valued the fighting qualities of those "warriors from the south" is indicated in the following:

"Turning now to where the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps were perched upon the cliffs of Sari Bair, I must begin by explaining that their role at this stage of the operations was, first, to keep open a door leading to the vitals of the Turkish position; secondly, to hold up as large a body as possible of the enemy in front of them, so as to lessen the strain at Cape Helles. Anzac, in fact, was cast to play second fiddle to Cape Helles, a part out of harmony with the dare-devil spirit animating those warriors from the South, and so it has come about that, as your Lordship will now see, the defensive of the Australians and New Zealanders has always tended to take on the character of an attack.

"The line held during the period under review by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps formed a rough semi-circle inland from the beach of Anzac Cove, with a diameter of about 1,100 yards. The firing line is everywhere close to the enemy's trenches, and in all sections of the position sapping, counter-sapping and bomb attacks have been incessant."

A Big Amateur Photographic Contest will be announced next week. The first prize will be a \$22.50 Kodak.