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THE BATTLE OF  
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OXFORD PAMPHLETS  
1914-1915

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THE BATTLE OF  
YPRES-ARMENTIÈRES

BY  
H. W. C. DAVIS

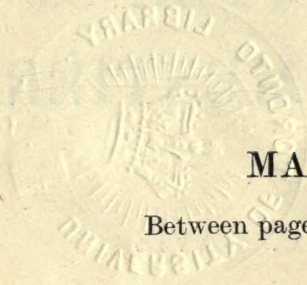
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**MAPS**

Between pages 30 and 31

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## INTRODUCTION

AT the beginning of October, when the battle of the Aisne had subsided into siege operations, the British troops were entrenched upon the line of the Aisne, between Soissons and Villers. On their left were French armies whose front extended in a curve from Soissons through Roye and Albert to a point some miles north of Arras. The German right extended equally far to the north, in a curve which passed west of Douai, Peronne, and Noyon. In the rear of the German right a strong German force was besieging Antwerp, and the situation of the defenders was becoming critical, since both in numbers and in weight of guns they were decidedly inferior to their assailants. It was only to be expected that, when Antwerp had fallen, the besieging army would be pushed forward on the German right to undertake an outflanking movement, and to cut off the Allies from the Channel ports.

Under these circumstances the British naval and military authorities resolved to throw whatever land-forces were available into the northern theatre of operations. The Admiralty dispatched to Antwerp two Naval Brigades and one Brigade of Marines, which arrived on the night of October 3-4; the War Office sent over the Fourth Corps, under Sir Henry Rawlinson, to keep open the line of

retreat from Antwerp to the Yser ; and Sir John French obtained permission from General Joffre to transfer his three Army Corps to the extreme left of the Allied line.

The adventures of the Naval and Marine Brigades are described in the dispatch of Major-General Paris (Appendix). They were in Antwerp for less than a week ; a large number of their men crossed the Dutch frontier on the night of October 8-9, in the course of the retreat, and were interned by order of the Dutch Government. Sir John French is, however, of opinion that this force delayed the enemy for a considerable time ; and, if that opinion is correct, the mission of Major-General Paris was strategically justifiable. The fall of Antwerp occurred at a critical moment, when the three Army Corps which had been on the Aisne were in transit to their new base at St. Omer. It was essential that the advance of the German force from Antwerp should be delayed until the main body of the British Expeditionary Force was in position to receive them. But obviously much more was done to retard the German advance by the retreating Belgian army, by the French Territorials who were pushed forward for this purpose to Ypres and Poperinghe, and by the Fourth Army Corps operating near Antwerp and Ghent. To the gallantry of the Fourth Army Corps and its commander we may fairly give the chief credit for the fact that the German army of Antwerp, a week after the fall of the city, found itself at a standstill to the east of Ypres and Nieuport. The exhausted Belgian army



was relieved, on the line of the Yser, by French forces ; but further to the south, in the gap between the Yser and the Lys, the main burden of defence fell upon the British Fourth Corps, which was already decimated by heavy fighting. Through this gap the Germans hoped to advance upon Calais and Boulogne ; but for four days Sir Henry Rawlinson and the forces under his command succeeded in holding an improvised line of defence against greatly superior forces. The Fourth Corps was posted on the line Zonnebeke—Gheluvelt—Zandvoorde, and this line they successfully held. Sir Henry Rawlinson was instructed to advance, if possible, to Menin—a position six and a half miles from the centre of his front—in order to hold the passage of the Lys at that point. If he had succeeded in doing this, it would have been very difficult for the German troops advancing from Antwerp to co-operate with the right wing of the main German force, which had now been extended from Douai to Lille and Roubaix. But the requisite effort was found impossible. The Fourth Corps had been already taxed almost beyond the limits of human endurance, and it was only able to hold its ground on the line originally selected by Sir Henry Rawlinson.

The order to take Menin was issued on October 17. By this time the removal of the First, Second, and Third Army Corps from the Aisne was almost completed. They were removed by train from Soissons to St. Omer. The French left extended to the village of Annequin, midway between Béthune and La Bassée and south of the La Bassée Canal.

## 6 THE BATTLE OF YPRES-ARMENTIÈRES

The Expeditionary Force was directed to move eastward from St. Omer. The French armies south of Annequin were to operate similarly eastward, keeping pace with the British troops on their left.

The work of detrainment was smoothly accomplished. The Second Army Corps, under Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, was the first to arrive and moved south-east from St. Omer, until it came (October 11) into touch with the French left. Smith-Dorrien was directed to advance south of the river Lys in the direction of La Bassée, where the troops of the extreme German right were entrenched. His corps was to pivot upon Givenchy, to the west of La Bassée, so as to envelop the German right from the north and east. But it was sharply checked at an early stage of the turning movement, and on the night of October 23 retired to the line Givenchy—Fauquissart ; here it remained, terribly exhausted by enormous losses. Its orders were, after October 20, to act on the defensive. Though reinforced on the 19th and the 20th by Indian troops, which did splendid service, it was always outnumbered.

The Third Army Corps, under General Pulteney, was instructed to act on the left of the Second Army Corps. It reached Hazebrouck from St. Omer on October 12 and it then proceeded to move in the direction of Armentières, following the line of the main road through Bailleul. On its right, acting as a link of connexion with the Second Corps, was the French Cavalry Corps of General Conneau. Although operating in enclosed and rain-sodden country, General Pulteney moved forward rapidly,

driving in the cavalry outposts of the enemy ; he carried the line of the river Lys, to the west of Armentières, on October 15. On the three following days he advanced to and beyond Armentières with his forces astride of the river. His orders were to proceed down the valley of the Lys ; but on October 18, finding that the German troops in front of him had been considerably reinforced, he came to a stand on a line which extended from Le Gheir and east of Armentières to a point due west of Lille. On this line General Pulteney held his own in spite of severe counter-attacks ; like Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, he had been ordered to stand on the defensive ; and his resources were strained to the utmost in the last eleven days of October. Sir John French considers that the work of this Corps, operating on an extended front which showed many weak points, was ' beyond all praise '.

Before October 19 the outflanking movements of the Third and Second Corps had been parried by the rapid lengthening of the German line. On that day it became apparent that these corps were themselves in danger of being outflanked by an advance of the enemy through Ypres, where the Fourth Corps was barely holding its own. It is clear that, though Sir John French divined the enemy's true intention, he was not fully informed as to the strength of the German forces which were being concentrated against Ypres. He instructed Sir Douglas Haig, the commander of the First Corps, which had just detrained at St. Omer, to advance to the north-east of Ypres and to operate on the left of the Fourth

Corps ; the direction indicated was Thourout, and the ultimate object of the advance was the recapture of Bruges and Ghent. Sir Douglas Haig moved forward rapidly, and on October 21 was established north-east of Ypres. But he was immediately threatened with a flank attack from the north ; and he found that the remnants of the Fourth Corps were in no condition to support an advance. It was perhaps as well that he remained on the defensive ; for on October 29, 30, and 31 the British troops east of Ypres were exposed to attacks of unprecedented severity. On the last of these three days the attack was executed by no less than three German Army Corps, who had been ordered by the Emperor to break through at all costs.

The story of these days is briefly told in the dispatch. They were as critical as the worst days of the retreat from Mons. The main burden of the defence fell upon the reconstituted First Corps, with which the Fourth Corps was amalgamated, by order of Sir John French, on October 27. Both on the 30th and on the 31st the enemy gained initial successes which might have induced a less stout-hearted commander than Sir Douglas Haig to order a general retirement ; and, if the First Corps had given way, a general *débâcle* of the Expeditionary Force would almost certainly have followed. The crisis was surmounted on October 31, the decisive factor being the recapture of Gheluvelt by the First Division. It was a brilliant feat of arms, accomplished after the Division had once been forced to retire. The 2nd Worcestershire Regiment are men-

tioned by Sir John French for their share in this achievement.

The tenth section of the dispatch refers briefly to the operations of November 1—November 12, when a fresh series of assaults was delivered by the Germans against the First Corps on the British left. It is not clear why this period is so summarily dealt with ; and one is disappointed to find that the narrative breaks off before the battle of November 15, when the Prussian Guard made their advance. It will be noted that Sir John French considers the situation on November 15 to have been even more critical than that of October 31, when everything depended on the recapture of Gheluvelt.

Sir John French calls special attention to the unparalleled feat of the Cavalry Corps in holding a long line of trenches against two German Army Corps for forty-eight hours ; to the extraordinary powers of endurance shown by the Third Corps under General Pulteney in defending an extremely extended line ; and to the excellent work of the Indian Corps round Ypres and in the zone of the Second British Corps. It was in this battle that the Indian troops had the first opportunity of proving their efficiency ; and it will be noticed that they are highly commended by Sir John French.

Clearly the battle made exceptional demands on the endurance of the individual and on the resource of subordinate commanders. Sir John French has occasion to praise many officers and a number of regiments. But it will be long before we know the full details of the heroic achievements with which

the last fortnight of October, 1914, was crowded. We are left with the impression that the enemy possessed the advantage in mobility, in accurate information, in unity of control, and above all in numbers ; but that the marvellous discipline of the British infantry, the accuracy of the British artillery and rifle fire, and the doggedness of the British general officers, retrieved a situation which an umpire in manœuvres would have declared to be hopeless. Undoubtedly the Expeditionary Force owed much to the support of General Conneau's cavalry and of the 9th French Corps. How much, we shall perhaps learn in more detail at some later date.

H. W. C. D.

## THE BATTLE OF YPRES-ARMENTIÈRES

*War Office, November 29th, 1914.*

THE following despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, British Forces in the Field :—

General Headquarters,  
20th November, 1914.

MY LORD,—

1. I have the honour to submit a further despatch recounting the operations of the Field Force under my command throughout the battle of Ypres-Armentières.

### REMOVAL FROM THE AISNE

Early in October a study of the general situation strongly impressed me with the necessity of bringing the greatest possible force to bear in support of the northern flank of the Allies, in order to effectively outflank the enemy and compel him to evacuate his positions.

At the same time the position on the Aisne, as described in the concluding paragraphs of my last despatch, appeared to me to warrant a withdrawal of the British Forces from the positions they then held.

The enemy had been weakened by continual

abortive and futile attacks, whilst the fortification of the position had been much improved.

I represented these views to General Joffre, who fully agreed.

Arrangements for withdrawal and relief having been made by the French General Staff, the operation commenced on the 3rd October ; and the 2nd Cavalry Division, under General Gough, marched for Compiègne *en route* for the new theatre.

The Army Corps followed in succession at intervals of a few days, and the move was completed on the 19th October, when the First Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig, completed its detrainment at St. Omer.

That this delicate operation was carried out so successfully is in great measure due to the excellent feeling which exists between the French and British Armies ; and I am deeply indebted to the Commander-in-Chief and the French General Staff for their cordial and most effective co-operation.

#### NEW PLAN OF OPERATIONS

As General Foch was appointed by the Commander-in-Chief to supervise the operations of all the French troops north of Noyon, I visited his headquarters at Doullens on 8th October and arranged joint plans of operations as follows :—

The Second Corps to arrive on the line Aire-Bethune on the 11th October, to connect with the right of the French 10th Army and, pivoting on its left, to attack in flank the enemy who were opposing the 10th French Corps in front.



The Cavalry to move on the northern flank of the Second Corps and support its attack until the Third Corps, which was to detrain at St. Omer on the 12th, should come up. They were then to clear the front and act on the northern flank of the Third Corps in a similar manner, pending the arrival of the First Corps from the Aisne.

The 3rd Cavalry Division and 7th Division, under Sir Henry Rawlinson, which were then operating in support of the Belgian Army and assisting its withdrawal from Antwerp, to be ordered to co-operate as soon as circumstances would allow.

In the event of these movements so far overcoming the resistance of the enemy as to enable a forward movement to be made, all the Allied Forces to march in an easterly direction. The road running from Bethune to Lille was to be the dividing line between the British and French Forces, the right of the British Army being directed on Lille.

#### OPERATIONS OF THE SECOND ARMY CORPS, OCTOBER 11—OCTOBER 31

2. The great battle, which is mainly the subject of this despatch, may be said to have commenced on October 11th, on which date the 2nd Cavalry Division, under General Gough, first came into contact with the enemy's cavalry who were holding some woods to the north of the Bethune-Aire Canal. These were cleared of the enemy by our cavalry,

which then joined hands with the Divisional Cavalry of the 6th Division in the neighbourhood of Hazebrouck. On the same day the right of the 2nd Cavalry Division connected with the left of the Second Corps, which was moving in a north-easterly direction after crossing the above-mentioned canal.

By the 11th October Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien had reached the line of the canal between Aire and Bethune. I directed him to continue his march on the 12th, bringing up his left in the direction of Merville. Then he was to move East to the line Laventie-Lorgies, which would bring him on the immediate left of the French Army and threaten the German flank.

On the 12th this movement was commenced. The 5th Division connected up with the left of the French Army north of Annequin. They moved to the attack of the Germans who were engaged at this point with the French; but the enemy once more extended his right in some strength to meet the threat against his flank. The 3rd Division, having crossed the canal, deployed on the left of the 5th; and the whole Second Corps again advanced to the attack, but were unable to make much headway owing to the difficult character of the ground upon which they were operating, which was similar to that usually found in manufacturing districts and was covered with mining works, factories, buildings, etc. The ground throughout this country is remarkably flat, rendering effective artillery support very difficult.

Before nightfall, however, they had made some

advance and had successfully driven back hostile counter-attacks with great loss to the enemy and destruction of some of his machine guns.

On and after the 13th October the object of the General Officer Commanding the Second Corps was to wheel to his right, pivoting on Givenchy to get astride the La Bassée-Lille road in the neighbourhood of Fournes, so as to threaten the right flank and rear of the enemy's position on the high ground south of La Bassée.

This position of La Bassée has throughout the battle defied all attempts at capture, either by the French or the British.

On this day Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien could make but little progress. He particularly mentions the fine fighting of the Dorsets, whose Commanding Officer, Major Roper, was killed. They suffered no less than 400 casualties, 130 of them being killed, but maintained all day their hold on Pont Fixe. He also refers to the gallantry of the Artillery.

The fighting of the Second Corps continued throughout the 14th in the same direction. On this day the Army suffered a great loss, in that the Commander of the 3rd Division, General Hubert Hamilton, was killed.

On the 15th the 3rd Division fought splendidly, crossing the dykes, with which this country is intersected, with planks; and driving the enemy from one entrenched position to another in loop-holed villages, till at night they pushed the Germans off the Estaires-La Bassée road, and establishing themselves on the line Pont de Ham-Croix Barbée.

On the 16th the move was continued until the left flank of the Corps was in front of the village of Aubers, which was strongly held. This village was captured on the 17th by the 9th Infantry Brigade ; and at dark on the same day the Lincolns and Royal Fusiliers carried the village of Herlies at the point of the bayonet after a fine attack, the Brigade being handled with great dash by Brigadier-General Shaw.

At this time, to the best of our information, the Second Corps were believed to be opposed by the 2nd, 4th, 7th, and 9th German Cavalry Divisions, supported by several battalions of Jaegers and a part of the 14th German Corps.

On the 18th powerful counter-attacks were made by the enemy all along the front of the Second Corps, and were most gallantly repulsed ; but only slight progress could be made.

From the 19th to the 31st October the Second Corps carried on a most gallant fight in defence of their position against very superior numbers, the enemy having been reinforced during that time by at least one Division of the 7th Corps, a brigade of the 3rd Corps, and the whole of the 14th Corps, which had moved north from in front of the French 21st Corps.

On the 19th the Royal Irish Regiment, under Major Daniell, stormed and carried the village of Le Pilly, which they held and entrenched. On the 20th, however, they were cut off and surrounded, suffering heavy losses.

On the morning of the 22nd the enemy made

a very determined attack on the 5th Division, who were driven out of the village of Violaines, but they were sharply counter-attacked by the Worcesters and Manchesters, and prevented from coming on.

The left of the Second Corps being now somewhat exposed, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien withdrew the line during the night to a position he had previously prepared, running generally from the eastern side of Givenchy, east of Neuve Chapelle to Fauquissart.

On the 24th October the Lahore Division of the Indian Army Corps, under Major-General Watkis, having arrived, I sent them to the neighbourhood of Lacon to support the Second Corps.

Very early on this morning the enemy commenced a heavy attack, but, owing to the skilful manner in which the artillery was handled and the targets presented by the enemy's infantry as it approached, they were unable to come to close quarters. Towards the evening a heavy attack developed against the 7th Brigade, which was repulsed, with very heavy loss to the enemy, by the Wiltshires and the Royal West Kents. Later, a determined attack on the 18th Infantry Brigade drove the Gordon Highlanders out of their trenches, which were retaken by the Middlesex Regiment, gallantly led by Lieutenant-Colonel Hull.

The 8th Infantry Brigade (which had come into line on the left of the Second Corps) was also heavily attacked, but the enemy was driven off.

In both these cases the Germans lost very heavily, and left large numbers of dead and prisoners behind them.

The Second Corps was now becoming exhausted, owing to the constant reinforcements of the enemy, the length of line which it had to defend, and the enormous losses which it had suffered.

OPERATIONS OF THIRD ARMY CORPS,  
OCTOBER 13—OCTOBER 18

3. By the evening of the 11th October the Third Corps had practically completed its detrainment at St. Omer, and was moved east to Hazebrouck, where the Corps remained throughout the 12th.

On the morning of the 13th the advanced guard of the Corps, consisting of the 19th Infantry Brigade and a Brigade of Field Artillery, occupied the position of the line Strazeele Station-Caestre-St. Sylvestre.

On this day I directed General Pulteney to move towards the line Armentières-Wytschaete ; warning him, however, that should the Second Corps require his aid he must be prepared to move south-east to support it.

A French Cavalry Corps under General Conneau was operating between the Second and Third Corps.

The Fourth German Cavalry Corps, supported by some Jaeger Battalions, was known to be occupying the position in the neighbourhood of Meteren ; and they were believed to be further supported by the advanced guard of another German Army Corps.

In pursuance of his orders, General Pulteney proceeded to attack the enemy in his front.

The rain and fog which prevailed prevented full advantage being derived from our much superior

artillery. The country was very much enclosed and rendered difficult by heavy rain.

The enemy were, however, routed ; and the position taken at dark, several prisoners being captured.

During the night the Third Corps made good the attacked position and entrenched it.

As Bailleul was known to be occupied by the enemy, arrangements were made during the night to attack it ; but reconnaissances sent out on the morning of the 14th showed that they had withdrawn, and the town was taken by our troops at 10 a.m. on that day, many wounded Germans being found and taken in it.

The Corps then occupied the line St. Jans Cappel-Bailleul.

On the morning of the 15th the Third Corps were ordered to make good the line of the Lys from Armentières to Sailly, which, in the face of considerable opposition and very foggy weather, they succeeded in doing, the 6th Division at Sailly-Bac St. Maur and the 4th Division at Nieppe.

The enemy in its front having retired, the Third Corps on the night of the 17th occupied the line Bois Grenier-Le Gheir.

On the 18th the enemy were holding a line from Radinghem on the south, through Perenchies and Frelinghien on the north, whence the German troops which were opposing the Cavalry Corps occupied the east bank of the river as far as Wervick.

On this day I directed the Third Corps to move down the valley of the Lys and endeavour to assist the Cavalry Corps in making good its position on

the right bank. To do this it was necessary first to drive the enemy eastward towards Lille. A vigorous offensive in the direction of Lille was assumed, but the enemy was found to have been considerably reinforced, and but little progress was made.

The situation of the Third Corps on the night of the 18th was as follows :

The 6th Division was holding the line Radinghem-La Vallée-Emnetières-Capingham-Premesques-Railway Line 300 yards east of Halte. The 4th Division were holding the line from L'Épinette to the river at a point 400 yards south of Frelinghein, and thence to a point half a mile south-east of Le Gheir. The Corps Reserve was at Armentières Station, with right and left flanks of Corps in close touch with French Cavalry and the Cavalry Corps.

Since the advance from Bailleul the enemy's forces in front of the Cavalry and Third Corps had been strongly reinforced, and on the night of the 17th they were opposed by three or four divisions of the enemy's cavalry, the 19th Saxon Corps, and at least one division of the 7th Corps. Reinforcements for the enemy were known to be coming up from the direction of Lille.

#### OPERATIONS OF CAVALRY CORPS, OCTOBER 11— OCTOBER 19

4. Following the movements completed on the 11th October, the 2nd Cavalry Division pushed the enemy back through Flêtre and Le Coq de Paille, and took Mont des Cats, just before dark, after stiff fighting.



On the 14th the 1st Cavalry Division joined up, and the whole Cavalry Corps under General Allenby, moving north, secured the high ground above Berthen, overcoming considerable opposition.

With a view to a further advance east, I ordered General Allenby, on the 15th, to reconnoitre the line of the River Lys, and endeavour to secure the passages on the opposite bank, pending the arrival of the Third and Fourth Corps.

During the 15th and 16th this reconnaissance was most skilfully and energetically carried out in the face of great opposition, especially along the lower line of the river.

These operations were continued throughout the 17th, 18th, and 19th; but, although valuable information was gained, and strong forces of the enemy held in check, the Cavalry Corps was unable to secure passages or to establish a permanent footing on the eastern bank of the river.

#### OPERATIONS OF FOURTH ARMY CORPS, OCTOBER 16—OCTOBER 20

5. At this point in the history of the operations under report it is necessary that I should return to the co-operation of the forces operating in the neighbourhood of Ghent and Antwerp under Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Rawlinson, as the action of his force about this period exercised, in my opinion, a great influence on the course of the subsequent operations.

This force, consisting of the 3rd Cavalry Division,

under Major-General the Hon. Julian Byng, and the 7th Division, under Major-General Capper, was placed under my orders by telegraphic instructions from your Lordship.

On receipt of these instructions I directed Sir Henry Rawlinson to continue his operations in covering and protecting the withdrawal of the Belgian Army, and subsequently to form the left column in the eastward advance of the British Forces. These withdrawal operations were concluded about the 16th October, on which date the 7th Division was posted to the east of Ypres on a line extending from Zandvoorde through Gheluveld to Zonnebeke. The 3rd Cavalry Division was on its left towards Langemarck and Poelcappelle.

In this position Sir Henry Rawlinson was supported by the 87th French Territorial Division in Ypres and Vlamertinghe, and by the 89th French Territorial Division at Poperinghe.

On the night of the 16th I informed Sir Henry Rawlinson of the operations which were in progress by the Cavalry Corps and the Third Corps, and ordered him to conform to those movements in an easterly direction, keeping an eye always to any threat which might be made against him from the north-east.

A very difficult task was allotted to Sir Henry Rawlinson and his command. Owing to the importance of keeping possession of all the ground towards the north which we already held, it was necessary for him to operate on a very wide front, and, until the arrival of the First Corps in the northern theatre

—which I expected about the 20th—I had no troops available with which to support or reinforce him.

Although on this extended front he had eventually to encounter very superior forces, his troops, both Cavalry and Infantry, fought with the utmost gallantry, and rendered very signal service.

On the 17th four French Cavalry Divisions deployed on the left of the 3rd Cavalry Division, and drove back advanced parties of the enemy beyond the Forêt d'Houthulst.

As described above, instructions for a vigorous attempt to establish the British Forces east of the Lys were given on the night of the 17th to the Second, Third, and Cavalry Corps.

#### FAILURE TO OCCUPY MENIN

I considered, however, that the possession of Menin constituted a very important point of passage, and would much facilitate the advance of the rest of the Army. So I directed the General Officer Commanding the Fourth Corps to advance the 7th Division upon Menin, and endeavour to seize that crossing on the morning of the 18th.

The left of the 7th Division was to be supported by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, and further north by the French Cavalry in the neighbourhood of Roulers.

Sir Henry Rawlinson represented to me that large hostile forces were advancing upon him from the east and north-east, and that his left flank was severely threatened.

I was aware of the threats from that direction,

but hoped that at this particular time there was no greater force coming from the north-east than could be held off by the combined efforts of the French and British Cavalry, and the Territorial troops supporting them, until the passage at Menin could be seized and the First Corps brought up in support.

Sir Henry Rawlinson probably exercised a wise judgement in not committing his troops to this attack in their somewhat weakened condition ; but the result was that the enemy's continued possession of the passage at Menin certainly facilitated his rapid reinforcement of his troops and thus rendered any further advance impracticable.

On the morning of the 20th October the 7th Division and 3rd Cavalry Division had retired to their old position extending from Zandvoord through Kruiseik and Gheluvelt to Zonnebeke.

#### THE SITUATION ON OCTOBER 19

6. On the 19th October the First Corps, coming from the Aisne, had completed its detrainment and was concentrated between St. Omer and Hazebrouck.

A question of vital importance now arose for decision.

I knew that the enemy were by this time in greatly superior strength on the Lys, and that the Second, Third, Cavalry and Fourth Corps were holding a much wider front than their numbers and strength warranted.

Taking these facts alone into consideration it would have appeared wise to throw the First Corps in to strengthen the line ; but this would have left the country north and east of Ypres and the Ypres Canal open to a wide turning movement by the 3rd Reserve Corps and at least one Landwehr Division which I knew to be operating in that region. I was also aware that the enemy was bringing large reinforcements up from the east which could only be opposed for several days by two or three French Cavalry Divisions, some French Territorial troops, and the Belgian Army.

After the hard fighting it had undergone the Belgian Army was in no condition to withstand, unsupported, such an attack ; and unless some substantial resistance could be offered to this threatened turning movement, the Allied flank must be turned and the Channel Ports laid bare to the enemy.

#### FIRST ARMY CORPS ORDERED TO ADVANCE BEYOND YPRES, OCTOBER 19

I judged that a successful movement of this kind would be fraught with such disastrous consequences that the risk of operating on so extended a front must be undertaken ; and I directed Sir Douglas Haig to move with the First Corps to the north of Ypres.

From the best information at my disposal I judged at this time that the considerable reinforcements which the enemy had undoubtedly brought up during the 16th, 17th, and 18th had been directed

principally on the line of the Lys and against the Second Corps at La Bassée ; and that Sir Douglas Haig would probably not be opposed north of Ypres by much more than the 3rd Reserve Corps, which I knew to have suffered considerably in its previous operations, and perhaps one or two Landwehr Divisions.

At a personal interview with Sir Douglas Haig on the evening of the 19th October I communicated the above information to him, and instructed him to advance with the First Corps through Ypres to Thourout. The object he was to have in view was to be the capture of Bruges and subsequently, if possible, to drive the enemy towards Ghent. In case of an unforeseen situation arising, or the enemy proving to be stronger than anticipated, he was to decide, after passing Ypres, according to the situation, whether to attack the enemy lying to the north or the hostile forces advancing from the east : I had arranged for the French Cavalry to operate on the left of the First Corps and the 3rd Cavalry Division, under General Byng, on its right.

The Belgian Army were rendering what assistance they could by entrenching themselves on the Ypres Canal and the Yser River ; and the troops, although in the last stage of exhaustion, gallantly maintained their positions, buoyed up with the hope of substantial British and French support.

I fully realized the difficult task which lay before us, and the onerous rôle which the British Army was called upon to fulfil.

That success has been attained, and all the enemy's

desperate attempts to break through our line frustrated, is due entirely to the marvellous fighting power and the indomitable courage and tenacity of officers, non-commissioned officers and men.

No more arduous task has ever been assigned to British soldiers; and in all their splendid history there is no instance of their having answered so magnificently to the desperate calls which of necessity were made upon them.

Having given these orders to Sir Douglas Haig, I enjoined a defensive rôle upon the Second and Third and Cavalry Corps, in view of the superiority of force which had accumulated in their front. As regards the Fourth Corps, I directed Sir Henry Rawlinson to endeavour to conform generally to the movements of the First Corps.

#### ADVANCE OF FIRST CORPS, OCTOBER 20—

#### OCTOBER 21

On the 20th October they reached the line from Elverdinghe to the cross-roads one and a half miles north-west of Zonnebeke.

On the 21st the Corps was ordered to attack and take the line Poelcappelle-Passchendaele.

Sir Henry Rawlinson's Command was moving on the right of the First Corps, and French troops, consisting of Cavalry and Territorials, moved on their left under the orders of General Bidon.

The advance was somewhat delayed owing to the roads being blocked; but the attack progressed favourably in face of severe opposition, often necessitating the use of the bayonet.

Hearing of heavy attacks being made upon the 7th Division and the 2nd Cavalry Division on his right, Sir Douglas Haig ordered his reserve to be halted on the north-eastern outskirts of Ypres.

Although threatened by a hostile movement from the Forêt d'Houthulst, our advance was successful until about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, when the French Cavalry Corps received orders to retire west of the canal.

Owing to this and the demands made on him by the Fourth Corps, Sir Douglas Haig was unable to advance beyond the line Zonnebeke-St. Julien-Lange-marck-Bixschoote.

#### COUNCIL OF WAR, OCTOBER 21

As there was reported to be congestion with French troops at Ypres, I went there on the evening of the 21st and met Sir Douglas Haig and Sir Henry Rawlinson. With them I interviewed General De Mitry, Commanding the French Cavalry, and General Bidon, Commanding the French Territorial Divisions.

They promised me that the town would at once be cleared of the troops, and that the French Territorials would immediately move out and cover the left of the flank of the First Corps.

I discussed the situation with the General Officers Commanding the First and Fourth Army Corps, and told them that, in view of the unexpected reinforcements coming up of the enemy, it would probably be impossible to carry out the original rôle



assigned to them. But I informed them that I had that day interviewed the French Commander-in-Chief, General Joffre, who told me that he was bringing up the 9th French Army Corps to Ypres, that more French troops would follow later, and that he intended—in conjunction with the Belgian troops—to drive the Germans east. General Joffre said that he would be unable to commence this movement before the 24th; and I directed the General Officers Commanding the First and Fourth Corps to strengthen their positions as much as possible and be prepared to hold their ground for two or three days, until the French offensive movement on the north could develop.

WAITING FOR FRENCH REINFORCEMENTS,  
OCTOBER 22—OCTOBER 23

It now became clear to me that the utmost we could do to ward off any attempts of the enemy to turn our flank to the north, or to break in from the eastward was to maintain our present very extended front, and to hold fast our positions until French reinforcements could arrive from the south.

During the 22nd the necessity of sending support to the Fourth Corps on his right somewhat hampered the General Officer Commanding the First Corps; but a series of attacks all along his front had been driven back during the day with heavy loss to the enemy. Late in the evening the enemy succeeded in penetrating a portion of the line held by the Cameron Highlanders north of Pilkem.

At 6 a.m. on the morning of the 23rd a counter attack to recover the lost trenches was made by the Queen's Regiment, the Northhamptons and the King's Royal Rifles, under Major-General Bulfin. The attack was very strongly opposed and the bayonet had to be used. After severe fighting during most of the day the attack was brilliantly successful, and over six hundred prisoners were taken.

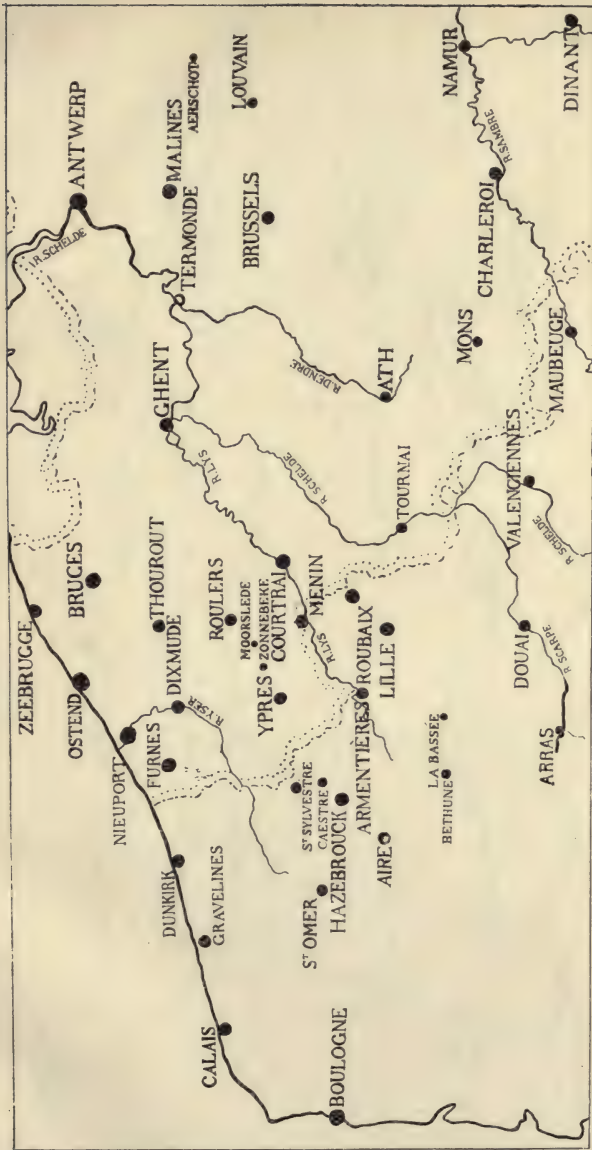
On the same day an attack was made on the 3rd Infantry Brigade. The enemy advanced with great determination, but with little skill, and consequently the loss inflicted on him was exceedingly heavy; some fifteen hundred dead were seen in the neighbourhood of Langemarck. Correspondence found subsequently on a captured German officer stated that the effectives of this attacking corps were reduced to 25 per cent. in the course of the day's fighting.

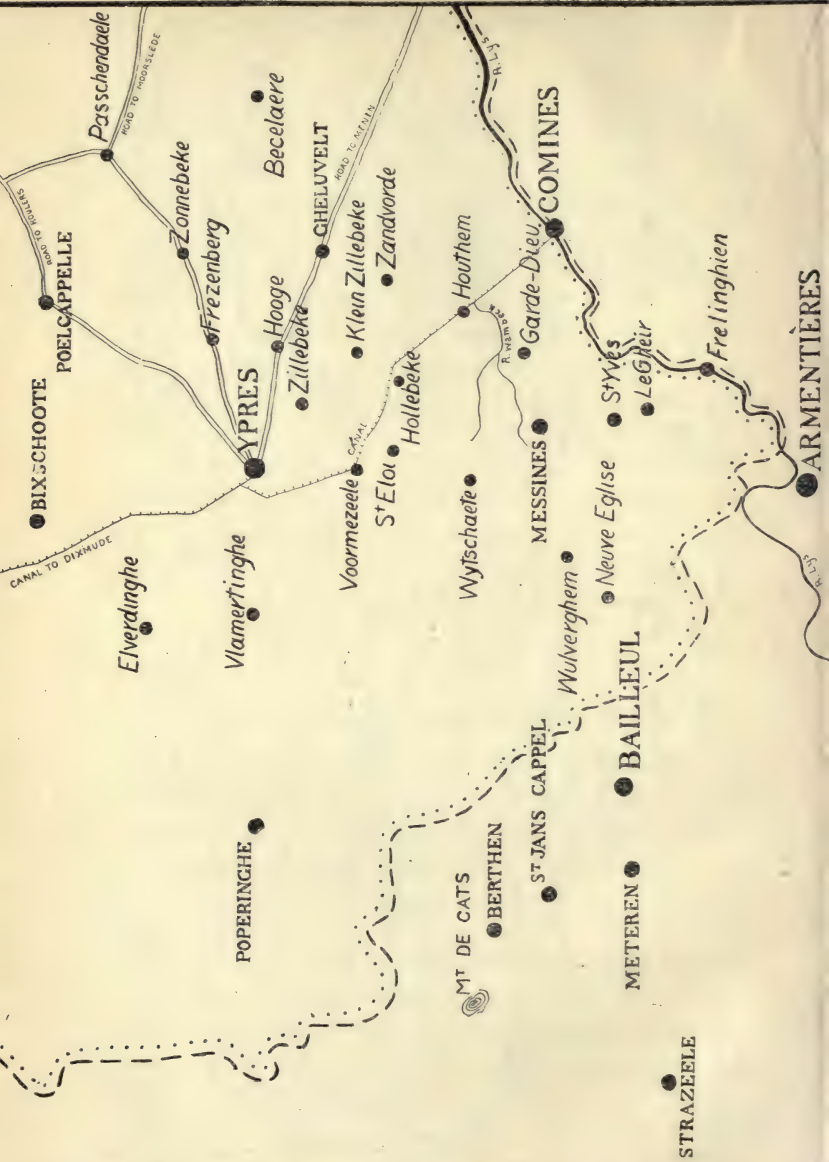
#### ARRIVAL OF FRENCH 9TH ARMY CORPS

In the evening of this day a division of the French 9th Army Corps came up into line and took over the portion of the line held by the 2nd Division, which, on the 24th, took up the ground occupied by the 7th Division from Poelzelhoek to the Becelaere-Passchendaele road.

On the 24th and 25th October repeated attacks by the enemy were brilliantly repulsed.

On the night of the 24th-25th the 1st Division was relieved by French Territorial troops and concentrated about Zillebeke.





BIX-SCHOOOTE

POELCAPPELLE

Paschendaale

Elverdinghe

Zonnebeke

Frezenberg

Vlamertinghe

POPERINGHE

YPRES

Zillebeke

Becelaere

Hooge

GHELUVELT

Voornezeele

Klein Zillebeke

S<sup>t</sup>Elot

Zandvorde

Hollebeke

Wytchaete

MT DE CATS

BERTHEN

Houthem

ST JANS CAPPEL

MESSINES

Wulverghem

METEREN

BAILLEUL

Neuve Eglise

Styves

Legheir

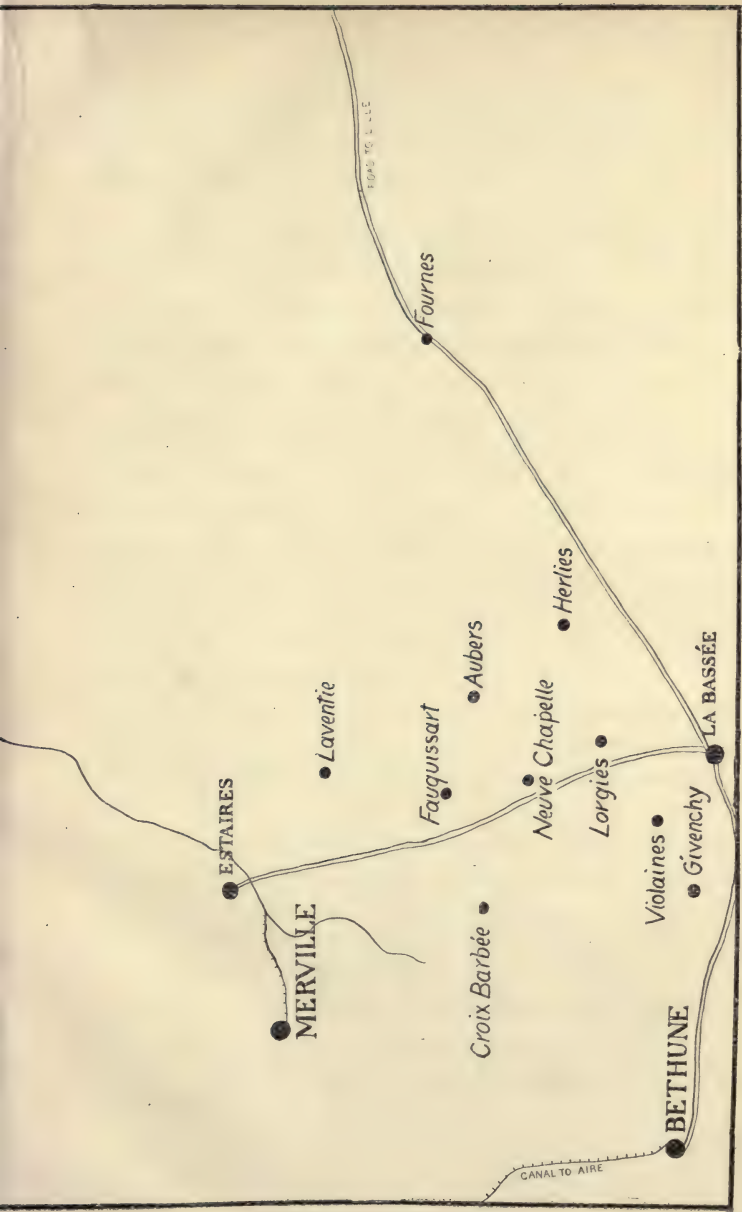
STRAZEELE

Frelinghien

Garde-Dieu

COMINES

ARMENTIÈRES





During the 25th the 2nd Division, with the 7th on its right and the French 9th Corps on its left, made good progress towards the north-east, capturing some guns and prisoners.

#### FOURTH ARMY CORPS MERGED IN THE FIRST CORPS, OCTOBER 27

On the 27th October I went to the headquarters of the First Corps at Hooge to personally investigate the condition of the 7th Division.

Owing to constant marching and fighting, ever since its hasty disembarkation in aid of the Antwerp Garrison, this division had suffered great losses, and were becoming very weak. I therefore decided temporarily to break up the Fourth Corps and place the 7th Division with the First Corps under the command of Sir Douglas Haig.

The 3rd Cavalry Division was similarly detailed for service with the First Corps.

I directed the Fourth Corps Commander to proceed, with his Staff, to England, to watch and supervise the mobilization of his 8th Division, which was then proceeding.

On receipt of orders, in accordance with the above arrangement, Sir Douglas Haig redistributed the line held by the First Corps as follows :

(a) 7th Division from the Chateau east of Zandvoorde to the Menin road.

(b) 1st Division from the Menin road to a point immediately west of Reytel village.

(c) 2nd Division to near Moorslede-Zonnebeke road.

THE CRISIS OF THE BATTLE FOR YPRES,  
OCTOBER 29—OCTOBER 31

On the early morning of the 29th October a heavy attack developed against the centre of the line held by the First Corps, the principal point of attack being the cross roads one mile east of Gheluvelt. After severe fighting—nearly the whole of the Corps being employed in counter-attack—the enemy began to give way at about 2 p.m.; and by dark the Kruiseik Hill had been recaptured and the 1st Brigade had re-established most of the line north of the Menin road.

Shortly after daylight on the 30th another attack began to develop in the direction of Zandvoorde, supported by heavy artillery fire. In face of this attack the 3rd Cavalry Division had to withdraw to the Klein Zillebeke ridge. This withdrawal involved the right of the 7th Division.

Sir Douglas Haig describes the position at this period as serious, the Germans being in possession of Zandvoorde Ridge.

Subsequent investigation showed that the enemy had been reinforced at this point by the whole German Active Fifteenth Corps.

The General Officer Commanding First Corps ordered the line Gheluvelt to the corner of the Canal to be held at all costs. When this line was taken up the 2nd Brigade was ordered to concentrate in rear of the 1st Division and the 4th Brigade line. One battalion was placed in reserve in the woods one mile south of Hooge.



Further precautions were taken at night to protect this flank, and the Ninth French Corps sent three battalions and one Cavalry Brigade to assist.

The First Corps' communications through Ypres were threatened by the advance of the Germans towards the Canal; so orders were issued for every effort to be made to secure the line then held and, when this had been thoroughly done, to resume the offensive.

An order taken from a prisoner who had been captured on this day purported to emanate from the German General Von Beimling, and said that the Fifteenth German Corps, together with the 2nd Bavarian and Thirteenth Corps, were entrusted with the task of breaking through the line to Ypres; and that the Emperor himself considered the success of this attack to be one of vital importance to the successful issue of the war.

Perhaps the most important and decisive attack (except that of the Prussian Guard on 15th November) made against the First Corps during the whole of its arduous experiences in the neighbourhood of Ypres took place on the 31st October.

#### GERMAN ATTACK OF OCTOBER 31

General Moussy, who commanded the detachment which had been sent by the French Ninth Corps on the previous day to assist Sir Douglas Haig on the right of the First Corps, moved to the attack early in the morning, but was brought to a complete standstill, and could make no further progress.

After several attacks and counter-attacks during the course of the morning along the Menin-Ypres-

road, south-east of Gheluvelt, an attack against that place developed in great force, and the line of the 1st Division was broken. On the south the 7th Division and General Bulfin's detachment were being heavily shelled. The retirement of the 1st Division exposed the left of the 7th Division, and owing to this the Royal Scots Fusiliers, who remained in their trenches, were cut off and surrounded. A strong infantry attack was developed against the right of the 7th Division at 1.30 p.m.

Shortly after this the Headquarters of the 1st and 2nd Divisions were shelled. The General Officer Commanding 1st Division was wounded, three Staff Officers of the 1st Division and three of the 2nd Division were killed. The General Officer Commanding the 2nd Division also received a severe shaking, and was unconscious for a short time. General Landon assumed command of the 1st Division.

#### RECOVERY OF GHELUVELT

On receiving a report about 2.30 p.m. from General Lomax that the 1st Division had moved back and that the enemy was coming on in strength, the General Officer Commanding the First Corps issued orders that the line, Frezenberg-Westhoek-bend of the main road-Klein Zillebeke-bend of Canal, was to be held at all costs.

The 1st Division rallied on the line of the woods east of the bend of the road, the German advance by the road being checked by enfilade fire from the north.

The attack against the right of the 7th Division forced the 22nd Brigade to retire, thus exposing

the left of the 2nd Brigade. The General Officer Commanding the 7th Division used his reserve, already posted on his flank, to restore the line ; but, in the meantime, the 2nd Brigade, finding their left flank exposed, had been forced to withdraw. The right of the 7th Division thus advanced as the left of the 2nd Brigade went back, with the result that the right of the 7th Division was exposed, but managed to hold on to its old trenches till nightfall.

Meantime, on the Menin road, a counter-attack delivered by the left of the 1st Division and the right of the 2nd Division against the right flank of the German line was completely successful, and by 2.30 p.m. Gheluvelt had been retaken with the bayonet, the 2nd Worcestershire Regiment being to the fore in this, admirably supported by the 42nd Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. The left of the 7th Division, profiting by their capture of Gheluvelt, advanced almost to its original line ; and connection between the 1st and 7th Divisions was re-established. The recapture of Gheluvelt released the 6th Cavalry Brigade, till then held in support of the 1st Division. Two regiments of this brigade were sent at once to clear the woods to the south-east, and close the gap in the line between the 7th Division and 2nd Brigade. They advanced with much dash, partly mounted and partly dismounted ; and, surprising the enemy in the woods, succeeded in killing large numbers and materially helped to restore the line. About 5 p.m. the French Cavalry Brigade also came up to the cross-roads just east of Hooge,

and at once sent forward a dismounted detachment to support our 7th Cavalry Brigade.

Throughout the day the extreme right and left of the First Corps' line held fast, the left being only slightly engaged, while the right was heavily shelled and subjected to slight infantry attacks. In the evening the enemy were steadily driven back from the woods on the front of the 7th Division and 2nd Brigade; and by 10 p.m. the line as held in the morning had practically been reoccupied.

During the night touch was restored between the right of the 7th Division and left of the 2nd Brigade, and the Cavalry were withdrawn into reserve, the services of the French Cavalry being dispensed with.

As a result of the day's fighting eight hundred and seventy wounded were evacuated.

I was present with Sir Douglas Haig at Hooge between 2 and 3 o'clock on this day, when the 1st Division were retiring. I regard it as the most critical moment in the whole of this great battle. The rally of the 1st Division and the recapture of the village of Gheluvelt at such a time was fraught with momentous consequences. If any one unit can be singled out for especial praise it is the Worcesters.

#### STAUNCH DEFENCE BY THE THIRD ARMY CORPS, OCTOBER 20—OCTOBER 31

7. In the meantime the centre of my line, occupied by the Third and Cavalry Corps, was being heavily pressed by the enemy in ever-increasing force.

On the 20th October advanced posts of the 12th Brigade of the 4th Division, Third Corps, were

forced to retire, and at dusk it was evident that the Germans were likely to make a determined attack. This ended in the occupation of Le Gheir by the enemy.

As the position of the Cavalry at St. Yves was thus endangered, a counter-attack was decided upon and planned by General Hunter-Weston and Lieutenant-Colonel Anley. This proved entirely successful, the Germans being driven back with great loss and the abandoned trenches reoccupied. Two hundred prisoners were taken and about forty of our prisoners released.

In these operations the staunchness of the King's Own Regiment and the Lancashire Fusiliers was most commendable. These two battalions were very well handled by Lieutenant-Colonel Butler of the Lancashire Fusiliers.

I am anxious to bring to special notice the excellent work done throughout this battle by the Third Corps under General Pulteney's command. Their position in the right central part of my line was of the utmost importance to the general success of the operations. Besides the very undue length of front which the Corps was called upon to cover (some 12 or 13 miles), the position presented many weak spots, and was also astride of the River Lys, the right bank of which from Frelinghein downwards was strongly held by the enemy. It was impossible to provide adequate reserves, and the constant work in the trenches tried the endurance of officers and men to the utmost. That the Corps was invariably successful in repulsing the constant attacks,

sometimes in great strength, made against them by day and by night is due entirely to the skilful manner in which the Corps was disposed by its Commander, who has told me of the able assistance he has received throughout from his Staff, and the ability and resource displayed by Divisional, Brigade and Regimental leaders in using the ground and the means of defence at their disposal to the very best advantage.

The courage, tenacity, endurance and cheerfulness of the men in such unparalleled circumstances are beyond all praise.

During the 22nd and 23rd and 24th October frequent attacks were made along the whole line of the Third Corps, and especially against the 16th Infantry Brigade ; but on all occasions the enemy was thrown back with loss.

During the night of the 25th October the Leicestershire Regiment were forced from their trenches by shells blowing in the pits they were in ; and after investigation by the General Officers Commanding the 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades it was decided to throw back the line temporarily in this neighbourhood.

On the evening of the 29th October the enemy made a sharp attack on Le Gheir, and on the line to the north of it, but were repulsed.

About midnight a very heavy attack developed against the 19th Infantry Brigade south of Croix Maréchal. A portion of the trenches of the Middlesex Regiment was gained by the enemy and held by him for some hours till recaptured with the

assistance of the detachment from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders from Brigade Reserve. The enemy in the trenches were all bayoneted or captured. Later information from prisoners showed that there were twelve battalions opposite the 19th Brigade. Over two hundred dead Germans were left lying in front of the Brigade's trenches, and forty prisoners were taken.

On the evening of the 30th the line of the 11th Infantry Brigade in the neighbourhood of St. Yves was broken. A counter-attack carried out by Major Prowse with the Somerset Light Infantry restored the situation. For his services on this occasion this officer was recommended for special reward.

On the 31st October it became necessary for the 4th Division to take over the extreme right of the 1st Cavalry Division's trenches, although this measure necessitated a still further extension of the line held by the Third Corps.

#### THE CAVALRY CORPS IN THE TRENCHES, OCTOBER 22—OCTOBER 31

8. On October 20th, while engaged in the attempt to force the line of the River Lys, the Cavalry Corps was attacked from the south and east. In the evening the 1st Cavalry Division held the line St. Yves-Messines: the 2nd Cavalry Division from Messines through Garde Dieu along the Wambeck to Houthem and Kortewilde.

At 4 p.m. on the 21st October a heavy attack was made on the 2nd Cavalry Division, which was

compelled to fall back to the line Messines-9th kilo stone on the Warneton-Oostaverne road-Hollebeke.

On the 22nd I directed the 7th Indian Infantry Brigade, less one battalion, to proceed to Wulverghem in support of the Cavalry Corps. General Allenby sent two battalions to Wytschaete and Voormezeele to be placed under the orders of General Gough, Commanding the 2nd Cavalry Division.

On the 23rd, 24th, and 25th several attacks were directed against the Cavalry Corps and repulsed with loss to the enemy.

On the 26th October I directed General Allenby to endeavour to regain a more forward line, moving in conjunction with the 7th Division. But the latter being apparently quite unable to take the offensive, the attempt had to be abandoned.

On October 30th heavy infantry attacks, supported by powerful artillery fire, developed against the 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Divisions, especially against the trenches about Hollebeke held by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade. At 1.30 p.m. this Brigade was forced to retire, and the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, less one regiment, was moved across from the 1st Cavalry Division to a point between Oostaverne and St. Eloi in support of the 2nd Cavalry Division.

The 1st Cavalry Division in the neighbourhood of Messines was also threatened by a heavy infantry column.

General Allenby still retained the two Indian Battalions of the 7th Indian Brigade, although they were in a somewhat exhausted condition.

After a close survey of the positions and con-



sultations with the General Officer Commanding the Cavalry Corps, I directed four battalions of the Second Corps, which had lately been relieved from the trenches by the Indian Corps, to move to Neuve Eglise under General Shaw, in support of General Allenby.

The London Scottish Territorial Battalion was also sent to Neuve Eglise.

It now fell to the lot of the Cavalry Corps, which had been much weakened by constant fighting, to oppose the advance of two nearly fresh German Army Corps for a period of over forty-eight hours, pending the arrival of a French reinforcement. Their action was completely successful. I propose to send shortly a more detailed account of the operation.

After the critical situation in front of the Cavalry Corps, which was ended by the arrival of the head of the French 16th Army Corps, the 2nd Cavalry Division was relieved by General Conneau's French Cavalry Corps and concentrated in the neighbourhood of Bailleul.

The 1st Cavalry Division continued to hold the line of trenches east of Wulverghem.

From that time to the date of this despatch the Cavalry Divisions have relieved one another at intervals, and have supported by their artillery the attacks made by the French throughout that period on Hollebeke, Wytschaete, and Messines.

#### THE THIRD CORPS HOLDS ITS GROUND.

The Third Corps in its position on the right of the Cavalry Corps continued throughout the same period to repel constant attacks against its front,

and suffered severely from the enemy's heavy artillery fire.

The artillery of the 4th Division constantly assisted the French in their attacks.

The General Officer Commanding Third Corps brings specially to my notice the excellent behaviour of the East Lancashire Regiment, the Hampshire Regiment and the Somersetshire Light Infantry in these latter operations ; and the skilful manner in which they were handled by General Hunter-Weston, Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, and the Battalion Commanders.

#### DOINGS OF THE INDIAN TROOPS IN THE CENTRE

9. The Lahore Division arrived in its concentration area in rear of the Second Corps on the 19th and 20th October.

I have already referred to the excellent work performed by the battalions of this Division which were supporting the Cavalry. The remainder of the Division from the 25th October onwards were heavily engaged in assisting the 7th Brigade of the Second Corps in fighting round Neuve Chapelle. Another brigade took over some ground previously held by the French 1st Cavalry Corps, and did excellent service.

On the 28th October especially the 47th Sikhs and the 20th and 21st Companies of the 3rd Sappers and Miners distinguished themselves by their gallant conduct in the attack on Neuve Chapelle, losing heavily in officers and men.

After the arrival of the Meerut Division at Corps Headquarters the Indian Army Corps took over the line previously held by the Second Corps, which was then partially drawn back into reserve. Two and a half brigades of British Infantry and a large part of the artillery of the Second Corps still remained to assist the Indian Corps in defence of this line. Two and a half battalions of these brigades were returned to the Second Corps when the Ferozepore Brigade joined the Indian Corps after its support of the Cavalry further north.

The Secunderabad Cavalry Brigade arrived in the area during the 1st and 2nd November, and the Jodhpur Lancers came about the same time. These were all temporarily attached to the Indian Corps.

Up to the date of the present despatch the line held by the Indian Corps has been subjected to constant bombardment by the enemy's heavy artillery, followed up by infantry attacks.

On two occasions these attacks were severe.

On the 13th October the 8th Gurkha Rifles of the Bareilly Brigade were driven from their trenches, and on the 2nd November a serious attack was developed against a portion of the line west of Neuve Chapelle. On this occasion the line was to some extent pierced, and was consequently slightly bent back.

The situation was prevented from becoming serious by the excellent leadership displayed by Colonel Norie, of the 2nd Gurkha Rifles.

Since their arrival in this country, and their occupation of the line allotted to them, I have been

much impressed by the initiative and resource displayed by the Indian troops. Some of the ruses they have employed to deceive the enemy have been attended with the best results, and have doubtless kept superior forces in front of them at bay.

The Corps of Indian Sappers and Miners have long enjoyed a high reputation for skill and resource. Without going into detail, I can confidently assert that throughout their work in this campaign they have fully justified that reputation.

The General Officer Commanding the Indian Army Corps describes the conduct and bearing of these troops in strange and new surroundings to have been highly satisfactory, and I am enabled, from my own observation, to fully corroborate his statement.

Honorary Major-General H.H. Sir Pratap Singh Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., A.D.C., Maharaja-Regent of Jodhpur ; Honorary Lieutenant H.H. The Maharaja of Jodhpur ; Honorary Colonel H.H. Sir Ganga Singh Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., A.D.C., Maharaja of Bikanir ; Honorary Major H.H. Sir Madan Singh Bahadur, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Maharaja-Dhiraj of Kishengarh ; Honorary Captain The Honourable Malik Umar Hayat Khan, C.I.E., M.V.O., Tiwana ; Honorary Lieutenant Raj-Kumar Hira Singh of Panna ; Honorary Lieutenant Maharaj-Kumar Hitendra Narayan of Cooch Behar ; Lieutenant Malik Mumtaz Mahomed Khan, Native Indian Land Forces ; Resaldar Khwaja Mahomed Khan Bahadur, Queen Victoria's Own Corps of Guides ; Honorary Captain Shah Mirza Beg, are serving with the Indian contingents.

## RENEWED GERMAN ATTACKS ON THE FIRST ARMY CORPS, NOVEMBER 2—NOVEMBER 12

10. Whilst the whole of the line has continued to be heavily pressed, the enemy's principal efforts since the 1st November have been concentrated upon breaking through the line held by the First British and 9th French Corps, and thus gaining possession of the town of Ypres.

From the 2nd November onwards the 27th, the 15th and parts of the Bavarian 13th and 2nd German Corps, besides other troops, were all directed against this northern line.

About the 10th instant, after several units of these Corps had been completely shattered in futile attacks, a division of the Prussian Guard, which had been operating in the neighbourhood of Arras, was moved up to this area with great speed and secrecy. Documents found on dead officers prove that the Guard had received the Emperor's special commands to break through and succeed where their comrades of the line had failed.

They took a leading part in the vigorous attacks made against the centre on the 11th and 12th ; but, like their comrades, were repulsed with enormous loss.

Throughout this trying period Sir Douglas Haig, ably assisted by his Divisional and Brigade Commanders, held the line with marvellous tenacity and undaunted courage.

Words fail me to express the admiration I feel for their conduct, or my sense of the incalculable

services they rendered. I venture to predict that their deeds during these days of stress and trial will furnish some of the most brilliant chapters which will be found in the military history of our time.

#### OFFICERS HONOURABLY MENTIONED

The First Corps was brilliantly supported by the 3rd Cavalry Division under General Byng. Sir Douglas Haig has constantly brought this officer's eminent services to my notice. His troops were repeatedly called upon to restore the situation at critical points, and to fill gaps in the line caused by the tremendous losses which occurred.

Both Corps and Cavalry Division Commanders particularly bring to my notice the name of Brigadier-General Kavanagh, Commanding the 7th Cavalry Brigade, not only for his skill but his personal bravery and dash. This was particularly noticeable when the 7th Cavalry Brigade was brought up to support the French troops when the latter were driven back near the village of Klein Zillebeke on the night of the 7th November. On this occasion I regret to say Colonel Gordon Wilson, Commanding the Royal Horse Guards, and Major the Hon. Hugh Dawnay, Commanding the 2nd Life Guards, were killed.

In these two officers the Army has lost valuable cavalry leaders.

Another officer whose name was particularly mentioned to me was that of Brigadier-General FitzClarence, V.C., Commanding the 1st Guards

Brigade. He was, unfortunately, killed in the night attack of the 11th November. His loss will be severely felt.

The First Corps Commander informs me that on many occasions Brigadier-General the Earl of Cavan, Commanding the 4th Guards Brigade, was conspicuous for the skill, coolness, and courage with which he led his troops, and for the successful manner in which he dealt with many critical situations.

I have more than once during this campaign brought forward the name of Major-General Bulfin to Your Lordship's notice. Up to the evening of the 2nd November, when he was somewhat severely wounded, his services continued to be of great value.

#### REGULAR AND TERRITORIAL UNITS MENTIONED. PRAISE OF THE FLYING CORPS AND SIGNAL CORPS

On the 5th November I despatched eleven battalions of the Second Corps, all considerably reduced in strength, to relieve the infantry of the 7th Division, which was then brought back into general reserve.

Three more battalions of the same Corps, the London Scottish and Hertfordshire Battalions of Territorials, and the Somersetshire and Leicestershire Regiments of Yeomanry, were subsequently sent to reinforce the troops fighting to the east of Ypres.

General Byng in the case of the Yeomanry

Cavalry Regiments and Sir Douglas Haig in that of the Territorial Battalions speak in high terms of their conduct in the field and of the value of their support.

The battalions of the Second Corps took a conspicuous part in repulsing the heavy attacks delivered against this part of the line. I was obliged to despatch them immediately after their trying experiences in the southern part of the line and when they had had a very insufficient period of rest ; and, although they gallantly maintained these northern positions until relieved by the French, they were reduced to a condition of extreme exhaustion.

The work performed by the Royal Flying Corps has continued to prove of the utmost value to the success of the operations.

I do not consider it advisable in this despatch to go into any detail as regards the duties assigned to the Corps and the nature of their work, but almost every day new methods for employing them, both strategically and tactically, are discovered and put into practice.

The development of their use and employment has indeed been quite extraordinary, and I feel sure that no effort should be spared to increase their numbers and perfect their equipment and efficiency.

In the period covered by this despatch Territorial Troops have been used for the first time in the Army under my command.

The units actually engaged have been the Northumberland, Northamptonshire, North Somerset, Leicestershire and Oxfordshire Regiments of



Yeomanry Cavalry; and the London Scottish, Hertfordshire, Honourable Artillery Company, and the Queen's Westminster Battalions of Territorial Infantry.

The conduct and bearing of these units under fire, and the efficient manner in which they carried out the various duties assigned to them, have imbued me with the highest hope as to the value and help of Territorial Troops generally.

Units which I have mentioned above, other than these, as having been also engaged, have by their conduct fully justified these hopes.

Regiments and battalions as they arrive come into a temporary camp of instruction, which is formed at Headquarters, where they are closely inspected, their equipment examined, so far as possible perfected, and such instruction as can be given to them in the brief time available in the use of machine guns, &c., is imparted.

Several units have now been sent up to the front besides those I have already named, but have not yet been engaged.

I am anxious in this despatch to bring to Your Lordship's special notice the splendid work which has been done throughout the campaign by the Cyclists of the Signal Corps.

Carrying despatches and messages at all hours of the day and night, in every kind of weather, and often traversing bad roads blocked with transport, they have been conspicuously successful in maintaining an extraordinary degree of efficiency in the service of communications.

Many casualties have occurred in their ranks, but no amount of difficulty or danger has ever checked the energy and ardour which has distinguished their Corps throughout the operations.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE BATTLE

11. As I close this despatch there are signs in evidence that we are possibly in the last stages of the battle of Ypres-Armentières.

For several days past the enemy's artillery fire has considerably slackened, and infantry attack has practically ceased.

In remarking upon the general military situation of the Allies as it appears to me at the present moment, it does not seem to be clearly understood that the operations in which we have been engaged embrace nearly all the Continent of Central Europe from East to West. The combined French, Belgian, and British Armies in the West and the Russian Army in the East are opposed to the united forces of Germany and Austria acting as a combined army between us.

Our enemies elected at the commencement of the war to throw the weight of their forces against the armies in the West, and to detach only a comparatively weak force, composed of very few first-line troops and several corps of the second and third lines, to stem the Russian advance till the Western Forces could be completely defeated and overwhelmed.

Their strength enabled them from the outset to

throw greatly superior forces against us in the West. This precluded the possibility of our taking a vigorous offensive, except when the miscalculations and mistakes made by their commanders opened up special opportunities for a successful attack and pursuit.

The battle of the Marne was an example of this, as was also our advance from St. Omer and Hazebrouck to the line of the Lys at the commencement of this battle. The rôle which our armies in the West have consequently been called upon to fulfil has been to occupy strong defensive positions, holding the ground gained and inviting the enemy's attack; to throw these attacks back, causing the enemy heavy losses in his retreat and following him up with powerful and successful counter-attacks to complete his discomfiture.

The value and significance of the rôle fulfilled since the commencement of hostilities by the Allied Forces in the West lies in the fact that at the moment when the Eastern Provinces of Germany are in imminent danger of being overrun by the numerous and powerful armies of Russia, nearly the whole of the active army of Germany is tied down to a line of trenches extending from the Fortress of Verdun on the Alsatian frontier round to the sea at Nieuport, east of Dunkirk (a distance of 260 miles), where they are held, much reduced in numbers and moral, by the successful action of our troops in the West.

THE ROYAL ARTILLERY AND ROYAL ENGINEERS  
COMMENDED

I cannot speak too highly of the valuable services rendered by the Royal Artillery throughout the battle.

In spite of the fact that the enemy has brought up guns in support of his attacks of great range and shell power, ours have succeeded throughout in preventing the enemy from establishing anything in the nature of an artillery superiority. The skill, courage, and energy displayed by their commanders have been very marked.

The General Officer Commanding Third Corps, who had special means of judging, makes mention of the splendid work performed by a number of young Artillery officers, who in the most gallant manner pressed forward in the vicinity of the firing line in order that their guns may be able to shoot at the right targets at the right moment.

The Royal Engineers have, as usual, been indefatigable in their efforts to assist the infantry in field fortification and trench work.

I deeply regret the heavy casualties which we have suffered; but the nature of the fighting has been very desperate, and we have been assailed by vastly superior numbers. I have every reason to know that throughout the course of the battle we have placed at least three times as many of the enemy *hors de combat* in dead, wounded, and prisoners.

THANKS TENDERED TO FRENCH GENERALS

Throughout these operations General Foch has strained his resources to the utmost to afford me all the support he could ; and an expression of my warm gratitude is also due to General D'Urbal, Commanding the 8th French Army on my left, and General Maud'huy, Commanding the 10th French Army on my right.

I have many recommendations to bring to Your Lordship's notice for gallant and distinguished service performed by officers and men in the period under report. These will be submitted shortly, as soon as they can be collected.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

J. P. D. FRENCH,

Field-Marshal, Commanding-in-Chief,

The British Army in the Field.

## APPENDIX

*Admiralty, December 5th, 1914.*

THE following dispatch has been received from Field-Marshal Sir J. D. P. French, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G., covering a dispatch from Major-General A. Paris, C.B., R.M.A., relating to the operations round Antwerp from October 3rd to the 9th :—

*From Sir J. D. P. French, Field-Marshal, Commanding-in-Chief, to the Secretary of the Admiralty.*

In forwarding this report to the Army Council at the request of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, I have to state that, from a comprehensive review of all the circumstances, the force of Marines and Naval Brigades which assisted in the defence of Antwerp was handled by General Paris with great skill and boldness.

Although the results did not include the actual saying of the fortress, the action of the force under General Paris certainly delayed the enemy for a considerable time, and assisted the Belgian Army to be withdrawn in a condition to enable it to reorganize and refit, and regain its value as a fighting force. The destruction of war material and ammunition—which, but for the intervention of this force, would have proved of great value to the enemy—was thus able to be carried out.

The assistance which the Belgian Army has rendered throughout the subsequent course of the operations on the canal and the Yser river has been a valuable asset to the Allied cause, and such help must be regarded as an outcome of the intervention of General Paris's force. I am further

of opinion that the moral effect produced on the minds of the Belgian Army by this necessarily desperate attempt to bring them succour, before it was too late, has been of great value to their use and efficiency as a fighting force.

J. D. P. FRENCH,  
Field-Marshal,  
Commanding-in-Chief.

*From the Secretary of the Admiralty to Field-Marshal Sir J. D. P. French, Commanding-in-Chief. (Enclosure in No. 1.)*

Admiralty,  
November 2nd, 1914.

Sir,

I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith a dispatch from Major-General Paris, reporting the proceedings of the Division round Antwerp from October 3rd to 9th, with a view to its being considered by you and forwarded to the Army Council with your survey of the operations as a whole.

I am, &c.,

W. GRAHAM GREENE.

*From Major-General A. Paris, C.B., Commanding Royal Naval Division, to the Secretary of the Admiralty. (Sub-enclosure in No. 1.)*

October 31st, 1914.

Regarding the operations round Antwerp from October 3rd to 9th, I have the honour to report as follows:—

The Brigade (2,200 all ranks) reached Antwerp during the night October 3rd-4th, and early on the 4th occupied, with the 7th Belgian Regiment, the trenches facing Lierre, with advanced post on the River Nethe, relieving some exhausted Belgian troops.

The outer forts on this front had already fallen and bombardment of the trenches was in progress. This increased in violence during the night and early morning of October 5th, when the advanced posts were driven in and the enemy effected a crossing of the river, which was not under fire from the trenches.

About midday the 7th Belgian Regiment was forced to retire, thus exposing my right flank. A vigorous counter-attack, gallantly led by Colonel Tierchon, 2nd Chasseurs, assisted by our aeroplanes, restored the position late in the afternoon.

Unfortunately, an attempt made by the Belgian troops during the night (October 5th-6th) to drive the enemy across the river failed, and resulted in the evacuation of practically the whole of the Belgian trenches.

The few troops now capable of another counter-attack were unable to make any impression, and the position of the Marine Brigade became untenable.

The bombardment, too, was very violent, but the retirement of the Brigade was well carried out, and soon after midday (October 6th) an intermediate position, which had been hastily prepared, was occupied.

The two Naval Brigades reached Antwerp during the night, October 5th-6th. The 1st Brigade moved out in the afternoon of 5th to assist the withdrawal to the main 2nd Line of Defence.

The retirement was carried out during the night, October 6th-7th, without opposition, and the Naval Division occupied the intervals between the forts on the 2nd Line of Defence.

The bombardment of the town, forts and trenches began at midnight, October 7th-8th, and continued with increasing intensity until the evacuation of the fortress.

As the water supply had been cut, no attempt could be



made to subdue the flames, and soon 100 houses were burning. Fortunately, there was no wind, or the whole town and bridges must have been destroyed.

During the day (October 8th) it appeared evident that the Belgian Army could not hold the forts any longer. About 5.30 p.m. I considered that if the Naval Division was to avoid disaster an immediate retirement under cover of darkness was necessary. General De Guise, the Belgian Commander, was in complete agreement. He was most chivalrous and gallant, insisting on giving orders that the roads and bridges were to be cleared for the passage of the British troops.

The retirement began about 7.30 p.m., and was carried out under very difficult conditions.

The enemy were reported in force (a Division plus a Reserve Brigade) on our immediate line of retreat, rendering necessary a *détour* of 15 miles to the north.

All the roads were crowded with Belgian troops, refugees, herds of cattle, and all kinds of vehicles, making inter-communication a practical impossibility. Partly for these reasons, partly on account of fatigue, and partly from at present unexplained causes large numbers of the 1st Naval Brigade became detached, and I regret to say are either prisoners or interned in Holland.

Marching all night (October 8th to 9th), one battalion of 1st Brigade, the 2nd Brigade and Royal Marine Brigade, less one battalion, entrained at St. Gillies Waes and effected their retreat without further incident.

The Battalion (Royal Marine Brigade) Rear Guard of the whole force, also entrained late in the afternoon together with many hundreds of refugees, but at Morbeke the line was cut, the engine derailed, and the enemy opened fire.

There was considerable confusion. It was dark and the agitation of the refugees made it difficult to pass any orders.

However, the battalion behaved admirably, and succeeded in fighting its way through, but with a loss in missing of more than half its number. They then marched another 10 miles to Selzaate and entrained there.

Colonel Seely and Colonel Bridges were not part of my command, but they rendered most skilful and helpful services during the evacuation.

The casualties are approximately—

1st Naval Brigade and 2nd Naval Brigade, 5 killed, 64 wounded, 2,040 missing.

Royal Marine Brigade, 23 killed, 103 wounded, 388 missing.

In conclusion, I would call your attention to the good services rendered by the following officers and men during the operations—

#### OFFICERS.

##### Staff—

Lieut.-Colonel A. H. Ollivant, R.A.

Major Richardson, N.Z. Staff Corps.

Fleet Surgeon E. J. Finch, R.N.

##### 1st Brigade—

Lieutenant G. G. Grant, R.N.V.R.

Sub-Lieutenant C. O. F. Modin, R.N.V.R.

##### 2nd Brigade—

Commodore O. Backhouse, R.N., Commanding Brigade.

Captain W. L. Maxwell, Brigade Major.

Sub-Lieutenant H. C. Hedderwick, R.N.V.R.

##### Royal Marine Brigade—

Lieut.-Colonel C. Mc. N. Parsons, R.M.L.I., in command most of the time.

Major A. H. French, R.M.L.I., 10th Battalion.

Lieutenant D. J. Gowney, R.M.L.I., 10th Battalion.

## MEN.

## Naval Brigade—

Chief Petty Officer B. H. Ellis, No. 748, B Co., R.N.V.R.,  
London.

Chief Petty Officer Payne, D Co.

Petty Officer (Acting) W. Wallace, O.N., Dev., 211,130.

Stoker Petty Officer W. S. Cole, O.N., Ch. 100,113.

Leading Seaman (Acting) H. D. Lowe, R.N.R., Dev.,  
No. B. 2542.

Ordinary Seaman G. Ripley, new Army recruit, C Co.  
(now R.N.V.R.).

Ordinary Seaman T. Machen, new Army recruit, C Co.  
(now R.N.V.R.).

## Royal Marine Brigade—

Sergeant-Major (Acting) Galliford.

Quartermaster-Sergeant Kenny, R.F.R., Ch. A. 426.

Sergeant G. H. Bruce, R.F.R., Ch. A. 631.

Lance-Corporal T. C. Frank, Ch. 17817.

Lance-Corporal W. J. Cook, Ply. 7685.

Private G. H. Hall, R.F.R., Ch. B. 194.

Private C. J. Fleet, R.F.R., Ch. B. 1585.

Private S. Lang, Ch. 18446.

Sergeant E. Walch (R. Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth  
Reserve), S.B. 508.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. PARIS, Major-General,

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief

# WHY WE ARE AT WAR

## GREAT BRITAIN'S CASE

BY MEMBERS OF THE OXFORD FACULTY  
OF MODERN HISTORY

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TROYON  
AN ENGAGEMENT IN THE  
BATTLE OF THE AISNE

BY  
A. NEVILLE HILDITCH

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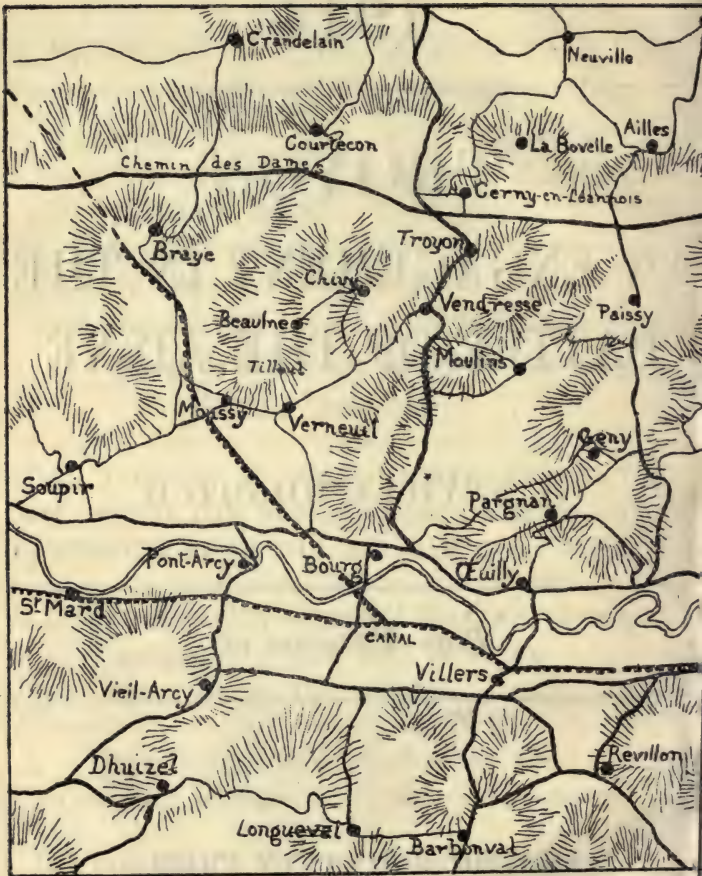
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## TROYON: AN ENGAGEMENT IN THE BATTLE OF THE AISNE<sup>1</sup>

No conflict in history exceeds in magnitude or importance the battle which commenced on the banks of the Aisne on September 13, 1914. The numbers engaged were upwards of two millions. The area involved stretched on September 13 from Verdun to Noyon, a distance of about one hundred and thirty miles, and included Laon and Soissons, Rheims and Compiègne. The immense battle-line lengthened from day to day. On September 28, its western extremity was Peronne. On October 2, gun defied gun from Verdun to Laon, from Laon to Arras. The Battle of the Aisne, which already summarized many engagements that once historians would have dignified, but modern comparisons forbid to be described, as battles in themselves, became itself part of one gigantic conflict which raged from the bounds of England to the confines of Switzerland. The thunder of the guns reverberated from the cliffs of Dover to the gorges of the Swiss Jura. But of the whole battle-line of the Aisne no section was more strategically important than that occupied by the British. Not one of the separate engagements, of the British or of the French, which together comprised the battle, was more strategically important or more stubbornly contested than that fought in the woods and on the hill-sides around Troyon. The struggle

<sup>1</sup> An outline of this narrative may be found in Sir John French's dispatch dated October 8, and published October 18.

opened with a night-attack in the early hours of September 14. How that struggle was won it is our purpose to describe.

Shortly after midnight on September 14, the 2nd Infantry Brigade, billeted in Moulins, began to muster. The conditions, indeed, were favourable to a night-attack. Rain fell at intervals. Heavy mist intensified the darkness. Nevertheless, Brigadier-General Bulfin could not but feel anxiety as to his prospects of success. The force under his command, now mustering without bugle-call or beat of drum, only numbered some 4,000 men. It comprised battalions of the King's Royal Rifles, the Royal Sussex, the Northamptonshire, the Loyal North Lancashire Regiments, and was supported by the 25th Artillery Brigade, which was short of a battery. There was ground for believing, and it was afterwards clearly established, that in the previous week the Germans had carefully selected their position, had taken all ranges, had dug gun-pits and trenches, with the object of making a determined stand here, rather than upon the banks of the Aisne between Oeuilly and the Pont-Arcy. Only a few hours before, on the morning of the 13th, the whole 1st British Division had met with little opposition in crossing the river. But the formidable position to which the enemy had retired, south of the line of the Chemin des Dames, looked down at the wooded slopes around Troyon across a wide valley almost destitute of cover. Some of the oldest local inhabitants could remember that this very spot had been held by the Germans in the campaign of 1871. There was another tradition. Historians asserted that, a short distance away, on the hill above Bourg and Comin, Labienus, the lieutenant of Caesar,



had successfully defended Gaul against barbarians attacking from the north. Excavation a few years before had revealed in the huge quarries there, now occupied by modern artillery, a subterranean village containing quantities of Gallic pottery and arms. The Germans might well be expected to offer considerable resistance. Signs, moreover, were not wanting of the constant watchfulness and activity of both the opposing armies. Desultory firing and the occasional screech of a shell broke the silence at intervals. The Medical Corps were at work bringing in the wounded. Great search-lights swept ceaselessly the death-ridden valley of the Aisne. If those great shafts of light, which the mist hampered but did not destroy, were to play on the woods and fields of Troyon and Vendresse, the British could scarcely hope to deliver their attack without previous discovery. As Bulfin awaited somewhat anxiously the return of the officers' patrol he had sent out to reconnoitre, perhaps he recalled under what different circumstances he had fought in the highlands of Burma, or gained distinction in the South African campaigns. Shortly before three o'clock the officers returned. They reported to the General a considerable force of the enemy near a factory north of Troyon.

Troyon lies on the Laon road, about half-way between Cerny and Vendresse. Wooded slopes of considerable height separate it from where, to its north, near Cerny, the Laon road crosses the Chemin des Dames. West of Troyon, densely wooded country undulates towards the high hills around Braye. East of Troyon a spur of hills rises sharply. Southwards, between Moulins and Troyon, continuous woodland could conceal, but would not facilitate, the approach of the British.

At three o'clock Bulfin ordered the King's Royal

Rifles and the Royal Sussex Regiment to move forward from Moulins. The advance was made as noiselessly as possible. Everything depended upon the enemy being surprised. At length the British drew near. The apprehensions of some of the officers were at one point alarmed by hearing a sudden sharp cry. A stray shot, an effect of the general desultory firing, had shattered the arm of one of the men. He could not restrain a cry of agony. But next moment the brave fellow seized a piece of turf with his uninjured hand and thrust it between his teeth. He held it in this position till he was able to crawl back through the lines. Soon the British came into touch with the German outposts. To conceal their approach now was hardly possible, and they pushed on rapidly till they gained the ground to the north of Troyon. A large factory, occupied by an expectant foe, now impeded further advance. The Germans opened fire. The alarm given, the German batteries in the entrenchments near the factory also opened fire. Meanwhile, the British had formed a firing line, and had begun to creep forward. The skilful use they made of their ground on that day called forth the admiration of the Germans themselves. All efforts to advance, however, were soon checked by the continuous fusillade. The black heights, the factory silhouetted against the sky, the dark wooded slopes, presented to the British lying under cover a front sparkling with innumerable points of fire, illumined by the flashes and shaken by the thunder of numerous guns. Light rain and soaking mist aggravated the discomforts but lessened the dangers of the men. Reinforcements were at hand. At four o'clock the Northamptonshire Regiment had left Moulins and advanced to occupy the hills east of

Troyon. A considerable time passed with the line, thus extended, keeping up a hot fire and advancing where possible. All efforts to dislodge the enemy from the factory proved futile. It was held in considerable force. The darkness, the mist, the rain-sodden ground, hampered the advance of the artillery. The east was paling. The shadows in the woods were growing grey. Dawn would soon break. It was not unlikely that the Rifles and the Sussex Regiment would be unable to maintain their position when revealed by daylight. About six o'clock, therefore, Bulfin directed the Loyal North Lancashires, who had proceeded from Moulins to Vendresse, to support their comrades at Troyon in a determined effort to make headway. The effort proved unavailing. Shortly afterwards, however, the 1st Infantry Brigade arrived. The Coldstream Guards were hurried to the right, the Grenadier, the Irish, the Scots Guards to the left, of the 2nd Brigade.

These reinforcements soon made themselves felt. The very presence of the Guards, indeed, was of considerable moral value. The glory of innumerable campaigns had made them jealous of a reputation won upon such fields as Malplaquet and Fontenoy, as Talavera and Barrosa, and as Inkerman. No other corps of soldiers existing could show as fine a record as that which numbered among its achievements the capture of Gibraltar and the defence of Hougomont at the crisis of Waterloo. The Coldstreams particularly could recall an old resentment against the foes they now faced. Over a hundred years before, in 1793, British and Prussians lay opposite French entrenchments in a forest. They were then allies. 5,000 Austrians had been thrice repulsed with a loss of 1,700 men. The Prussians were asked to undertake the attack.

Their general, who also commanded the British, sent the Coldstreams, only 600 strong, alone to the assault. It was impossible to carry the entrenchments. The regiment was cut up severely. But it could not be dislodged from the wood.

A vigorous attack was now made upon the German lines. The position was rushed at the point of the bayonet. Unsupported by artillery, the British met with a heavy rifle and shell fire before they reached the enemy's trenches. Tremendous hand-to-hand fighting followed. Fourteen years before, stout Boer burghers, impervious to fear of the bullet, had fled in terror at the flash of the deadly bayonet. The Germans had so far shown a partiality for artillery duels, for steady advance in packed masses, for the weight of numbers. They were not accustomed to calculate, nor inclined to rely, upon the dash and the *élan*, as the French say, of a charge with the cold steel. Unable to withstand the furious British assault, they abandoned five guns in a hurried retreat ; 280 prisoners were taken to the rear by the Sussex Regiment, 47 by the Scots Guards.

The capture of the factory could only be effected after a desperate struggle and with considerable loss. The Loyal North Lancashires lay opposite the position. It presented difficulties, indeed, which might well cause misgivings to the bravest. Every door was sure to be bolted and barred. Death lurked behind every window. But the Loyal North Lancashires could not hesitate while other regiments on their right and left were striking vigorously at the foe. A party of them forced a passage over shattered doors and barricades, over ruined furniture, over the piled corpses of the slain. Some prisoners and several machine guns fell

into their hands. The position thus won was held by men of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment throughout the day.

The morning, which had dawned amid the roar of action, was cold and windy, and showed the British how formidable was their task. The line to which the Germans had retreated was strong. Concealed artillery strengthened their entrenchments, which covered a long stretch of rising open ground. The fusillade recommenced and continued with renewed violence. At about nine o'clock the screech of shells coming from the British lines announced that at last the British artillery was able to render the infantry effective support.

Our purpose is merely to record the operations which took place in the neighbourhood of Troyon on September 14. But it is necessary to mention the position of the Allies on either flank of the brigades engaged, which belonged to the 1st Division. To the right of the line of the 1st and 2nd Brigades, on the further side of the spur of hills to the east of Troyon, the troops from French Morocco were entrenched in echelon. They came, indeed, from a region on which Germany had once cast covetous eyes. She had had, however, when she sent the *Panther* to Agadir, good reason to desire to make dependants, or at least allies, of the Moroccans. For they had proved terrible foes. On the left of the 1st Division the 2nd Division had been advancing since an early hour towards Ostel and Braye. The 6th Infantry Brigade, the right wing of the 2nd Division, at nine o'clock reached Tilleul. Here its progress was checked by that artillery and rifle fire which had checked effectually the progress of the brigades north of Troyon. A dangerous

interval of ground disconnected the firing lines of these two forces. Sir Douglas Haig grasped the importance of covering this interval. It was more than likely that the enemy would choose a point so vulnerable for counter-attack. The 3rd Infantry Brigade was at hand. At six o'clock it had left Bourg, where it had been billeted during the night, and had at ten o'clock reached a point one mile south of Vendresse. It was immediately ordered to continue the line of the 1st Brigade and to connect with and aid the right of the 2nd Division. This disposition was speedily justified. No sooner had the 3rd Brigade covered the interval, than a heavy shrapnel fire was opened upon them, and a strong hostile column was found to be advancing.

The commanding officer of the 3rd Brigade, Brigadier-General James Landon, took prompt and decisive action. Two of his battalions made a vigorous counter-attack. A battery of field-guns was rushed into action, and opened fire at short range with deadly effect. The German artillery, hurling a continuous shower of shells during the whole day upon and around Vendresse, could not inflict on the British such slaughter as one deadly hail of shell and bullet could inflict upon the close masses of German infantry. The advancing column, menaced on either flank, hastily recoiled.

Both British and German lines were now strongly held. The fighting during the whole of the morning and till late in the afternoon continued to be of a most desperate character. Both the opposing forces continually delivered attacks and counter-attacks. British and Germans advanced and retired in turn, surging and receding like breakers on a sea-coast. The men in the firing lines took turns in the dangerous duty of

watching for advancing enemies, while the rest lay low in the protecting trenches. Artillery boomed continually from the hill-sides. Maxim and rifle fire crackled ceaselessly in the woods and valleys. At times a sonorous unmistakable hum swelled the volume of sound. The aeroplanes, despite rain and wind, were continually upon the alert. The troops on solid ground watched them circling at dizzy heights amid the flashes of bursting shells, and marvelled at the coolness, the intrepidity, and the skill of those who controlled levers and recorded observations as they hovered, the mark for every hostile gun, in the open sky. No ditch or wall screened the airmen from the most certain and the most horrible of deaths. Only their speed and their good fortune could elude the stray bullet and the flying splinter of shell which would send those delicate mechanisms hurtling to earth. During the course of the struggle a German aeroplane flew at a great height over the British lines. It was well out of reach of fire. A British machine rose, swept in a wide semicircle around its opponent, and mounted steadily. The German, becoming alive to these movements, made efforts to attack his adversary from above. He swooped suddenly and fired. The British swerved giddily upwards, and gained the same altitude as the German. Those who watched from below that remarkable duel could see the two machines manœuvring at a great height for the upper place, and could hear distantly the sound of shots. The airmen showed superb nerve. The struggle ranged up and down for some minutes. Then the British seized a sudden advantage of superior height. The machines seemed to close. The German staggered, its pilot struck by a revolver shot. His slow descent to earth left his adversary in possession of the

air. The British aeroplane, skimming and humming downwards amid the cheers of thousands, could well claim to have marked a signal instance of that personal ascendancy which Sir John French so emphatically extols, and which seems to offer chances of Great Britain adding the dominion of the air to her world-wide domain of the seas.<sup>1</sup>

Many instances are recorded of the successes and checks of that strenuous day. At one point the enemy were shelled out of their trenches and abandoned two machine guns. Fifty of them surrendered at the call of ten British. At another point a battalion of the Guards, the Camerons, and the Black Watch delivered in turn a fierce assault upon the German lines. It was necessary to traverse about half a mile of open ground. They went off with a cheer. The air was full of the scream of shrapnel and the whistle of bullets. So hot and so concentrated was the fusillade that the British were compelled to retire with severe loss. Equally unsuccessful but not less heroic was a charge of the Welsh Regiment. That occasion was rendered memorable by the gallantry of the captain who, struck down while leading the charge and laying about him with an empty rifle, kept uttering dying exhortations of 'Stick it, Welsh!' 'Stick it, Welsh!' His men were, indeed, compelled to retire over his body. But such was the devotion he had inspired that his soldier-servant, afterwards rewarded for his courage with the Victoria Cross, ran out about a hundred yards, exposed to heavy fire, to pick up and bring back to cover his mortally wounded captain. The energy and tenacity

<sup>1</sup> It cannot be claimed as certain that this occurrence took place on September 14. Nevertheless, the evidence is sufficiently strong to warrant its insertion in the narrative of that day's events.



with which they were assailed, however, prompted some Germans to fall back upon a base expedient. A white flag was seen to flutter out at one point in the German lines. It was the token of surrender. A body of the Coldstreams, Grenadiers, Irish Guards, and Connaughts went forward to take the prisoners. No sooner were they well in the open than out burst a ring of fire from concealed artillery. The Germans who had affected to surrender poured in a hot rifle fire. The British, caught in a trap, were cut up in face of a withering fusillade. They perished as martyrs to the unsuspecting faith of chivalry, and as victims of the most disgraceful form of treachery.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon before a perceptible weakening of the German counter-attacks and resistance indicated that a general advance might safely be undertaken. Sir Douglas Haig ordered his whole corps to push forward. The enemy still offered considerable opposition, and maintained very heavy artillery and rifle fire. It was not found possible to advance far. Cerny was in possession of the Germans. The day had been long and strenuous. The enemy had been forced back a considerable distance. The troops were very weary. Nevertheless, most of the contested ground, from the Chemin des Dames on the right to Chivy onwards, was occupied by the British before night-fell.

The 1st Army Corps, and particularly the 1st Division of that Corps, had, indeed, good reason to be satisfied with the result of the day's operations. They had gained a very considerable stretch of difficult and dangerous ground, covered with woods that harboured the infantry and concealed the artillery of the enemy. They had had to contest every yard, to dig trenches.

continually, to creep forward slowly, and occasionally to retire. They had captured 600 prisoners and twelve guns. They had repulsed repeated and prolonged attacks. The Commander-in-Chief asserted in a dispatch that the advanced and commanding position they had won alone enabled him to maintain his ground for more than three weeks of very severe fighting on the northern bank of the Aisne. The casualties had indeed been severe. One brigade alone had lost three of its four colonels. But the captured trenches showed that the Germans had suffered far more heavily.

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# WHY WE ARE AT WAR

## GREAT BRITAIN'S CASE

BY MEMBERS OF THE OXFORD FACULTY  
OF MODERN HISTORY

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THE ACTION OFF  
HELIGOLAND

AUGUST 1914

BY

L. CECIL JANE

WITH TWO MAPS

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*Price Threepence net*

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## MAPS

Between pages 20 and 21

HELIGOLAND AND THE COAST  
CHART OF HELIGOLAND

(On a larger scale)

## INTRODUCTION

HELIGOLAND was originally a Danish possession ; its population is mainly of Frisian extraction. From 1807 to 1890 it was held by Great Britain, having been seized for naval reasons, and was used as a naval station during the last stages of the Napoleonic War. In July 1890, by the Anglo-German agreement, concluded between Lord Salisbury and General von Caprivi, it was transferred to the German Empire.

The island lies in the North Sea, about 35 nautical miles NW. of Cuxhaven, 43 nautical miles N. of Wilhelmshaven, and 260 nautical miles E. by N. from Yarmouth. It consists of a rocky plateau, with an approximate area of 130 acres ; a stretch of excellent sand to the south-eastward made it a favourite summer bathing resort for the people of Hamburg and north-eastern Germany. The island is peculiar in the fact that there is an entire absence of wheeled traffic.

### HARBOURS OF HELIGOLAND

The original, or inner, harbour of the island is some 400 yards long by 200 yards wide. A new, or outer, harbour is in process of completion ; it is intended to be about 900 yards long by 600 yards wide. The harbour is entered from the east,

There are also two havens. The North Haven lies to the NE. of the island, between it and the sand-bank, known as Olde Hoven Brunnen; it is impossible to proceed from this haven to the harbour. The South Haven is ESE. of the island, between it and the rock of Düne. To the north of this haven, between it and the North Haven, there is an anchorage for torpedo craft, prohibited to all other vessels than those of the German Navy. This anchorage is about five cables by two cables in area, and has an average depth of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms.

#### NAVAL VALUE OF THE ISLAND

Since its cession, considerable attention has been devoted to the island by the German Admiralty. One of the most serious difficulties with which the German naval administration has had to contend is the fact that on the North Sea coast of the empire there is no really satisfactory port. Hamburg and Bremen lie far up the rivers Elbe and Weser. The original naval base on the North Sea, Wilhelms-haven, where is an imperial dockyard, suffers from the fact that Jade Bay is extremely sandy; the harbour can only be kept open by means of constant dredging. The new base, Cuxhaven, opposite the junction of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal with the Elbe, suffers, in a slightly lesser degree, from the same drawback. Hence every effort has been made to utilize Heligoland. It has been converted into a base for torpedo craft and submarines, and two Zeppelin sheds, said to be of the 'disappearing' variety, have been constructed on the island. But



the value of Heligoland is much reduced by the fact that it suffers in a peculiar degree from erosion, and can, indeed, only be preserved from destruction by artificial means and at a considerable annual cost. The shores of the island are carefully protected by deposits of cement, which are constantly washed away in westerly gales and require frequent renewal.

#### FORTIFICATIONS

Heligoland, as well as the whole North Sea coast of Germany, has been very carefully fortified. The forts are of the cupola type, built of concrete, and are defended by 11-inch guns; the statement that the guns are 12-inch seems to be unfounded. Theoretically, both the island and the whole coast should be impregnable; it is supposed that a single shot from one of these guns would suffice to sink any ship. It must, however, be remembered that the value of cupola forts has been somewhat discounted by the experiences of Namur and other places.

#### ANCHORAGE OF HELIGOLAND

To the east of the island, immediately beyond the 'prohibited' anchorage, is the rock of Düne. It is protected by groynes, but both its area and shape are subject to frequent changes; it is in reality little more than a sandbank, serving as the site for three beacons. Beyond it, eastward, there is an anchorage for large vessels, which is satisfactory in westerly winds. It is probable that this is the anchorage which is mentioned in the dispatches as

having been 'examined' on September 14, and that it has been utilized as a station for light cruisers. It is commanded by the guns of Heligoland.

#### BIGHT OF HELIGOLAND

The Bight of Heligoland, the scene of the operations described in the dispatches, is to the NE. of the island, from which it is distant some seven miles. It forms a channel, with an approximate width of eighteen miles and an average depth of nine fathoms, between the shallows near Heligoland and the shoals off the Holstein coast. Through it lies the regular course for ships proceeding northwards from the Elbe ports.

#### BRITISH SHIPS ENGAGED

The following are brief details of the British vessels, mentioned as having taken part in the operations.

The date signifies date of completion; D. displacement; C. complement; G. guns. The speed given is the best recent speed, unless otherwise stated.

##### (i) BATTLE CRUISERS

*Lion* (1912: Devonport). D. 26,350. C. 1,000.  
Sp. 31·7 kts. Guns: eight 13·5-inch; sixteen 4-inch.

*Queen Mary* (1913: Clydebank). D. 27,000. C. 1,000. Sp. 33. Guns: (as *Lion*).

*New Zealand* (1912: Fairfield). D. 18,750. C. 800.  
Sp. 25 (designed: her sister's best recent speed)

is 29·13). Guns : eight 12-inch ; sixteen 4-inch.

*Invincible* (1908 : Elswick). D. 17,250. C. 750. Sp. 28·6. Guns : (as *New Zealand*).

All these vessels possess three submerged tubes. Their armour is Krupp.

### (ii) CRUISERS

The cruisers mentioned are the *Bacchante*, *Cressy*, *Euryalus*, and *Hogue*. They were sisters. Displacement, 12,000 tons : complement, 700 (*Euryalus*, as flagship, 745). Guns : two 9·2-inch ; twelve 6-inch ; thirteen 12-pounders. Two submerged tubes. Armour, Krupp.

The *Bacchante* (1902) was built at Clydebank ; *Cressy* (1901), Fairfield ; *Euryalus* (1903) and *Hogue* (1902), Vickers.

Best recent speeds were : *Bacchante*, 19·5 kts. ; *Cressy*, 19·2 ; *Euryalus*, 20·3 ; *Hogue*, 17.

The *Hogue* and *Cressy*, with their sister, the *Aboukir*, were sunk by a German submarine on September 22.

### (iii) LIGHT CRUISERS

*Arethusa* (1913). D. 3,520. C. —. Sp. (designed) 30 kts. Guns : two 6-inch ; six 4-inch. Four tubes, above water. (Chatham.)

*Lowestoft* (1914). D. 5,400. C. —. Sp. (designed) 24·75. Guns : nine 6-inch ; four 3-pounders. Two submerged tubes. (Chatham.)

*Liverpool* (1910). D. 4,800. C. 376. Sp. (designed) 25. Guns : two 6-inch ; ten 4-inch ; four

3-pounders. Two submerged tubes. Armour, Krupp. (Vickers.)

*Fearless* (1913). D. 3,440. C. 320. Sp. (designed) 25. Guns: ten 4-inch; four 3-pounders. Two tubes above water. Unarmoured. (Pembroke.)

*Amethyst* (1904). D. 3,000. C. 296. Sp. 20. Guns: twelve 4-inch; eight 3-pounders. Two tubes above water. (Elswick.)

#### (iv) DESTROYERS

The destroyers mentioned were:

(a) Four of the L Class: D. 807 tons. Sp. 35. Armament: three 4-inch; four tubes. (1912-13.) The *Laurel* and *Liberty* are White boats; *Laertes*, Swan, Hunter & Richardson; *Laforey*, Fairfield.

(b) Two special boats of I Class, *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*. D. 790. C. 72. Sp. (designed) 32. Armament: two 4-inch; two 12-pounders; two tubes. (1911.) (Yarrow.)

(c) Three boats, Admiralty design, I Class: *Defender*, *Goshawk*, and *Ferret*. D. (nominal) 750. C. 72. Armament, as *Lurcher*. Sp. (designed) 27. (1911.) *Defender* is a Denny boat; *Ferret*, White; *Goshawk*, Beardmore. The actual displacement varies slightly from the nominal; speed in some cases rather above designed speed.

#### (v) SPECIAL SERVICE

*Maidstone* (1911: Scott's S. and E. Co.). Submarine dépôt ship. D. 3,600 tons. Sp. 14 kts.

## (vi) SUBMARINES

(a) D Class. Nos. 1, 2 and 8. D 1 (1907). D. 550-600. Maximum speed, 16-9. Tubes, 3. D 2 and D 8 (1910-11). D. 550-600. Maximum speed, 16-10. Tubes, 3.

(b) E Class. Nos. 4 to 9. (1912.) D. 725-810. Sp. 16-10. Tubes, 4.

## GERMAN SHIPS MENTIONED

. Of the German vessels mentioned :

(i) *Mainz* (1909) (Vulkan Co.). D. 4,350. C. 362. Sp. (designed) 25·5. Guns : twelve 4-inch ; four 5-pounders ; four machine. Two submerged tubes. One of *Kolberg* class.

(ii) *Helia* (1896 : refitted, 1910), (Weser, Bremen). D. 2,040. C. 178. Guns : four 15½-pounders ; six 6-pounders ; two machine. One submerged tube ; two above water. Sp. 18. Was to be replaced.

(iii) V 187 (1909-11) (Vulkan). C. 82. Sp. 32·5. D. *circa* 650 tons. Armament : two 24-pounders ; three tubes.

(iv) S 126 (1906). D. 487. Sp. 28. C. 68. Armament : three 4-pounders ; two machine. Three tubes.

The four-funnelled cruiser mentioned must have been either one of the *Breslau* and *Karlsruhe* class, or one of the *Roon* class. The former class comprises twelve vessels, four of the *Breslau* type, and eight of the *Karlsruhe* type (of which two were completed in 1913, two were due to be completed

in the present year, two in 1915, and two later). Details of the *Breslau* class are as follows : D. 4,550. C. 370. Sp. (designed) 25½ kts. Guns : twelve 4·1-inch. Two submerged tubes. (The actual speed of these ships is above the designed speed.) Details of the *Karlsruhe* class are as follows : D. 4,900. C. 373. Sp. (designed) 28 kts. Guns : twelve 4·1-inch. Two submerged tubes. (1912-13.) The *Roon* class, containing two vessels, the *Roon* and *Yorck* (the latter since sunk), have : D. 9,050. C. 557. Sp. (designed) 21 kts. Guns : four 8·2-inch ; ten 6-inch ; eleven 24-pounders ; four machine. Four submerged tubes. (1905-6.)

#### PAST SERVICES OF BRITISH OFFICERS

Some of the British officers concerned had already seen active service and gained distinctions.

Vice-Admiral (Acting) Sir David Beatty served as a lieutenant on the river Nile, during the operations of 1898, and conducted the bombardment of the Dongola forts. He also served as commander of the *Barfleur* at Tientsin in 1900.

Rear-Admiral Arthur H. Christian served on the expedition against King Kobo of Nimby, 1895, and captured M'weli, the stronghold of the Arab chief Mburuk in the same year.

Commodore Reginald Y. Tyrwhitt commanded the landing party during the disturbances at Bluefields, 1894, and was thanked by the inhabitants.

Commodore Roger J. B. Keyes served against the Sultan of Vitu, 1890. In the *Fame*, he cut out four

Chinese destroyers, 1900, and was promoted for this service.

Captain William F. Blunt was present at the blockade of Zanzibar, 1888-9, and also served in Crete, 1897-8, and in China, 1900.

Commander Charles R. Samson served in Somaliland, 1902-4. He made the first flight from the deck of a British warship in 1912.





## NAVAL ENGAGEMENT OFF HELIGOLAND

*Admiralty, 21st October, 1914.*

The following despatches have been received from Vice-Admiral (Acting) Sir David Beatty, K.C.B., M.V.O., D.S.O., H.M.S. 'Lion', Rear-Admiral Arthur H. Christian, M.V.O., H.M.S. 'Euryalus', Commodore Reginald Y. Tyrwhitt, Commodore (T.), H.M.S. 'Arethusa', and Commodore Roger J. B. Keyes, C.B., M.V.O., Commodore (S.), reporting the engagement off Heligoland on Friday, the 28th August.

A memorandum by the Director of the Air Department, Admiralty, is annexed.

*H.M.S. 'Lion',*

*1st September, 1914.*

Sir,—I have the honour to report that on Thursday, 27th August, at 5 a.m., I proceeded with the First Battle Cruiser Squadron and First Light Cruiser Squadron in company, to rendezvous with the Rear-Admiral, 'Invincible'.

At 4 a.m., 28th August, the movements of the Flotillas commenced as previously arranged, the Battle Cruiser Squadron and Light Cruiser Squadron supporting. The Rear-Admiral, 'Invincible', with 'New Zealand' and four Destroyers having joined

my flag, the Squadron passed through the pre-arranged rendezvous.

At 8.10 a.m. I received a signal from the Commodore (T), informing me that the Flotilla was in action with the enemy. This was presumably in the vicinity of their prearranged rendezvous. From this time until 11 a.m. I remained about the vicinity ready to support as necessary, intercepting various signals, which contained no information on which I could act.

#### SUBMARINE ATTACK

At 11 a.m. the Squadron was attacked by three Submarines. The attack was frustrated by rapid manœuvring and the four Destroyers were ordered to attack them. Shortly after 11 a.m., various signals having been received indicating that the Commodore (T) and Commodore (S) were both in need of assistance, I ordered the Light Cruiser Squadron to support the Torpedo Flotillas.

Later I received a signal from the Commodore (T), stating that he was being attacked by a large Cruiser, and a further signal informing me that he was being hard pressed and asking for assistance. The Captain (D), First Flotilla, also signalled that he was in need of help.

#### INTERVENTION OF THE BATTLE CRUISERS

From the foregoing the situation appeared to me critical. The Flotillas had advanced only ten miles since 8 a.m., and were only about twenty-five miles from two enemy bases on their flank and

rear respectively. Commodore Goodenough had detached two of his Light Cruisers to assist some Destroyers earlier in the day, and these had not yet rejoined. (They rejoined at 2.30 p.m.) As the reports indicated the presence of many enemy ships—one a large Cruiser—I considered that his force might not be strong enough to deal with the situation sufficiently rapidly, so at 11.30 a.m. the Battle Cruisers turned to E.S.E., and worked up to full speed. It was evident that to be of any value the support must be overwhelming and carried out at the highest speed possible.

I had not lost sight of the risk of Submarines, and possible sortie in force from the enemy's base, especially in view of the mist to the South-East.

Our high speed, however, made submarine attack difficult, and the smoothness of the sea made their detection comparatively easy. I considered that we were powerful enough to deal with any sortie except by a Battle Squadron, which was unlikely to come out in time, provided our stroke was sufficiently rapid.

#### THE 'MAINZ' ATTACKED

At 12.15 p.m. 'Fearless' and First Flotilla were sighted retiring West. At the same time the Light Cruiser Squadron was observed to be engaging an enemy ship ahead. They appeared to have her beat.

#### ENEMY CRUISER ENGAGED WITH THIRD FLOTILLA

I then steered N.E. to sounds of firing ahead, and at 12.30 p.m. sighted 'Arethusa' and Third Flotilla retiring to the Westward engaging a Cruiser of the

'Kolberg' class on our Port Bow. I steered to cut her off from Heligoland, and at 12.37 p.m. opened fire. At 12.42 the enemy turned to N.E., and we chased at 27 knots.

#### 'LION' ENGAGED WITH AN ENEMY CRUISER

At 12.56 p.m. sighted and engaged a two-funnelled Cruiser ahead. 'Lion' fired two salvos at her, which took effect, and she disappeared into the mist, burning furiously and in a sinking condition. In view of the mist and that she was steering at high speed at right angles to 'Lion', who was herself steaming at 28 knots, the 'Lion's' firing was very creditable.

Our Destroyers had reported the presence of floating mines to the Eastward and I considered it inadvisable to pursue her. It was also essential that the Squadrons should remain concentrated, and I accordingly ordered a withdrawal. The Battle Cruisers turned North and circled to port to complete the destruction of the vessel first engaged.

#### SINKING OF THE 'MAINZ'

She was sighted again at 1.25 p.m. steaming S.E. with colours still flying. 'Lion' opened fire with two turrets, and at 1.35 p.m., after receiving two salvos, she sank.

The four attached Destroyers were sent to pick up survivors, but I deeply regret that they subsequently reported that they searched the area but found none.

## SUBMARINE ATTACK ON 'QUEEN MARY'

At 1.40 p.m. the Battle Cruisers turned to the Northward, and 'Queen Mary' was again attacked by a Submarine. The attack was avoided by the use of the helm. 'Lowestoft' was also unsuccessfully attacked. The Battle Cruisers covered the retirement until nightfall. By 6 p.m., the retirement having been well executed and all Destroyers accounted for, I altered course, spread the Light Cruisers, and swept northwards in accordance with the Commander-in-Chief's orders. At 7.45 p.m. I detached 'Liverpool' to Rosyth with German prisoners, 7 officers and 79 men, survivors from 'Mainz'. No further incident occurred.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient Servant,

(Signed) DAVID BEATTY,  
Vice-Admiral.

The Secretary of the Admiralty.

## WORK OF THE CRUISER FORCE

'Euryalus',

28th September, 1914.

Sir,—I have the honour to report that in accordance with your orders a reconnaissance in force was carried out in the Heligoland Bight on the 28th August, with the object of attacking the enemy's Light Cruisers and Destroyers.

The forces under my orders (viz., the Cruiser Force, under Rear-Admiral H. H. Campbell, C.V.O., 'Euryalus', 'Amethyst', First and Third Destroyer

Flotillas and the Submarines) took up the positions assigned to them on the evening of the 27th August, and, in accordance with directions given, proceeded during the night to approach the Heligoland Bight.

#### ASSISTANCE RENDERED TO INJURED VESSELS

The Cruiser Force under Rear-Admiral Campbell, with 'Euryalus' (my Flagship) and 'Amethyst', was stationed to intercept any enemy vessels chased to the westward. At 4.30 p.m. on the 28th August these Cruisers, having proceeded to the eastward, fell in with 'Lurcher' and three other Destroyers, and the wounded and prisoners in these vessels were transferred in boats to 'Bacchante' and 'Cressy', which left for the Nore. 'Amethyst' took 'Laurel' in tow, and at 9.30 p.m. 'Hogue' was detached to take 'Arethusa' in tow. This latter is referred to in Commodore R. Y. Tyrwhitt's report, and I quite concur in his remarks as to the skill and rapidity with which this was done in the dark with no lights permissible.

#### INDIVIDUAL SERVICES MENTIONED

Commodore Reginald Y. Tyrwhitt was in command of the Destroyer Flotillas, and his report is enclosed herewith. His attack was delivered with great skill and gallantry, and he was most ably seconded by Captain William F. Blunt, in 'Fearless', and the Officers in command of the Destroyers, who handled their vessels in a manner worthy of the best traditions of the British Navy.

Commodore Roger J. B. Keyes, in 'Lurcher', had, on the 27th August, escorted some Submarines into positions allotted to them in the immediate vicinity of the enemy's coast. On the morning of the 28th August, in company with 'Firedrake', he searched the area to the southward of the Battle Cruisers for the enemy's Submarines, and subsequently, having been detached, was present at the sinking of the German Cruiser 'Mainz', when he gallantly proceeded alongside her and rescued 220 of her crew, many of whom were wounded. Subsequently he escorted 'Laurel' and 'Liberty' out of action, and kept them company till Rear-Admiral Campbell's Cruisers were sighted.

As regards the Submarine Officers, I would specially mention the names of :—

(a) Lieutenant-Commander Ernest W. Leir. His coolness and resource in rescuing the crews of the 'Goshawk's' and 'Defender's' boats at a critical time of the action were admirable.

(b) Lieutenant-Commander Cecil P. Talbot. In my opinion, the bravery and resource of the Officers in command of Submarines since the war commenced are worthy of the highest commendation.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. H. CHRISTIAN,

Rear-Admiral.

The Secretary, Admiralty.

## WORK OF DESTROYER FLOTILLA

*H.M.S. 'Lowestoft',**26th September, 1914.*

Sir,—I have the honour to report that at 5 a.m. on Thursday, 27th August, in accordance with orders received from Their Lordships, I sailed in 'Arethusa', in company with the First and Third Flotillas, except 'Hornet', 'Tigress', 'Hydra', and 'Loyal', to carry out the prearranged operations. H.M.S. 'Fearless' joined the Flotillas at sea that afternoon.

At 6.53 a.m. on Friday, 28th August, an enemy's Destroyer was sighted, and was chased by the 4th Division of the Third Flotilla.

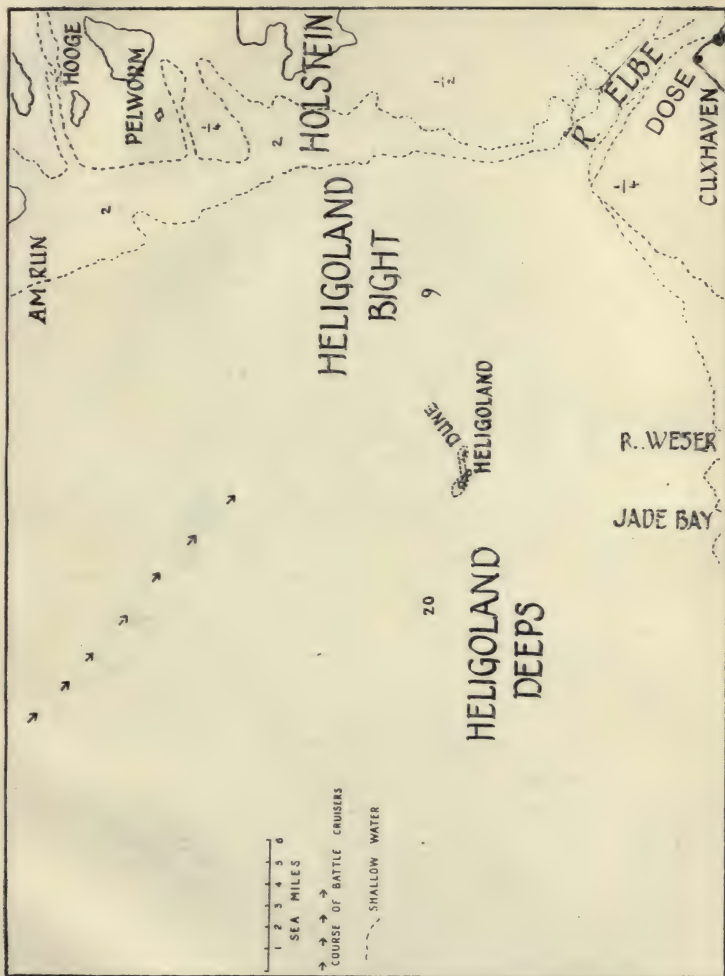
From 7.20 to 7.57 a.m. 'Arethusa' and the Third Flotilla were engaged with numerous Destroyers and Torpedo Boats which were making for Heligoland; course was altered to port to cut them off.

## ENEMY CRUISERS ENGAGED

Two Cruisers, with 4 and 2 funnels respectively, were sighted on the port bow at 7.57 a.m., the nearest of which was engaged. 'Arethusa' received a heavy fire from both Cruisers and several Destroyers until 8.15 a.m., when the four-funnelled Cruiser transferred her fire to 'Fearless'.

Close action was continued with the two-funnelled Cruiser on converging courses until 8.25 a.m., when a 6-inch projectile from 'Arethusa' wrecked the fore bridge of the enemy, who at once turned away in the direction of Heligoland, which was sighted slightly on the starboard bow at about the same time.





HELIQOLAND;  
BIQHT

9

4

7

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11

5

12

N

8

NORTH  
CHANNEL

12

8

ANCHORAGE  
FOR LARGE  
VESSELS

9



6

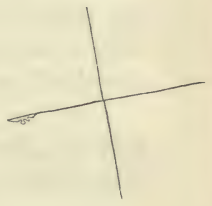
SOUTH  
CHANNEL

15

10

HELIGOLAND  
DEEPS

24 HELIGOLAND



10 CABLES  
ONE SEA MILE



All ships were at once ordered to turn to the westward, and shortly afterwards speed was reduced to 20 knots.

#### DAMAGE DONE TO THE 'ARETHUSA'

During this action 'Arethusa' had been hit many times, and was considerably damaged; only one 6-inch gun remained in action, all other guns and torpedo tubes having been temporarily disabled.

Lieutenant Eric W. P. Westmacott (Signal Officer) was killed at my side during this action. I cannot refrain from adding that he carried out his duties calmly and collectedly, and was of the greatest assistance to me.

A fire occurred opposite No. 2 gun port side caused by a shell exploding some ammunition, resulting in a terrific blaze for a short period and leaving the deck burning. This was very promptly dealt with and extinguished by Chief Petty Officer Frederick W. Wrench, O.N. 158630.

The Flotillas were re-formed in Divisions and proceeded at 20 knots. It was now noticed that 'Arethusa's' speed had been reduced.

#### SINKING OF AN ENEMY DESTROYER

'Fearless' reported that the 3rd and 5th Divisions of the First Flotilla had sunk the German Commodore's Destroyer and that two boats' crews belonging to 'Defender' had been left behind as our Destroyers had been fired upon by a German Cruiser during their act of mercy in saving the survivors of the German Destroyer.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH ENEMY CRUISERS

At 10 a.m., hearing that Commodore (S) in 'Lurcher' and 'Firedrake' were being chased by Light Cruisers, I proceeded to his assistance with 'Fearless' and the First Flotilla until 10.37 a.m., when, having received no news and being in the vicinity of Heligoland, I ordered the ships in company to turn to the westward.

All guns except two 4-inch were again in working order, and the upper deck supply of ammunition was replenished.

At 10.55 a.m. a four-funnelled German Cruiser was sighted, and opened a very heavy fire at about 11 o'clock.

Our position being somewhat critical, I ordered 'Fearless' to attack, and the First Flotilla to attack with torpedoes, which they proceeded to do with great spirit. The Cruiser at once turned away, disappeared in the haze and evaded the attack.

About 10 minutes later the same Cruiser appeared on our starboard quarter. Opened fire on her with both 6-inch guns; 'Fearless' also engaged her, and one Division of Destroyers attacked her with torpedoes without success.

The state of affairs and our position was then reported to the Admiral Commanding Battle Cruiser Squadron.

We received a very severe and almost accurate fire from this Cruiser; salvo after salvo was falling between 10 and 30 yards short, but not a single shell

struck ; two torpedoes were also fired at us, being well directed, but short.

The Cruiser was badly damaged by ' Arethusa's ' 6-inch guns and a splendidly directed fire from ' Fearless,' and she shortly afterwards turned away in the direction of Heligoland.

#### SINKING OF THE ' MAINZ '

Proceeded, and four minutes later sighted the three-funnelled Cruiser ' Mainz '. She endured a heavy fire from ' Arethusa ' and ' Fearless ' and many Destroyers. After an action of approximately 25 minutes she was seen to be sinking by the head, her engines stopped, besides being on fire.

At this moment the Light Cruiser Squadron appeared, and they very speedily reduced the ' Mainz ' to a condition which must have been indescribable.

I then recalled ' Fearless ' and the Destroyers, and ordered cease fire.

We then exchanged broadsides with a large, four-funnelled Cruiser on the starboard quarter at long range, without visible effect.

The Battle Cruiser Squadron now arrived, and I pointed out this Cruiser to the Admiral Commanding, and was shortly afterwards informed by him that the Cruiser in question had been sunk and another set on fire.

#### STATE OF THE WEATHER

The weather during the day was fine, sea calm, but visibility poor, not more than 3 miles at any

time when the various actions were taking place, and was such that ranging and spotting were rendered difficult.]

#### WITHDRAWAL OF THE FLOTILLA

I then proceeded with 14 Destroyers of the Third Flotilla and 9 of the First Flotilla.

'Arethusa's' speed was about 6 knots until 7 p.m., when it was impossible to proceed any further, and fires were drawn in all boilers except two, and assistance called for.

At 9.30 p.m. Captain Wilmot S. Nicholson, of the 'Hogue', took my ship in tow in a most seamanlike manner, and, observing that the night was pitch dark and the only lights showing were two small hand lanterns, I consider his action was one which deserves special notice from Their Lordships.

I would also specially recommend Lieutenant-Commander Arthur P. N. Thorowgood, of 'Arethusa', for the able manner he prepared the ship for being towed in the dark.

H.M. Ship under my command was then towed to the Nore, arriving at 5 p.m. on the 29th August. Steam was then available for slow speed, and the ship was able to proceed to Chatham under her own steam.

#### INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

I beg again to call attention to the services rendered by Captain W. F. Blunt, of H.M.S. 'Fearless', and the Commanding Officers of the Destroyers of the First and Third Flotillas, whose gallant attacks



on the German Cruisers at critical moments undoubtedly saved 'Arethusa' from more severe punishment and possible capture.

I cannot adequately express my satisfaction and pride at the spirit and ardour of my Officers and Ship's Company, who carried out their orders with the greatest alacrity under the most trying conditions, especially in view of the fact that the ship, newly built, had not been 48 hours out of the Dockyard before she was in action.

It is difficult to specially pick out individuals, but the following came under my special observation :—

*H.M.S. 'Arethusa'.*

Lieutenant-Commander Arthur P. N. Thorowgood, First Lieutenant, and in charge of the After Control.

Lieutenant-Commander Ernest K. Arbuthnot (G.), in charge of the Fore Control.

Sub-Lieutenant Clive A. Robinson, who worked the range-finder throughout the entire action with extraordinary coolness.

Assistant Paymaster Kenneth E. Badcock, my Secretary, who attended me on the bridge throughout the entire action.

Mr. James D. Godfrey, Gunner (T), who was in charge of the torpedo tubes.

The following men were specially noted :—

Armourer Arthur F. Hayes, O.N. 342026 (Ch.).

Second Sick Berth Steward George Trolley, O.N. M.296 (Ch.).

Chief Yeoman of Signals Albert Fox, O.N. 194656 (Po.), on fore bridge during entire action.

Chief Petty Officer Frederick W. Wrench, O.N. 158630 (Ch.) (for ready resource in extinguishing fire caused by explosion of cordite).

Private Thomas Millington, R.M.L.I., No. Ch. 17417.

Private William J. Beirne, R.M.L.I., No. Ch. 13540.

First Writer Albert W. Stone, O.N. 346080 (Po.).

I also beg to record the services rendered by the following Officers and Men of H.M. Ships under my orders :—

*H.M.S. ' Fearless '.*

Mr. Robert M. Taylor, Gunner, for coolness in action under heavy fire.

The following Officers also displayed great resource and energy in effecting repairs to ' Fearless ' after her return to harbour, and they were ably seconded by the whole of their staffs :—

Engineer Lieutenant-Commander Charles de F. Messervy.

Mr. William Morrissey, Carpenter.

*H.M.S. ' Goshawk '.*

Commander The Hon. Herbert Meade, who took his Division into action with great coolness and nerve, and was instrumental in sinking the German Destroyer ' V.187 ', and, with the boats of his Division, saved the survivors in a most chivalrous manner.

*H.M.S. ' Ferret '.*

Commander Geoffrey Mackworth, who, with his Division, most gallantly seconded Commander Meade of ' Goshawk '.

*H.M.S. ' Laertes '.*

Lieutenant-Commander Malcolm L. Goldsmith, whose ship was seriously damaged, taken in tow, and towed out of action by ' Fearless '.

Engineer Lieutenant-Commander Alexander Hill, for repairing steering gear and engines under fire.

Sub-Lieutenant George H. Faulkner, who continued to fight his gun after being wounded.

Mr. Charles Powell, Acting Boatswain, O.N. 209388, who was gunlayer of the centre gun, which made many hits. He behaved very coolly, and set a good example when getting in tow and clearing away the wreckage after the action.

Edward Naylor, Petty Officer, Torpedo Gunner's Mate, O.N. 189136, who fired a torpedo which the Commanding Officer of 'Laertes' reports undoubtedly hit the 'Mainz', and so helped materially to put her out of action.

Stephen Pritchard, Stoker Petty Officer, O.N. 285152, who very gallantly dived into the cabin flat immediately after a shell had exploded there, and worked a fire hose.

Frederick Pierce, Stoker Petty Officer, O.N. 307943, who was on watch in the engine room and behaved with conspicuous coolness and resource when a shell exploded in No. 2 boiler.

#### *H.M.S. 'Laurel'.*

Commander Frank F. Rose, who most ably commanded his vessel throughout the early part of the action, and after having been wounded in both legs, remained on the bridge until 6 p.m., displaying great devotion to duty.

Lieutenant Charles R. Peploe, First Lieutenant, who took command after Commander Rose was wounded, and continued the action till its close, bringing his Destroyer out in an able and gallant manner under most trying conditions.

Engineer Lieutenant-Commander Edward H. T. Meeson, who behaved with great coolness during the action, and steamed the ship out of action, although she had been very severely damaged by explosion of her own lyddite, by which the after funnel was

nearly demolished. He subsequently assisted to carry out repairs to the vessel.

Sam Palmer, Leading Seaman (G.L. 2) O.N. 179529, who continued to fight his gun until the end of the action, although severely wounded in the leg.

Albert Edmund Sellens, Able Seaman (L.T.O.), O.N. 217245, who was stationed at the fore torpedo tubes ; he remained at his post throughout the entire action, although wounded in the arm, and then rendered first aid in a very able manner before being attended to himself.

George H. Sturdy, Chief Stoker, O.N. 285547, and

Alfred Britton, Stoker Petty Officer, O.N. 289893, who both showed great coolness in putting out a fire near the centre gun after an explosion had occurred there ; several lyddite shells were lying in the immediate vicinity.

William R. Boiston, Engine Room Artificer, 3rd class, O.N. M.1369, who showed great ability and coolness in taking charge of the after boiler room during the action, when an explosion blew in the after funnel and a shell carried away pipes and seriously damaged the main steam pipe.

William H. Gorst, Stoker Petty Officer, O.N. 305616.

Edward Crane, Stoker Petty Officer, O.N. 307275.

Harry Wilfred Hawkes, Stoker 1st class, O.N. K.12086.

John W. Bateman, Stoker 1st class, O.N. K.12100.

These men were stationed in the after boiler room and conducted themselves with great coolness during the action, when an explosion blew in the after funnel, and shell carried away pipes and seriously damaged the main steam pipe.

#### *H.M.S. 'Liberty'.*

The late Lieutenant-Commander Nigel K. W. Barttelot commanded the 'Liberty' with great skill and gallantry throughout the action. He was a

most promising and able Officer, and I consider his death is a great loss to the Navy.

Engineer Lieutenant-Commander Frank A. Butler, who showed much resource in effecting repairs during the action.

Lieutenant Henry E. Horan, First Lieutenant, who took command after the death of Lieutenant-Commander Barttelot, and brought his ship out of action in an extremely able and gallant manner under most trying conditions.

Mr. Harry Morgan, Gunner (T), who carried out his duties with exceptional coolness under fire.

Chief Petty Officer James Samuel Beadle, O.N. 171735, who remained at his post at the wheel for over an hour after being wounded in the kidneys.

John Galvin, Stoker Petty Officer, O.N. 279946, who took entire charge, under the Engineer Officer, of the party who stopped leaks, and accomplished his task although working up to his chest in water.

*H.M.S. 'Laforey'.*

Mr. Ernest Roper, Chief Gunner, who carried out his duties with exceptional coolness under fire.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

R. Y. TYRWHITT,

Commodore (T).

WORK OF SUBMARINES SINCE THE OUTBREAK  
OF WAR

*H.M.S. 'Maidstone',*

*17th October, 1914.*

Sir,—In compliance with Their Lordships' directions, I have the honour to report as follows upon

the services performed by Submarines since the commencement of hostilities :—

#### RECONNAISSANCE IN HELIGOLAND BIGHT

Three hours after the outbreak of war, Submarines ' E.6 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Cecil P. Talbot), and ' E.8 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Francis H. H. Goodhart), proceeded unaccompanied to carry out a reconnaissance in the Heligoland Bight. These two vessels returned with useful information, and had the privilege of being the pioneers on a service which is attended by some risk.

#### PROTECTION OF TRANSPORTS

During the transportation of the Expeditionary Force the ' Lurcher ' and ' Firedrake ' and all the Submarines of the Eighth Submarine Flotilla occupied positions from which they could have attacked the High Sea Fleet, had it emerged to dispute the passage of our transports. This patrol was maintained day and night without relief, until the personnel of our Army had been transported and all chance of effective interference had disappeared.

#### OPERATIONS ON THE GERMAN COAST

These Submarines have since been incessantly employed on the Enemy's Coast in the Heligoland Bight and elsewhere, and have obtained much valuable information regarding the composition and movement of his patrols. They have occupied his waters and reconnoitred his anchorages, and, while so engaged, have been subjected to skilful and well-

executed anti-submarine tactics ; hunted for hours at a time by Torpedo Craft and attacked by gunfire and torpedoes.

#### ENGAGEMENT OFF HELIGOLAND

At midnight on the 26th August, I embarked in the 'Lurcher', and, in company with 'Firedrake' and Submarines 'D.2', 'D.8', 'E.4', 'E.5', 'E.6', 'E.7', 'E.8', and 'E.9' of the Eighth Submarine Flotilla, proceeded to take part in the operations in the Heligoland Bight arranged for the 28th August. The Destroyers scouted for the Submarines until nightfall on the 27th, when the latter proceeded independently to take up various positions from which they could co-operate with the Destroyer Flotillas on the following morning.

At daylight on the 28th August the 'Lurcher' and 'Firedrake' searched the area, through which the Battle Cruisers were to advance, for hostile Submarines, and then proceeded towards Heligoland in the wake of Submarines 'E.6', 'E.7', and 'E.8', which were exposing themselves with the object of inducing the enemy to chase them to the westward.

#### STATE OF THE WEATHER

On approaching Heligoland, the visibility, which had been very good to seaward, reduced to 5,000 to 6,000 yards, and this added considerably to the anxieties and responsibilities of the Commanding Officers of Submarines, who handled their vessels with coolness and judgment in an area which was necessarily occupied by friends as well as foes.

Low visibility and calm sea are the most unfavourable conditions under which Submarines can operate, and no opportunity occurred of closing with the Enemy's Cruisers to within torpedo range.

#### SINKING OF ' V.187 '

Lieutenant-Commander Ernest W. Leir, Commanding Submarine ' E.4 ', witnessed the sinking of the German Torpedo Boat Destroyer ' V.187 ' through his periscope, and, observing a Cruiser of the ' Stettin ' class close, and open fire on the British Destroyers which had lowered their boats to pick up the survivors, he proceeded to attack the Cruiser, but she altered course before he could get within range. After covering the retirement of our Destroyers, which had had to abandon their boats, he returned to the latter, and embarked a Lieutenant and nine men of ' Defender ', who had been left behind. The boats also contained two Officers and eight men of ' V.187 ', who were unwounded, and eighteen men who were badly wounded. As he could not embark the latter, Lieutenant-Commander Leir left one of the Officers and six unwounded men to navigate the British boats to Heligoland. Before leaving he saw that they were provided with water, biscuit, and a compass. One German Officer and two men were made prisoners of war.

#### INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

Lieutenant-Commander Leir's action in remaining on the surface in the vicinity of the enemy and in a visibility which would have placed his vessel within



easy gun range of an enemy appearing out of the mist, was altogether admirable.

This enterprising and gallant Officer took part in the reconnaissance which supplied the information on which these operations were based, and I beg to submit his name, and that of Lieutenant-Commander Talbot, the Commanding Officer of 'E.6', who exercised patience, judgment and skill in a dangerous position, for the favourable consideration of Their Lordships.

#### SINKING OF THE 'HELA'

On the 13th September, 'E.9' (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton) torpedoed and sank the German Light Cruiser 'Hela' six miles South of Heligoland.

A number of Destroyers were evidently called to the scene after 'E.9' had delivered her attack, and these hunted her for several hours.

#### EXAMINATION OF THE HELIGOLAND ANCHORAGE

On the 14th September, in accordance with his orders, Lieutenant-Commander Horton examined the outer anchorage of Heligoland, a service attended by considerable risk.

On the 25th September, Submarine 'E.6' (Lieutenant-Commander C. P. Talbot), while diving, fouled the moorings of a mine laid by the enemy. On rising to the surface she weighed the mine and sinker; the former was securely fixed between the hydroplane and its guard; fortunately, however, the horns of the mine were pointed outboard. The

weight of the sinker made it a difficult and dangerous matter to lift the mine clear without exploding it. After half an hour's patient work this was effected by Lieutenant Frederick A. P. Williams-Freeman and Able Seaman Ernest Randall Cremer, Official Number 214235, and the released mine descended to its original depth.

#### SINKING OF ' S.126 '

On the 6th October, ' E.9 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton), when patrolling off the Ems, torpedoed and sank the enemy's destroyer, ' S.126.'

The enemy's Torpedo Craft pursue tactics which; in connection with their shallow draft, make them exceedingly difficult to attack with torpedo, and Lieutenant-Commander Horton's success was the result of much patient and skilful zeal. He is a most enterprising submarine officer, and I beg to submit his name for favourable consideration.

Lieutenant Charles M. S. Chapman, the Second in Command of ' E.9 ', is also deserving of credit.

#### DIFFICULTIES OF THE SUBMARINE WORK

Against an enemy whose capital vessels have never, and Light Cruisers have seldom, emerged from their fortified harbours, opportunities of delivering Submarine attacks have necessarily been few, and on one occasion only, prior to the 13th September, has one of our Submarines been within torpedo range of a Cruiser during daylight hours.

During the exceptionally heavy westerly gales

which prevailed between the 14th and 21st September, the position of the Submarines on a lee shore, within a few miles of the Enemy's coast, was an unpleasant one.

The short steep seas which accompany westerly gales in the Heligoland Bight made it difficult to keep the conning tower hatches open. There was no rest to be obtained, and even when cruising at a depth of 60 feet, the Submarines were rolling considerably, and pumping—*i.e.*, vertically moving about twenty feet.

I submit that it was creditable to the Commanding Officers that they should have maintained their stations under such conditions.

#### EAGERNESS TO SERVE IN THE BIGHT

Service in the Heligoland Bight is keenly sought after by the Commanding Officers of the Eighth Submarine Flotilla, and they have all shown daring and enterprise in the execution of their duties. These Officers have unanimously expressed to me their admiration of the cool and gallant behaviour of the Officers and men under their command. They are, however, of the opinion that it is impossible to single out individuals when all have performed their duties so admirably, and in this I concur.

#### SUBMARINES ENGAGED

The following Submarines have been in contact with the enemy during these operations :—

' D.1 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Archibald D. Cochrane).

' D.2 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Arthur G. Jameson).

' D.3 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Edward C. Boyle).

' D.5 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Godfrey Herbert).

' E.4 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Ernest W. Leir).

' E.5 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Charles S. Benning).

' E.6 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Cecil P. Talbot).

' E.7 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Ferdinand E. B. Feilmann).

' E.9 ' (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton).

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) ROGER KEYES,

Commodore (S).

## MEMORANDUM BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE AIR DEPARTMENT, ADMIRALTY

Commander Charles R. Samson, R.N., was in command of the Aeroplane and Armoured Motor Support of the Royal Naval Air Service (Naval Wing) at Dunkerque, between the dates 1st September to 5th October.

### AEROPLANE SKIRMISHES IN SEPTEMBER

During this period several notable air reconnaissances were made, and skirmishes took place. Of these particular mention may be made of the

Aeroplane attack on 4th September on 4 enemy cars and 40 men, on which occasion several bombs were dropped ; and of the successful skirmishes at Cassel on 4th September, Savy on 12th September, Aniche on 22nd September, Orchies on 23rd September.

#### ATTACK ON DÜSSELDORF (SEPT. 22)

On the 22nd September, Flight Lieutenant C. H. Collet, of the Royal Naval Air Service (Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps), flying a Sopwith tractor biplane, made a long flight and a successful attack on the German Zeppelin Airship Shed at Düsseldorf.

Lieutenant Collet's feat is notable—gliding down from 6,000 feet, the last 1,500 feet in mist, he finally came in sight of the Airship Shed at a height of 400 feet, only a quarter of a mile away from it.

#### ATTACK ON DÜSSELDORF (OCT. 8)

Flight Lieutenant Marix, acting under the orders of Squadron Commander Spenser Grey, carried out a successful attack on the Düsseldorf airship shed during the afternoon of the 8th October. From a height of 600 feet he dropped two bombs on the shed, and flames 500 feet high were seen within thirty seconds. The roof of the shed was also observed to collapse.

Lieutenant Marix's machine was under heavy fire from rifles and mitrailleuse and was five times hit whilst making the attack.

## FLIGHT TO COLOGNE

Squadron Commander Spenser Grey, whilst in charge of a flight of naval aeroplanes at Antwerp, penetrated during a  $3\frac{3}{4}$  hours' flight into the enemy's country as far as Cologne on the 8th October. He circled the city under fire at 600 feet and discharged his bombs on the military railway station. Considerable damage was done.

11th October, 1914.

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NON-COMBATANTS  
AND THE WAR

BY

A. PEARCE HIGGINS, LL.D.

LECTURER ON INTERNATIONAL LAW AT THE LONDON SCHOOL OF  
ECONOMICS AND THE ROYAL NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

IN 1912 Dr. Pearce Higgins published a book entitled *War and the Private Citizen* (London: P. S. King & Son) which has been highly praised by lawyers but is less known to the general public than it should be. By his courtesy and that of Messrs. P. S. King & Son, we are able to reprint from that book some pages which are specially interesting and instructive at the present moment.

H. W. C. D.

# NON-COMBATANTS AND THE WAR

## I

WAR is not a condition of anarchy ; contests between States are regulated by the laws of war, and much has been done in recent times to bring about a uniformity in regard to the legitimate practices of war. The Instructions issued to the United States armies in 1863, which were prepared by Dr. Francis Lieber, mark an important stage in the movement towards a more complete statement of these rules. They were issued again without modification for the government of the armies of the United States during the war with Spain in 1898.<sup>1</sup> They were of considerable value to the Conference at Brussels in 1874, when an attempt was made to obtain a declaration of the laws of land warfare acceptable to the Powers of the world. The Brussels Conference did not succeed in this, but the Declaration which it drafted was in nearly all its essentials accepted by the First Hague Conference in 1899, and is the basis of the 'Regulations' annexed to the Convention on the Laws and Customs of War on land. These Regulations were amended by the Second Hague Conference in 1907, and the Convention to which they are annexed has been signed by nearly all the Powers in the world.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. B. Davis, *Elements of International Law*, p. 505.

<sup>2</sup> For texts of these Conventions see A. Pearce Higgins, *The Hague Peace Conferences*, pp. 206-72 ; for the Brussels Draft Declaration (with cross-references to the Hague Regulations) see *ibid.*, p. 273.

The object of these Regulations was strikingly put by the distinguished Russian Plenipotentiary and Publicist, M. de Martens. They are, he said, to provide Statutes for a Mutual Insurance Society against the abuse of force in time of war, with the object of safeguarding the interests of populations against the greatest disasters that could happen to the ordinary populations in time of war. The emphasis laid on their importance in regard to the civilian population is noteworthy. The Powers who are parties to the Convention agree to issue to their armed forces instructions which shall be in conformity with the Regulations (Art. 1), and any belligerent party which violates their provisions is liable to make compensation, and is responsible for all acts committed by persons forming part of its armed forces (Art. 3).

Besides the Regulations annexed to the Hague Conventions, the Geneva Conventions of 1864 and 1906—to which also nearly all States are parties—regulate the treatment of the sick and wounded in land warfare, and a Convention entered into at the Hague Conference of 1907 applies the same principles to naval warfare.

International agreements, however, form only a part of International Law, and the preamble to the Convention on the laws and customs of war on land recognizes the incompleteness of its provisions, and states that until a more complete code of the laws of war can be issued, the High Contracting Parties think it expedient to declare that 'in cases not included in the Regulations adopted by them, populations and belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations as they result from the usages established between civilized nations, from the laws of humanity and the dictates of the public conscience'. The

written laws of war must therefore be supplemented by the rules of customary International Law, the evidence of which is to be sought in the works of International lawyers, while the facts on which those rules are based are to be found in historical, judicial, and diplomatic records. All of these rules are to be observed in the spirit of humanity, which prohibits the infliction of needless suffering to individuals and mere wanton destruction of property, and to be enforced with the knowledge that the enlightened conscience of the world demands their observance in a spirit of good faith and honourable adherence to international agreements. Recent wars testify to the restraining force of the rules of International Law.

One fundamental principle on which I wish to lay great emphasis stands out from what has just been said, and it is this, that all is not fair in war. The international conventions I have referred to, and the usages of nations for a century past, prove conclusively the falsity of the popular saying. Great restrictions have been imposed on the unlimited power of a belligerent in regard both to the combatant and non-combatant members of the enemy state. The rule that 'the right of belligerents to adopt means of injuring the enemy is not unlimited'<sup>1</sup> has received almost universal acceptance. The amount of violence which is permitted to a belligerent by the laws of war is that which is necessary to enable him to attain the object desired, and the natural end of the art of war, says Clausewitz, the great master of strategy, is the complete overthrow of the enemy. In other words, a belligerent who wishes to bring his war to a successful termination may bring such pressure to bear on his adversary—that is,

<sup>1</sup> Article 22 of the Hague Regulations for Land Warfare.

primarily on the armed forces of his adversary, but incidentally and often directly also on the civilian population—as will bring about the complete submission of the enemy as quickly as possible, and with the smallest possible expenditure of blood and treasure. ‘War means fighting,’ said the great Confederate General Stonewall Jackson. ‘The business of the soldier is to fight. Armies are not called out to dig trenches, to throw up breastworks, to live in camps, but to find the enemy and to strike him; to invade his country and do all possible damage in the shortest time. This will involve great destruction of life and property while it lasts, but such a war will of necessity be of brief duration, and so would be an economy of life and property in the end. To move swiftly, strike vigorously, and secure all the fruits of victory is the secret of successful war.’<sup>1</sup> And these views were more concisely stated by the American Instructions: ‘The more vigorously wars are pursued, the better it is for humanity. Sharp wars are brief.’ But all this must be subject to the qualification that it be done in accordance with the rules of International Law, both customary and conventional, rules which have come into being chiefly under the guidance of military commanders themselves, and have been dictated by the necessity for the due maintenance of discipline, by humanity and regard for the public opinion of the civilized world. ‘Men who take up arms against one another in public war do not cease on this account to be moral beings, responsible to one another, and to God.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. E. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*, vol. i, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> Article 16 of United States ‘Instructions’.

## II

It is the modern practice when an army invades the enemy's territory, for the commander to issue a proclamation addressed to the inhabitants announcing that he is making war only against the soldiers and not against private citizens, and that so long as the latter remain neutral, and make no hostile attempts against his troops, he will, as far as possible, spare them the horrors of war, and permit them to continue to enjoy security for person and property. It is one of the greatest triumphs of civilization to have brought about the distinction between the treatment of combatants and non-combatants. Private citizens are no longer murdered, enslaved, or carried off to distant parts, nor exposed to every kind of disturbance of private relations. The credit for this alteration of treatment is due in the first place to belligerent commanders themselves, for they alone had and have the power to enforce the rules which have grown up ameliorating the condition of the peaceful citizen. Self-interest has played a by no means unimportant part in bringing about this change; commanders discovered that by giving protection to the civilian population, by buying their provisions instead of plundering them wholesale, better discipline was preserved among their own troops, and greater freedom for their operations was ensured. Yet even now the lot of the private citizen in an invaded territory is far from being a happy one.

In order that the civilian population may receive such improved treatment it must remain strictly non-combatant and refrain from all intermeddling in hostilities. Full belligerent rights are accorded (1) to the armed forces of the belligerent State, including under

this designation those in the regular army, volunteers, territorial troops, and such irregular troops as comply with the requirements of the first Article of the Hague Regulations. These conditions are that such forces (a) must have at their head a person responsible for his subordinates; (b) they must have a fixed, distinctive sign recognizable at a distance; (c) must carry arms openly; and (d) conform in their operations to the laws and customs of war. The armed forces complying with these requirements (some of which, especially the use of a distinctive sign, are equivocal) always have attached to them a certain number of non-combatants to whom also belligerent rights are granted, such as telegraphists, veterinary surgeons, canteen-contractors, and others. They fight if necessary, and should be included under the term combatants, though Article 3 of the Hague Regulations designates them as non-combatants.

Belligerent rights are also granted (2) to the population which rises in arms at the approach of an invading army in an unoccupied territory; such persons if they take up arms spontaneously in order to resist the invading troops, without having had time to organize in conformity with the first Article of the Regulations, are to be considered as lawful belligerents if (a) they carry arms openly and (b) observe the laws and customs of war. This recognition of the right of a whole population to rise *en masse* and defend itself against an approaching invader was obtained only after strenuous contention on the part of Great Britain and some of the smaller States of Europe. For the great military Powers which have adopted universal military service in some form or another, the question of granting this recognition had not the importance that it possesses for other States such as our own, where the great mass of the



manhood of the nation has received no military training. As it is, the Article still seems defective. There will remain the difficulty of distinguishing between such levies *en masse* and sporadic outbreaks in unoccupied districts in the absence of a commander responsible for the acts of his subordinates. The German General Staff, in its official work on the laws of land warfare, states that the demand for subordination to responsible heads, for a military organization, and for distinctive marks, cannot be given up without engendering a strife of individual against individual which would be a far worse calamity than anything likely to result from the restriction of combatant privileges.<sup>1</sup> This question is by no means settled. One fact, however, is clear: the belligerent character only attaches where the rising is one of considerable dimensions. Cases of isolated defence by individuals of their homes are left outside these regulations. The citizen who committed acts of hostility without belonging to a force complying with the requirements of the Hague Regulations would find himself dealt with as severely as was Mr. Browne in *An Englishman's Home*, who for defending his house against the invaders of the 'Nearland' Army, was taken and put to death before it. Men and squads of men not under strict discipline, not forming part of the army or of a levy *en masse*, at the approach of the invaders, who commit hostile acts with intermitting returns to their homes and vocations, divesting themselves of the character or appearance of soldiers, have no cause for complaint of an infringement of the laws of war if when they are caught they are denied belligerent rights, and put to death.

<sup>1</sup> *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, pp. 7-8; J. M. Spaight, *War Rights on Land*, p. 55.

None of the Regulations referred to affect the treatment of risings by the inhabitants in territories occupied by the invading army. The customary rule of International Law is that all such persons are liable to the severest penalties. 'War rebels,' says Article 85 of the American Instructions, 'are persons within an occupied territory who rise in arms against the occupying or conquering army or against the authorities established by the same. If captured, they may suffer death, whether they rise singly, in small or large bands, or whether called upon to do so by their own, but expelled, Government or not.'<sup>1</sup>

There is, however, another case in which private citizens have often been granted the rights of belligerents, (3) namely, where they have assisted the army of defence of a besieged town. The historic defence of Saragossa, in which even the women assisted the gunners, and the more recent defence of Plevna, afford examples of such treatment.

So long therefore as non-combatants refrain from direct participation in the war they are immune from direct violence, but they are liable to personal injuries which may result from the military operations of the armed forces of the belligerents. Among such operations are bombardments which accompany the sieges of defended towns. The Hague Regulations lay down certain rules for the general guidance of officers in conducting sieges. The attack or bombardment by any means whatever—this includes dropping shells from

<sup>1</sup> Of the treatment by the Italians of the Arabs in the Oasis of Tripoli in October, 1911, I say nothing, as there appears at present to be a hopeless contradiction in the reports in the press. There seems, however, to have been a rising in occupied territory, which is always severely dealt with.

balloons and airships—of *undefended* towns, villages, dwellings or buildings is forbidden (Art. 25). The commander of the troops attacking a defended town before commencing a bombardment, except in the case of assault, must do all that lies in his power to give warning to the authorities (Art. 26). In sieges and bombardments, every precaution is to be taken to spare, as much as possible, buildings devoted to religion, art, science, and charity, historic monuments, and hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided that they are not used at the same time for military purposes. The besieged is to indicate these buildings or places by some special visible sign, which is to be previously notified to the assailants (Art. 27).<sup>1</sup> The pillage of a town or place, even when taken by assault, is prohibited (Art. 28). This last prohibition marks a great advance in the customs of war, and with one or two exceptions due to special circumstances has been well observed in modern times.

The siege and bombardment of a town is an operation of war which bears most cruelly on the ordinary civilian population; the private citizens who are living in their own homes and who generally are not allowed to leave, even if they should wish to do so, are subject to all the dangers of falling shot and shell, and not infrequently their houses are directly bombarded by the assailant in order to bring pressure to bear on the commander of the besieged town so that he may be induced, by the

<sup>1</sup> In case of bombardment by naval forces there is a similar injunction to the commandant to spare such places. The duty of the inhabitants is to indicate these buildings by special signs consisting of large, rectangular rigid panels, divided along one of their diagonals into two coloured triangles, black above and white below. 9. H. C., 1907, Art. 5. (See *Hague Peace Conferences*, p. 356.)

sufferings of the inhabitants, to surrender. It must be noticed that it is only *undefended* towns which may not be bombarded. The distinction is not between fortified and unfortified places. Modern engineering skill has shown the futility of endeavouring to draw such a distinction. Plevna, till Osman Pacha threw himself into it with his army, was as open a town as any English country-town to-day. Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley were all unfortified till the British troops took in hand their defences.

The injury which may be inflicted on private citizens by bombardments may be illustrated by the bombardment of Strasburg by the Germans in 1870, when 448 private houses were utterly destroyed, nearly 3,000 out of a total of 5,150 were more or less injured, 1,700 civilians were killed or wounded, and 10,000 persons rendered homeless; the total damage to the city was estimated at nearly £8,000,000.<sup>1</sup> The great damage done to Strasburg was chiefly due to the fact that the forts and ramparts were so close to the town that they could not be shelled without damaging the houses, but there appears to be little doubt that the bombardment was, at times, intentionally directed against the private houses with a view of bringing pressure to bear on the civilian population. Such a practice—attacking those who cannot defend themselves—certainly appears to be contrary to the principle of modern warfare, and bombardments to produce psychological pressure cannot be excused, says Hall, and can only be accounted for as a survival from the practices which were formerly regarded as permissible, and which to a certain extent lasted till the beginning of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Spaight, *op. cit.*, p. 162; H. M. Hozier, *Franco-Prussian War*, vol. ii, p. 71.

‘For the present’, he adds, ‘it is sanctioned by usage’,<sup>1</sup> and in every war since 1870, whether by inevitable accident or design, considerable damage has been done to the persons and property of ordinary peaceful citizens.

With the progress of aeronautics we shall probably see a further terror added to war, as it seems that in the future Tennyson’s prophecy will be fulfilled in which the Poet :

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained  
 a ghastly dew  
 From the nation’s airy navies grappling in the central  
 blue.

With the exception of Great Britain, no great European Power has ratified the Declaration agreed to at the Hague Conference in 1907, which prohibits, till the close of the Third Peace Conference, the discharge of projectiles and explosives from balloons and airships.<sup>2</sup> It is, in my opinion, a lamentable commentary on the humanitarian sentiments so freely expressed by the delegates at this Conference, that this splendid opportunity of making a beginning in the limitation of military budgets, the increase of which they all so loudly deplored, was thus lost.

Before leaving the subject of bombardments, a few words are necessary in regard to the question of allowing

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 537.

<sup>2</sup> See *Hague Peace Conferences*, pp. 482-91. All the Powers have agreed that undefended towns, &c., are free from bombardments ‘by any means whatsoever’, which words were inserted to include the discharge of projectiles from airships (see *Hague Peace Conferences*, p. 490, and Note 4 on the same page as regards bombardments by naval forces). Though Great Britain has ratified the Declaration against discharging projectiles from balloons, this is only binding in case of war with other Powers signatory of the same Declaration.

what are called 'useless mouths' (*les bouches inutiles*)—that is, old men, women, and children—to leave a besieged town. The Hague Regulations are silent on the point. The notice which a commander is required to give before bombardment—though no period of delay is fixed—is some protection for the non-combatants, and such notice is clearly demanded by every requirement of humanity so as to enable some measures to be taken for the protection of the civilian population, especially women and children; but beyond this the Regulations are silent. There is no obligation imposed on the besieger, either by the written or unwritten laws of war, to allow any portion of the population to leave a besieged place even when a bombardment is about to commence. 'When the commander of a besieged place expels the non-combatants, in order to lessen the number of those who consume his stock of provisions, it is lawful, though an extreme measure, to drive them back, so as to hasten on the surrender,'<sup>1</sup> and instances of this have occurred in modern times. The whole matter is solely one for the commander of the besieging force, though when the intention is to take the town by assault, not to reduce it by famine, the retention of the civil population within the town means the infliction of much unnecessary suffering. The Japanese gave permission to the civilian population to leave Port Arthur before the bombardment, but throughout the Franco-German War, except when General von Werder granted a short armistice for some Swiss delegates to remove 2,000 homeless women and children from Strasburg, the Germans observed the full rigour of their war rights. The Americans before bombarding Santiago de Cuba in June 1898, gave forty-eight hours' notice and allowed the

<sup>1</sup> United States 'Instructions', Article 18.

exit of non-combatants. In the siege of Ladysmith, although non-combatants were not allowed to leave, an arrangement was made whereby they were placed in a camp outside the zone of fire, but they remained dependent for their supplies on the defenders of the besieged town. This subject, like so many connected with war, is one in which it is most difficult to harmonize military necessities and the dictates of humanity.

It is, however, as a rule, only a small proportion of the civilian population that is thus exposed to the danger of death or injury by direct military operations, but when a district is occupied by the invading army every inhabitant feels the pressure of war. The object of the invader, apart from winning victories over his adversary's troops, is to make his superiority felt by the whole population of the enemy State, and when the troops of the defenders have been expelled from a given area, and the territory is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army, an important legal change in the relation between the invader and the invaded takes place, as such territory is then said to be in the enemy's military occupation.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the invader treated the territory of his enemy as his own, but gradually the distinction between conquest and military occupancy was worked out, and by the end of the nineteenth century a series of rules was accepted and embodied in the Hague Regulations of 1899 and 1907. 'Territory is considered to be occupied when it is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army. The occupation applies only to the territories where such authority is established and can be exercised' (Art. 42). It appears certain that under the Hague

Regulations the practice pursued by the Germans in 1870 of deeming a whole canton of seventy-two square miles to be occupied if a patrol or small detachment passed through without resistance, can no longer be justified. 'Occupation on land is strictly analogous to blockade at sea ; and as blockades are not recognized unless they are effective, so occupation must rest on the effective control.'<sup>1</sup> Practically occupation amounts to this, that the territorial Government can no longer exercise its authority within the area of invasion, and the invader can set up his own governmental organization, or continue in office those of the expelled Government who are willing to serve. Recent wars provide us with examples of the working of the modern rules governing belligerent occupation which are contained in Articles 42-56 of the Hague Regulations.

The authority of the legitimate sovereign having been displaced, the occupant must take all steps in his power to re-establish and ensure public order and safety, while respecting, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country. A combination of severity and conciliation is required which will at the same time allow the peaceful citizen to continue the pursuit of his ordinary avocation, so far as possible, while the occupant's position is not endangered. Order is to be maintained, and existing laws enforced as far as circumstances permit. A military administration is in practice at once set up. The occupant issues notices prohibiting and punishing with severity all offences against the army of occupation, and every act which may endanger the security of his troops. (I have already referred to the severity with which risings in occupied districts are always dealt.) The commander

<sup>1</sup> T. J. Lawrence, *International Law*, p. 433.



orders all arms and ammunition of every description to be given up, closes the public-houses either wholly or partially, forbids the assembly of groups of men in the street, requires all shutters to be removed from shops, orders all lights to be put out by a certain time, establishes a censorship on all letters, suppresses or restricts the publication of newspapers, restricts individuals in their freedom of movement, deports any whose presence he may consider dangerous to his army, and in a thousand different ways makes the ordinary citizen feel that the enemy is within his gates. The following Proclamation issued by General von Kummer at Metz on October 30, 1870, gives in a few sentences an example of the powers of an occupant :

‘ If I encounter disobedience or resistance, I shall act with all severity and according to the laws of war. Whoever shall place in danger the German troops, or shall cause prejudice by perfidy, will be brought before a council of war ; whoever shall act as a spy to the French troops or shall lodge or give them assistance ; whoever shows the road to the French troops voluntarily : whoever shall kill or wound the German troops or the persons belonging to their suite ; whoever shall destroy the canals, railways, or telegraph wires ; whoever shall render the roads impracticable ; whoever shall burn munitions and provisions of war ; and lastly, whoever shall take up arms against the German troops, will be punished by death. It is also declared that (1) all houses in which or from out of which any one commits acts of hostilities towards the German troops will be used as barracks ; (2) not more than ten persons shall be allowed to assemble in the streets or public houses ; (3) the inhabitants must deliver up all arms by 4 o’clock on Monday, October 31, at the Palais, rue

de la Princesse ; (4) all windows are to be lighted up during the night in case of alarm.<sup>1</sup>

The conversion into barracks of houses in which or out of which acts of hostilities had been committed was less severe than the treatment authorized by the British generals during the Boer War. Lord Roberts ordered the burning of farms for acts of treachery or when troops had been fired on from farm premises, and as a punishment for breaking up telegraph or railway lines or when they had been used as bases of operations for raids.<sup>2</sup>

The rules issued by the occupant are rules of Martial Law, and proceedings to enforce them are generally taken before a military tribunal. There is, I believe, a considerable misapprehension as to the meaning of Martial Law, not only among military officers but also among civilians. Martial Law might perhaps be more accurately called 'Military rule', or the 'Law of hostile occupation', as General Davis suggests.<sup>3</sup> It was described by the Duke of Wellington as 'neither more nor less than the will of the general who commands the army. In fact, Martial Law means no law at all. Therefore the general who declares Martial Law, and commands that it shall be carried into execution, is bound to lay down distinctly the rules, and regulations, and limits according to which his will is to be carried out.' It is not, therefore, a secret written code of law which a commander produces from his pocket and declares to be the laws under which an occupied terri-

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Hozier, *Franco-Prussian War*, vol. ii, p. 124, cited by J. M. Spaight, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> *Parliamentary Papers*, 1900. Proclamations of F.-M. Lord Roberts (Cd. 426), p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Elements of International Law* (3rd ed.), p. 333.

tory is to be governed. Martial Law in a hostile country consists of the suspension of the ordinary rules of law in so far as such suspension is called for by military necessities, and the substitution of military rule and force for the ordinary laws either in whole or in part.<sup>1</sup>

The occupant is forbidden to place any compulsion on the inhabitants of occupied territory to take the oath of allegiance to him (H. R. Art. 45), but he may compel them to take an oath of neutrality, though even without this the inhabitants are under a duty of remaining neutral, and they forfeit their rights as non-combatants by any intermeddling in the war. The occupant must see that the family honour and rights, the lives of individuals and private property, as well as religious conviction and liberty of worship, are respected; but liberty of worship does not mean liberty to preach sermons inciting to continued warfare or hostility to the occupant. Many churches were closed by British officers during the Boer War in consequence of the political character of the sermons preached therein. Private property cannot be confiscated (Art. 46). The occupant may, however, find it necessary to make use of churches or schools as hospitals, and we shall shortly see that, though private property must not be confiscated, the occupant has a large licence in the matters of supplying his troops with all things needful for them. He may not confiscate, but he may commandeer. The occupant is also forbidden to interfere with the existing private rights of citizens of the occupied territory, for

<sup>1</sup> For examples of Proclamations of Martial Law during the Boer War see *Parliamentary Papers*, 1900 (Cd. 426), also chap. xi of Dr. Spaight's *War Rights on Land*. For a fuller treatment of Martial Law in relation to English law see A. V. Dicey, *The Law of the Constitution*, chap. viii.

he must not declare to be extinguished, suspended, or unenforceable in a court of law the rights and rights of action of the subject of the enemy State (Art. 23 (*h*)). There is some doubt as to the meaning of this prohibition, but this is the view which it is understood that the British Government takes as to its interpretation.<sup>1</sup>

The services of the inhabitants of the occupied territories may be requisitioned by the occupant, if they are of such a nature as not to involve them directly in taking part in military operations against their own country (Art. 52). The interpretation which commanders put on this limiting clause is a lax one, but professional men, tradesmen, and artisans, for example medical men, chemists, engineers, electricians, butchers, bakers, smiths, &c., &c., may find that their services are demanded by the commanding officer in the locality. Some authorities hold that the occupant may resort to forced labour for the repair of roads, railways, and bridges, as such are required to restore the general condition of the country, even though their repair should mean a considerable strategic advantage to the troops of the occupying army. The belligerent is also forbidden, both in unoccupied and occupied districts, to compel the subjects of the other belligerent to take part in operations of war directed against their own country (Art. 23, last paragraph), and an occupant is also forbidden to compel the population of occupied territory to furnish information about his own country's army, or about its means of defence (Art. 44). The discussions on these articles at the Hague in 1907 make it clear in my opinion that these provisions forbid the

<sup>1</sup> On the meaning of this Article see *Hague Peace Conferences*, pp. 263-5; T. J. Lawrence, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-60; T. E. Holland, *Law Quarterly Review*, vol. xxviii (Jan., 1912), pp. 94-8.

impressment of persons to act as guides for the invading troops, and this view is supported by the Report made by the French Delegation to their Government. But all the Powers do not accept this latter Article. Austria, Germany, Japan, and Russia excluded it, on signing the Convention, but even so I think the practice is condemned in Article 23. However, it is by no means improbable that some of these Powers, by making a reservation of Article 44, did so in order to adhere to the practice, which has long obtained, of compelling inhabitants to act as guides to the invader's troops. This practice, and that of compelling men under threat of death to give information of military value, appear to me contrary to the whole spirit of the modern development of the laws of war; they are odious, and should disappear from all the military manuals of civilized States.<sup>1</sup>

We thus see that there are many cases in which the personal services of ordinary private citizens may be requisitioned in occupied territory; their property is also liable to be requisitioned for the use of the occupying army. In addition to the payment of the ordinary taxes which the invader may levy for the benefit of the occupied district, the inhabitants may also be called upon to pay contributions in money in lieu of requisitions in kind. There are no less than three different Articles in the Hague Regulations which either prohibit pillage or forbid the confiscation of private property, but military necessities, though not over-ruling the strict letter of the prohibition, often bring about a situation which make these prohibitions sound unreal. Still they are exceptions, and the rule holds good. We have

<sup>1</sup> For discussions of these Articles see *Hague Peace Conferences*, pp. 265-8.

already seen that the actual destruction of private dwelling-houses and other buildings in private ownership may be occasioned by bombardment or other operations of war. But, in addition to destruction or damage caused by these means, the landowner may be deprived of the use of his land for camps, for fortifications, for entrenchments, or for the burial of the dead. Commanding officers in actual warfare do not ask permission of landowners to make use of the land as battle-fields, and promise not to damage the crops or disturb the game; nor will the objection by fashionable watering-places, that military manœuvres interfere with summer visitors, receive any attention from the commander of an invading army. Houses, fences, woods are all liable to be demolished to provide materials for fortifications or to prevent the enemy from making use of them as cover, and landowners may never get any compensation where such destruction takes place as an operation of war. Further, private citizens are liable to have troops billeted on them or sick or wounded placed in their houses. In connexion with the requisitioning of the services of inhabitants to assist in the care of the sick and wounded, I may draw attention to the fact that the Geneva Conventions make no provision for the non-combatant inhabitants in districts where hostilities are in progress. 'These unfortunates frequently suffer severely from sickness and wounds in consequence of the military operations, and their case is then particularly distressing because they are generally without medical personnel or material for their proper treatment.'<sup>1</sup>

Then as regards the personal property of the ordinary

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Macpherson, 'The Geneva Convention', *Zeitschrift für Völkerrecht und Bundesstaatsrecht*, vol. v, p. 260.

citizens, everything belonging to them which may be of direct use in war, such as guns, ammunition and all kinds of war-material, are always taken from the inhabitants, and particularly heavy penalties are always inflicted for the concealment of arms. All appliances, whether on land, at sea, or in the air, adapted for the transmission of news or for the transport of persons or goods, apart from cases governed by maritime law, may be seized even though belonging to private persons, but they are to be restored and indemnities regulated at the peace (Art. 53). Restoration will in a vast number of cases be an impossibility, and the compensation may be but a poor substitute for the thing taken. Money is but a poor compensation to a farmer if all his horses are requisitioned. This article therefore authorizes the seizure of all kinds of transport: horses, motor-cars, motor-boats, carts, bicycles, carriages, tram-cars, balloons, aeroplanes, river pleasure-steamers, canal-barges, and so forth—all may be seized by the occupant, as well as dépôts of arms and all kinds of war material, from the farmer's sporting rifle to the contents of the Elswick, Krupp or Creusot armament works. In all these cases the persons from whom articles are taken should obtain receipts, so that they may have evidence on which to base their claims for compensation when the war is over. But besides all these articles, which are from their nature of direct use in war, the commander of an occupied locality can order the inhabitants to provide everything necessary for the needs of his army, such as food, wines, tobacco, fuel, cloth, leather, stirrups, chains for horses and artillery and transport-wagons, &c., &c. Such requisitions are to be paid for as far as possible in ready money, and the price may be fixed by the commander, or if payment is not made he must give

receipts for whatever he takes (Art. 52). In this way the occupant may make the inhabitants of the occupied district contribute to the maintenance and upkeep of his army. The requisitions must be proportionate to the resources of the country, which means that the inhabitants are not to be left in a starving condition. In practice such requisitions are levied through the civil authorities, who will make representations if they consider the demands exorbitant; usually in modern warfare the attitude of commanders has been commendably reasonable. It is good policy.<sup>1</sup>

It may often happen that a particular district does not possess the actual requirement of the army, whereas another does. In such cases the Commander-in-Chief levies contributions in money as far as possible in accordance with the assessments for ordinary taxes; the money thus raised from the whole district can be spent in that part which possesses the required article, and in this way the expense is spread over a wider area. Such contributions can only be levied for military necessities or for the administration of the territory (Art. 49); the occupant is therefore forbidden to exact money payments for the purpose of enriching his own treasury, but he is not forbidden to levy money payments by way of punishment of breaches of the laws of war.

It is impossible in the space of a single lecture to show in further detail the various ways in which pressure may be brought to bear in almost every direction on the ordinary civil population of an occupied or invaded district. I can say nothing of the hostages the invader may take to ensure the observance of the laws he has enacted, or of the fines he may impose, the destruction

<sup>1</sup> See J. M. Spaight, *op. cit.*, 405.



of buildings he may order, or the other punishments he may inflict for the infringement of his regulations or by way of reprisals; all these matters are writ large on the pages of the histories of recent wars.

Neither can I speak of the treatment which public property will receive at the hands of the invader, except to lay down the general principle that as regards the State property in land and buildings of a non-military character, the occupant must regard himself as being an administrator and usufructuary; that is, the property must be used with care so that its substance remains uninjured. Similarly, property belonging to municipal bodies and all public buildings devoted to religion, education, charity, art, science, and the like are to be treated as private property, and so must the moveable property of the State and provincial and municipal corporations except where it is of a character to be of use in war. Royal palaces, picture galleries, public libraries, museums and their contents would therefore be exempt from confiscation or injury. These subjects are, however, outside the scope of our inquiry. We are concerned with the private citizen.

I have now endeavoured to give some idea of the manner in which war affects the private citizen both as regards his person and property, and we are led to the conclusion that Lord Brougham's dictum that 'in the enlightened policy of modern times, war is not the concern of individuals but of governments' is very far from representing the whole truth. Much has been done during the past century to mitigate the horrors of war, particularly as regards the treatment of sick and wounded belonging to the belligerent forces, especially by the Geneva Convention of 1906, which for the first time gives an international recognition to the work

of Red Cross Societies, provided they are under due control: the lot of the private citizen has also been ameliorated by the acceptance of a code of laws for land warfare, by the introduction of the practice of payment for goods requisitioned for the hostile army, the prohibition of pillage and the definite recognition by States of the duty to provide for the protection of family life and honour and by the increasing influence of the public opinion of neutral States. But when all these ameliorations are taken into consideration, it remains evident that both in naval and land warfare the private citizen is still subject to great dangers and losses. Forced labour may be requisitioned, private property of every description can be commandeered for the use of the invading army, foodstuffs of all sorts compulsorily purchased, and several of the most powerful military States still insist on retaining the right—one of the most objectionable of the usages of war—of forcing non-combatant individuals to act as guides to the army of invasion.

We may speak of the ameliorations of the lot of the private citizen which have resulted from the growing sentiment of humanity, we may congratulate ourselves on the legal limitations imposed on commanders by International Law, but when all is said, and every legal rule obeyed, can a stern and successful commander be prevented from bringing psychological pressure to bear on the civil population by carrying out the war-policy advocated by General Sherman in the following passage?—‘The proper strategy consists in the first place in inflicting as telling blows as possible on the enemy’s army, and then in causing the inhabitants so much suffering that they must long for peace and force their governors to demand it. The people must be left

nothing but their eyes to weep with over the war.' 'War means fighting'—but it means much more. It involves starvation and untold miseries to men, women, and children who take no part in battles.

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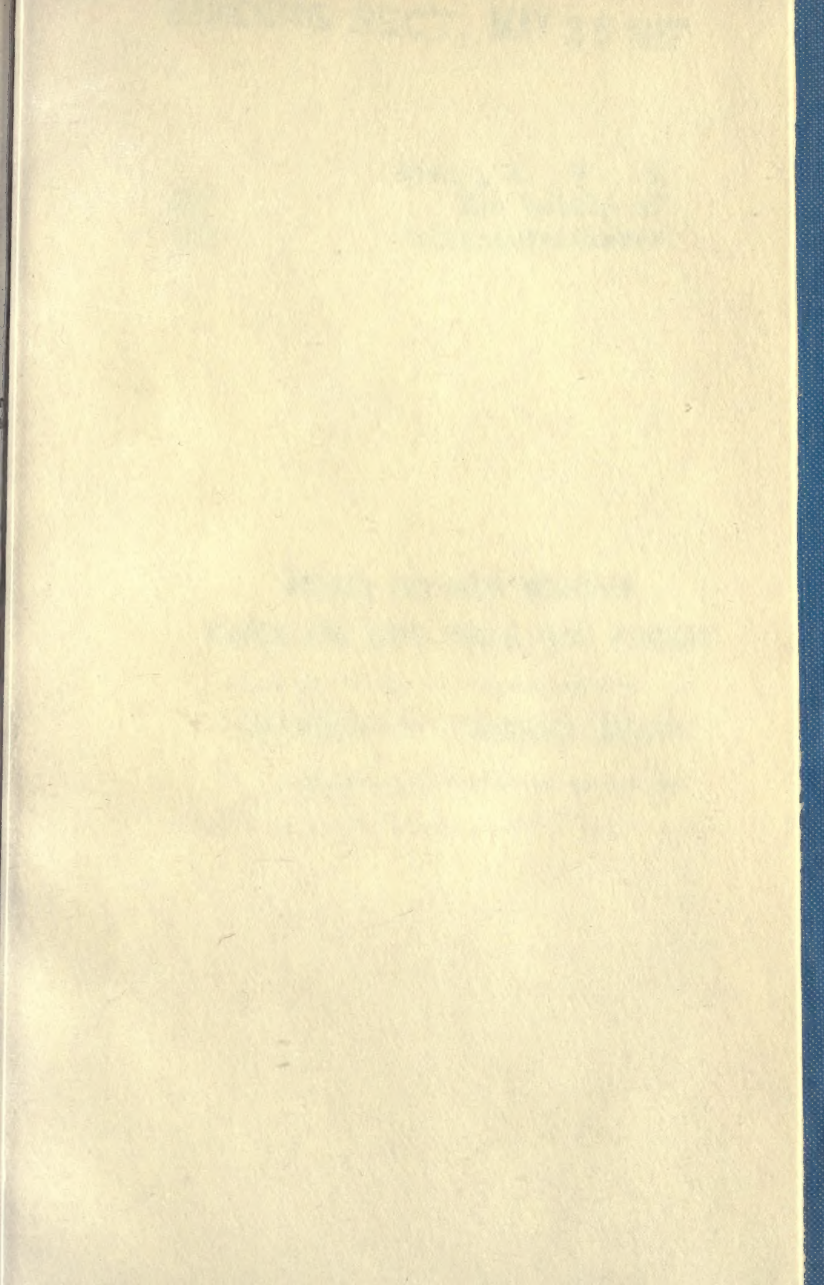
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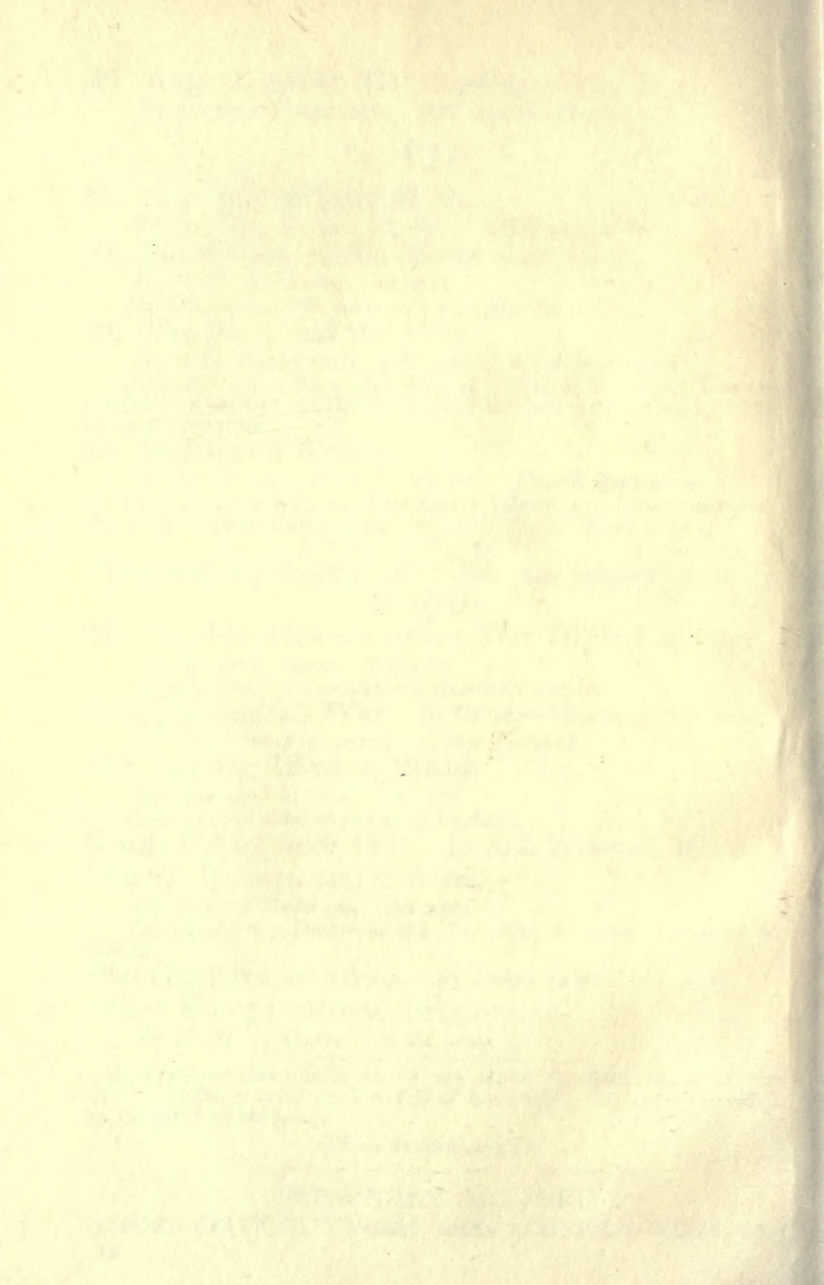
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