The Aneurin Great War Project: Timeline
Part 10 - 1915 (1st January to 31st December)

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This timeline supports the Aneurin series of interdisciplinary scientific reflections on why the Great War failed so singularly in its bid to be The War to End all Wars. It presents actual or best-guess historical event and introduces theoretical issues of cognitive science as they become relevant.

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The Timeline Items

For ease of back-reference this next entry is repeated from the end of 1914

*******************  MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1914  *******************
*******************  MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1914  *******************
*******************  MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1914  *******************
Note: Those battalions earmarked for 53rd [Territorial] (Welsh) Division are identified thus [53rd (from 5th August)]; those battalions subsequently brought together to serve in 38th (Welsh) Division are identified thus [38th (from 29th November 1915)].

1915 [Friday 1st January] Present Location of Welsh Units: Not a lot has changed during December. Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the fifth month of the war ...

ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
The decimated 1st Bn [<=7th December] has now been rebuilt and is back in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn[38th (from 29th November 1915)]; having been in France since mid-August, remains part of 6th Division [1st December<=2015 (1st February)]. The reserve battalion, the eight territorial battalions, and the first nine service battalions remain as previously listed [<=1st December]. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during December. No further service battalions were created during December.

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
The decimated 1st Bn has now been rebuilt and is back in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn[4th December<=>12th January] is at sea, returning from the Far East. The reserve battalion, the two territorial battalions, and the first seven service battalions remain as previously listed [<=1914 (1st December)]. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during December. One more service battalion was created during December, namely 11th [(Service)] (2nd Gwent) Bn[38th (from 29th November 1915)] at Brecon.

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn has just got back from India and has been assigned to 28th Division. The decimated 2nd Bn has now been rebuilt and is back in France with 1st Division. The reserve battalion, the first seven territorial battalions, and the first nine service battalions remain as previously listed [<=1914 (1st December)]. One further territorial battalion was mobilised during December, namely 2/6th [(Territorial)] (Glamorgan) Bn at Swansea. One further service battalion was created during December, namely 17th [(Service)] (1st Glamorgan) Bn[38th (from 29th November 1915)] at Cardiff.

THE (TERRITORIAL) WELSH ARMY
I - INFANTRY
The following territorial infantry regiments in Wales (sometimes also in the border counties of England) are mobilising in their respective garrison town(s) ...

THE CHESHIRE REGIMENT
No change during December 1914 [last substantive comment <=1914 (1st November)].

THE HEREFORDSHIRE REGIMENT
During December 1/1st Bn has relocated to Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk, and 2/1st Bn has relocated to Aberystwyth [next substantive comment =>1915 (24th April)].

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT
The 1/2nd Bn [2nd December<=>1st February] is still in France with 4th Division.

Those units already assigned to 53rd (Welsh) Division remain in training at Northampton.

II - MOUNTED
No change during December 1914 [last substantive comment <=1914 (1st November)] [next substantive comment =>1915 (1st November)].

THE (REGULAR) "WELSH ARMY"
No change during December 1914 [last substantive comment <=1st October].

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1914 ***************

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1914 ***************

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1914 ***************
1915 [Friday 1st-12th January] The Battles of the Cuinchy Brickstacks[1] [I - Early January]:

[New sub-thread] This comparatively localised series of actions takes place in the early weeks of 1915 at Cuinchy [maplink at 10th October] on the otherwise generally quiet La Bassée front [<=1914 (27th October)] between local elements of Crown Prince Rupprecht's [1914 (20th December)<=13th May] Sixth (Bavarian) Army and Haig's [1914 (26th December)<=10th March] First Army. The first action is on 1st January when the Germans attempt to snap off the half-mile deep mini-salient where the British line snakes through a pre-war brickyard. They achieve minor gains which British counter-attacks on 1st, 2nd, and 10th January succeed in recovering, only to lose again in a renewed German attack on 12th January [sub-thread continues at 25th January ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1ASIDE - THE BRICKSTACKS: 2nd Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers [1st January<=1st February] were in the Cuinchy sector later in 1915 and one of their officers described the brickstacks as follows ...

"These large compact piles, roughly 35 feet square by 18 feet in height, were adapted as observation, sniper, and machine-gun posts. In and beneath them were dug-outs giving perfect cover, but many men on the surface were injured by flying fragments of brick. To the stacks the area owed at all times a grandeur I never saw on any other part of the organised front. [...] Trenches were named mostly after London streets. [...] Fatigues were heavy in this sector, so constant was the need to repair dilapidations owing to shelling" (Dunn, 1938, p143).

********** A WIZARD WHEEZE**********

1915 [Friday 1st-13th January] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [I - The Mission Conceived]: [New sub-thread] Having been asked by the Russian Chief-of-Staff Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich [Wikipedia biography=13th July] for a British and French diversionary attack against the western possessions of the Ottoman Empire in order to take some pressure off his hard-pressed armies in the Caucasus, Kitchener [1914 (27th October)<=16th February] visits First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill [1914 (15th December)<=25th January] to discuss what might be done, and where. Churchill replies that the best diversionary effect would come from threatening the Turkish capital Constantinople [= modern Istanbul; map, etc.] itself, and that the best way of doing that would be to stage an operation in the Dardanelles ...

ASIDE - THE DARDANELLES: Like some gargantuan Villa d'Este water feature, the rivers which drain Southern Europe into the Black Sea [map, etc.] - primarily (from west to east) the Danube, the Dnieper, and the Don - deliver a "positive water balance" of 300 cubic kilometres [!] of rainwater a year down into the Aegean Sea through a 150-mile series of channels and pools. Geologically speaking this is all down to the "plate tectonics"[Wikipedia factsheet] of the region, and specifically to the North Anatolian Fault [Wikipedia factsheet]. The first 15-mile descent - "the Bosphorus" [map, etc.] - drops between 20cm and 40cm depending on time of year (Alpar, Dogan, Yuce, and Altiok, 2000), giving a downstream flow speed of some four miles an hour. Istanbul itself is at the southern end of the Bosphorus, where the waters flow out into the 70-mile long Sea of Marmara [map, etc.]. At the south-western end of the Sea of Marmara the coastlines gradually close together, the channel being 15 miles wide at the port of Şarköy [map, etc.] but only two miles wide at Gelibolu/Gallipoli [map, etc.]. From here the channel is known to the Greeks as the Hellespont, to the Turks as the Çanakkale Boğazı, and to the English-speaking world as "the Dardanelles". The next descent - 25 miles long - is more or less straight and more or less consistently three miles wide, and runs from Gallipoli down to Çanakkale [map, etc.], where there is perhaps the most impressive feature of the whole system, namely "the Narrows". Here the waters are constricted between two headlands barely a mile apart, and here the southbound current naturally accelerates to about five miles an hour. Amongst Çanakkale's attractions are its ancient forts, the ML Nusret Commandery Military Museum [=25th February], and coach stops for tours to the nearby ruins of ancient Troy. The defences at this point are as follows ...
"Two ancient fortresses, one a square crenellated building in the town of Chanak [= Çannakale] on the Asiatic side, and the other an odd heart-shaped structure tilted towards the sea at [Kilitbahir] [map, etc.] on the opposite bank, stand guard over the Narrows, and it was here that the Turks established their main defences at the outbreak of the war. These consisted of eleven forts with 72 guns, some of them new, a series of torpedo tubes designed to fire on vessels coming upstream, a minefield and, later on, a net of wire mesh to block submarines" (Moorehead, 1956, p53).

At and below Gallipoli the northern coastline of the Dardanelles is a long, narrow, and very mountainous peninsula, to the north of which is the Gulf of Saros [map, etc.]. The width of the peninsula varies but in places the heaviest naval guns have the range to shoot across the peninsula into the Straits, provided their fall of shot is "spotted" with the aid of wireless. The final descent is through the 15-mile-long lower strait through Erenköy Bay [map, etc.], and this brings you to the west-facing "mouth" of the system between Cape Helles [map, etc.] on the northern shore and Cape Kum Kale [ditto] on the southern. The whole region is a veritable historical treasure-house. In human prehistory it was one of the main exit routes for hominid migration "out of Africa". In the Classical era it saw the wars between Greece and Troy and Macedonia and the Persians. After the fall of the Roman Empire it saw the growth of Byzantium (<=330). In the Middle Ages it was a major base for the Crusaders en route for the Holy Land (<=1198). Then after the Fall of Constantinople (<=1453) it became the capital city of the Ottoman Empire. In the 19th century rights to through-traffic in the Straits were controlled by the London Straits Convention (<=1841 (13th July)). It has, in short, long been a geo-political border; between West and East, Europe and Asia, Christianity and Islam. The European Union is likely to allow Turkey to become a member in the not-too-distant-future.

Kitchener duly reassures Nikolaevich that there will indeed be "a demonstration" of some sort calculated to divert Turkish attention from their Caucasus Front and on 3rd January Churchill discusses options with the First Sea Lord "Jacky" Fisher [1914 (30th October)]<=25th January].

**ASIDE:** Readers are reminded that the First Lord of the Admiralty is a politician whilst the First Sea Lord has actually been to sea. Readers are also reminded of the distinct perils of this "Civil Lord" tradition (<=1868 (3rd December)).

Fisher responds enthusiastically, thus ...

"... he went on to define exactly what should be done. All the Indians and 75,000 of the British troops in France were to be embarked at Marseilles and landed, together with the Egyptian garrison, on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles; the Greeks were to attack the Gallipoli peninsula, and the Bulgarians to march to Constantinople. At the same time a squadron of old British battleships of the Majestic and Canopus class were to force the Dardanelles" (Moorehead, 1956, p36).

Churchill duly telegraphs these proposals to the commander of the Royal Navy's presence in the eastern Mediterranean Sir Sackville H. Carden [Wikipedia biography] asking whether in his opinion it would be possible to force the Dardanelles "by ships alone". Carden replies on 5th January that such an operation would take a lot of ships and a lot of time. He provides a detailed shopping list on 11th January, as follows ...

"Admiral Carden's plan [...] envisaged the employment of a very large force: 12 battleships, 3 battlecruisers, 1 flotilla leader, 16 destroyers, 6 submarines, 4 seaplanes, 12 minesweepers, and a score of other miscellaneous craft. He proposed in the first place to take on the forts at long range and by indirect fire and then, with his mine-sweepers in the van, to sail directly into the range of the Turkish guns and demolish them seriatim as he went along. [...] He would require much ammunition, he said" (Moorehead, 1956, p39).

Then (with no little foresight as things turn out) he adds ...
"Time required for operations depends greatly on morale under bombardment; garrison largely stiffened by the Germans; also on weather conditions. Gales now frequent. Might do it all in a month about" (*ibid.*; bold emphasis added).

Kitchener and Churchill now spend the following days producing a more detailed proposal to place before the 13th January meeting of the War Cabinet. They clearly make their case well, for there are few dissenting voices [sub-thread continues at 25th January ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**ASIDE - "WIZARD WHEEZES":** As either an exclamation or an adjective "wizard" is 19th-century public schoolboy English for "excellent". A "wheeze" is ditto for an "idea, plan, proposal". Hence the phrase "wizard wheeze" is nowadays conventionally defined as "solving a problem by depending upon an awkward, strange, or funny situation" (*Urban Dictionary*). **However, the phrase is not everyday English and is nowadays more or less always used ironically to mean a downright stupid or unworkable idea.**

1915 [Saturday 2nd January] **Chemical Warfare [IV - Possible Trial Use of Chlorine Gas]:** [Continued from 1914 (21st October [ASIDE])] Uncorroborated papers from around this time suggest that the Germans may already be experimenting with the discharge procedures for Chlorine gas [sub-thread continues at 31st January ...]. [THREAD = WW1 CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS]

**ASIDE - WHY CHLORINE?:** Chlorine (the smell of swimming pools and many bleaches) was chosen because it was cheap (BASF was presently producing 40 tons of the stuff per day), lingering, disabling in small doses, and (almost) allowable under the Geneva Convention in that it was, like tear-gas, not technically a poison.

1915 [Wednesday 6th January] **Having been in transit since 28th August 1914 the frontiersmen of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry [1914 (10th August)<=20th March] finally take their place on the Western Front at Dikkebusch [map, etc.], on the southern flank of the Ypres Salient, thereby becoming the first Canadian infantry in the line. They are commanded by Francis D. Farquhar [Birth of a Regiment biography=>20th March]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [6th-18th January] **WW1 in the Caucasus [IV - The Battle of Sarikamish (The Ottomans Crushed)]:** [Continued from 22nd December 1914] On 6th January 1915 the Russians, aided by Armenian volunteer units, attack the Ottoman supply lines south of Ardahan and Sarikamish, forcing the two attacking columns to withdraw in some disorder. Ottoman losses are greatly compounded by more than normally inclement weather. Ottoman Minister of War Enver Pasha [Wikipedia biography] loudly blames the setback on Armenian treachery [sub-thread continues at 20th April 1915 ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 9th-10th January] **The Woman's Peace Party:** A group of American women band together in Washington, DC, to found the Woman's Peace Party [Wikipedia factsheet=>28th April]. The 54-year-old suffragist and peace activist Jane Addams [Wikipedia biography=>27th February] is elected National Chairman, and amongst the associated activists are the campaigning journalists Louis P. Lochner [Wikipedia biography=>27th February] and Rosika Schwimmer [Wikipedia biography=>28th April]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]

**ASIDE:** Feminism and peace activism often go together even to the present day because they share the core suspicion that war is very much a man thing. At the time of writing [April 2015] it is difficult to assess how much scientific truth there is in this hypothesis for there are too many variables involved. We shall be returning to the issue in due course. [THREAD = THE TRUE CAUSES OF WAR]
1915 [Sunday 10th January] Reconstructive Surgery and Rehabilitation [I - Wimereux Base Hospital]: [New sub-thread] The French-born/American-trained dental surgeon [Sir] Augustine C. Valadier [no convenient biography, but much of value in McAuley (1974 online)] starts to specialise in reconstruction of battlefield jaw-line injuries in the nascent "max fax" specialist unit at 13th Base Hospital, Wimereux [map, etc.], just outside Boulogne. Because he is not an M.D. he is only allowed to operate with the assistance of a surgeon, and amongst those who assist him in this way is a New Zealand born R.A.M.C. officer named [Sir] Harold D. Gillies [Wikipedia biography]—15th June. One of the other specialist units being developed at the same time is for brain and spinal injuries, drawing on the attending expertise of the neurologist [Gordon M. Holmes] [Wikipedia biography] and the neurosurgeon [Sir Percy W. G. Sargent] [Royal College of Surgeons biography]—[sub-thread continues at 15th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

**ASIDE - NEUROLOGY VERSUS NEUROSURGERY:** A neurologist is a physician who has specialised in the functional assessment and non-invasive management of brain, spinal, and peripheral nerve injuries. A neurosurgeon, on the other hand, is less involved in the functional side of assessment and management, but is able to intervene invasively - that is to say, surgically. Indeed the first neurosurgical need might be to ferret out the projectile itself, and then clean and close up the wound; which actions, being life-saving, do not per se require more than a passing knowledge of nervous function, merely structure. The two specialisms therefore typically work as teams.

1915 [Tuesday 12th January] 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers [1st January<=25th April] arrives back at Plymouth after assisting at the Siege of Tsingtao [<=1914 (2nd September)]. Over the coming weeks it will be assembled with other units in the Midlands to form 29th Division [Wikipedia factsheet]—16th February, the last of the ex-foreign service regular army divisions. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [30th November] The Schneider Company [1889<=9th December] sends its chief designer, Eugène Brillié [Wikipedia biography], to observe demonstrations of the Holt Caterpillar track-laying tractors to the British War Department. On the strength of Brillié's observations Schneider authorise development of two experimental tanks on Holt chassis. They will be designated "Chars d'Assaut" [French = "assault carriages"]—[See next 1915 (16th June)] [THREAD = WW1 ARMOURED FIGHTING VEHICLES]

1915 [3rd December] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXIX - Five Trusted Men]; [Continued from 1914 (11th December)] Following criticism in Parliament [<=1914 (31st August)] the British Cabinet resolves that five accredited war reporters should be appointed to work under the direction of the author-journalist Charles E. Montague [Wikipedia biography]. The five members of Montague's team are [Sir] Philip Gibbs [Wikipedia biography], (initially still an American citizen) [Sir] Percival Phillips [no convenient biography, although worth a few minutes keyword browsing], [Sir] William B. Thomas [Wikipedia biography], [Sir] Henry P. Robinson [Spartacus Educational biography], and [Sir] Herbert Russell [Spartacus Educational biography], all highly experienced and (at least to start with) on-message wordsmiths—[sub-thread continues at 3rd December ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS]

1915 [15th January or hereabouts] Counter-Battery Science [II - The Bull-Weiss String Galvanometer]: [Continued from 1914 (1st November)] Around this time the French Army begins field trials of the Bull-Weiss String Galvanometer [<=1911 (15th September)] for the sound ranging of enemy artillery fire—[sub-thread continues at 4th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 ARTILLERY]

####1915 [Monday 18th January] German Sabotage in the U.S. [I - The Roebling Incidents: [New sub-thread] Suspected German saboteurs start a fire at the Roebling...
**Brothers Wire Works**, Trenton, NJ, causing $1½ million worth of damage. There will be a second attack on 11th November [sub-thread continues at 2nd February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 NEUTRALITY]

1915 [Monday 18th-19th January] **The East African Campaign [VI - The Battle of Jassin]:** [Continued from 1914 (17th November)] This battle is fought at the port of Jassin [<=2nd November], German East Africa, between elements of the British/Indian occupation force and a locally superior column of von Lettow-Vorbeck’s [1914 (17th November) to 11th July] German/Askari resistance fighters. After two days of fighting the outcome is a British surrender. The British theatre commander Aitken [<=1914 (17th November)] is now briefly replaced by [Sir] Richard ["Wappy"] Wapshare [no convenient biography] and then on 3rd June more permanently by Michael J. Tighe [no convenient biography] [1916 (19th February)] [sub-thread continues at 4th February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 21st January] **Hunting the Dresden [I - The Hunt Begins]:** [New sub-thread, but links back to Coronel and the Falklands at 1914 (8th December)] Still on the run following her narrow escape from the Battle of the Falkland Islands, and presently at anchor off Santa Inés Island [map, etc.] in the Magellan Straights, SMS Dresden [1914 (8th December) to 14th February] informs Berlin that because there is no longer a reliable German coaling and re-supply network in the Atlantic she intends patrolling as best she can in the Pacific and - should she get that far - the East Indies. Over the coming weeks she duly breaks westward and makes her way up the Chilean coastline [sub-thread continues at 8th March ...], [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS]

1915 [Friday 22nd January] **Deutsche Vitascope** [<=1909 (8th September)] restructures itself as Greenbaum-Film G.m.b.H. [no convenient factsheet], becoming thereby the largest production studio in Germany. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS]

1915 [Saturday 23rd-24th January] **The Battle of the Dogger Bank:** This battle is fought between a raiding squadron of German battlecruisers under von Hipper [1914 (15th December) to 1916 (31st May)] and a slightly larger intercepting squadron of British battlecruisers under Beatty [1914 (15th December) to 1916 (30th May)]. As with earlier fleet engagements in the North Sea each side has spent months desperately seeking a few moments of positional advantage over the other. The present German operation to sweep the Dogger Bank area for targets of opportunity has come to the British Admiralty's attention thanks to SIGINT decrypts by its Room 40 Codebreakers [<=1914 (15th December)], and Beatty's battlecruisers have been scrambled to ambush them.

**ASIDE:** After the battle the Germans realise that the security surrounding the operation must have been compromised but suspect the work of agents on the ground rather than wireless interception. As for the technicalities of the interception, the German navy had a pattern of communication which the British monitored very closely, and occasionally managed/bothered to decrypt. *Only when this pattern altered* (i.e., more or less transmissions, or from new directions) did it indicate that something special was afoot.

Here are the capital ships (and their captains) involved ...

**GERMAN** (Admiral von Hipper in overall command aboard Seydlitz)

FIRST SCOUTING GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>dates</th>
<th>Biography</th>
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<td>SMS Seydlitz</td>
<td>1914 (15th December) to 1916 (24th April)</td>
<td><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moritz_von_Egidy">Moritz von Egidy</a></td>
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<td>SMS Moltke</td>
<td>&lt;=1914 (15th December)</td>
<td><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnus_von_Levetzow">Magnus von Levetzow</a></td>
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<td>SMS Derfflinger</td>
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<td><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig_von_Reuter">Ludwig von Reuter</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>SMS Blücher</td>
<td>1914 (15th December)</td>
<td><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Erdmann">Alexander Erdmann</a></td>
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**BRITISH** (Admiral Beatty in overall command aboard Lion; later Princess Royal)
At 0720hr light cruisers from the two fleets sight each other and as the larger units come into sight over the coming minutes von Hipper sees that he is outnumbered and turns his fleet to the southeast to execute a fighting retreat. The engagement now becomes a stern chase in which the speed of the British battlecruisers soon threatens the slowest of the German ships, Blücher. Beatty, moreover, mindful of the own-smoke problems experienced by Sturdee's battlecruisers at the Battle of the Falkland Islands the month before, carefully positions his ships slightly to starboard of the German wakes so that the day's north-easterly wind will immediately clear his smoke downrange. Lion opens fire at 0852hr at 20,000 yards' range, her companions joining in over the ensuing minutes. However the lighter main armament of the German ships (that is to say, 11" on Seydlitz and Moltke and 12" on Derfflinger, as opposed to Lion's 13.5") means that they cannot return fire until 0911hr. Lion receives her first hit at 0928hr and at 0935hr, with a line-of-battle action on the cards, Beatty hoists the flag signal <ENGAGE THE CORRESPONDING SHIPS IN THE ENEMY LINE>. At 0943hr Seydlitz has a lucky escape when one of Lion's 13.5" shells explodes below decks alongside the armoured sheathing of the ship's two rear turrets, causing a flashover fire in the propellant cartridges being prepared for loading.

Between 1018hr and 1041hr Derfflinger hits Lion a dozen times in quick succession, including two on the waterline which cause her to lose power. She duly turns away to attempt running repairs. At much the same time [1030hr] Blücher is hit by a 13.5" shell from Princess Royal, reducing her speed to 17 knots, and at 1048hr Beatty orders his own rearmost ship Indomitable to break away from the main chase to finish her off. Then at 1102hr, realising that Lion is too badly damaged to keep up with the main chase, Beatty signals Tiger, Princess Royal, and New Zealand to continue the main pursuit without him. Unfortunately the flag-hoists <COURSE NORTH-EAST> <ATTACK THE REAR OF THE ENEMY> are open to serious misinterpretation in that no particular "enemy" is specified, resulting in Tiger, Princess Royal, and New Zealand turning on Blücher. Now totally outgunned Blücher is soon reduced to a burning wreck, and at 1213hr she sinks, taking with her 792 out of her crew of 1026 men. With the surviving Germans by now well beyond pursuit, Beatty returns to base.

The battle is noteworthy in the present context for validating the combination of high speed and heavy armament in pre-war battlecruiser design, with the Lion-class ships being able not just to overtake their German equivalents, but engage them at a longer range. However two potentially fatal problems remained, namely (1) the problem of flashover fires in the system of hoists and conveyors which brought shells and cordite bags up to the turrets from the magazines deep within the ship, and (2) the fact that the British fire control system was not able properly to exploit the longer range of its guns. Indeed the standard of German fire control was such that they significantly "out hit" the British ...
ASIDE - APPROXIMATE HIT RATES: Tiger scored a "villainously bad" two hits out of 355 shells fired, Lion four out of 243, and Princess Royal two out of 271. Seydlitz scored eight hits out of 390, Moltke eight out of 276, and Derfflinger five-six out of 310. It is this as-yet-unresolved difficulty with gunnery which prompted us in Project Aneurin Part 9 to recount the development of fire control technology during the pre-war years. Note especially the ASIDE on "Helm-Free Plotting" at 1911 (??th May) which now leads us to suspect that the British can only fire without educated guesswork while steering in a straight line, which, of course, makes them easier targets for the enemy's fire controllers!

Ingenohl will be replaced as Commander-in-Chief of the High Seas Fleet on 2nd February by Hugo von Pohl [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (18th January)]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS]

1ASIDE: The British had five full battlecruisers available against von Hipper's three, plus the fast armoured cruiser Blücher. Tiger's crew, however, were reportedly very inexperienced and - see above - could not hit a barn door. So if von Hipper had attacked instead of retreating the quality of the German gunnery control and the sturdiness of their ships might well have delivered them a famous victory.

1915 [Monday 25th January] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [II - Fisher Develops Concerns]: [Continued from 1st January] Notwithstanding his initial enthusiasm the First Sea Lord, "Jacky" Fisher [1st January=>9th May], now develops "vague forebodings" (Moorehead, 1956, p47) about the wisdom of the Dardanelles Operation. He is particularly concerned that the ships required in the Mediterranean will not also be available to the Grand Fleet should the Germans stage a diversionary naval operations of their own in the North Sea. He therefore submits a distinctly negative Paper to Winston Churchill [1st January=>13th March] for discussion at the next meeting of the War Cabinet on 28th January. On the day, however, he is persuaded that on balance the benefits of the operation just about outweigh the risks [sub-thread continues at 16th February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

ASIDE: It may well be that Fisher had recalled past failures to suppress deeply dug shore fortifications by bombardment from the sea. Readers interested in specific cases should see the Battle of Fort McHenry [=1814 (13th September)], the Siege of Plevna [=1877 (20th July), especially the ASIDE], and the Bombardment of Alexandria [=1882 (11th July), especially the ASIDE]. Details of the conversation with Churchill by which Fisher was finally persuaded to cooperate are nowhere recorded.

1915 [Monday 25th January-1st February] The Battles of the Cuinchy Brickstacks [II - Late January]: [Continued from 1st January] Having made some inroads into the Brickstacks Salient at the beginning of the month Eberhard von Claer's [Wikipedia biography] VII Corps try to finish off the job with simultaneous attacks north of the La Bassée Canal against Givenchy-lès-la-Bassée [maplink at 1914 (10th October)], south of it against the Cuinchy Salient proper, and south again of that against the French around Vermelles [maplink at 1914 (10th October)]. The Germans penetrate several hundred yards south of the canal, thereby creating a dent in the British line. At 0800hr on 29th January the Germans attack again but withdraw after a morning's intense close-quarters fighting [sub-thread continues at 4th February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 26th January-4th February] Egypt and the Canal Zone [I - The First Suez Offensive]: [New sub-thread] From its bases in Palestine an Ottoman/German Expeditionary Force launches an offensive across the Sinai Desert with the objective of denying the Suez Canal to the Allies. The operation is under the overall command of Ahmad Djemal Pasha [Wikipedia biography], supported by Friedrich von Kressenstein [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (3rd August)]. The British/Indian/Egyptian Canal Zone defence force
is under the overall command of Sir John Maxwell [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (28th April)]. The Ottomans begin by picking off the British outposts one by one, and then, after von Kressenstein's troops arrive at the Canal on 2nd February, force a local bridgehead across the canal at Ismailia [map, etc.]. Here, however, fresh Indian and Australian units, with supporting fire from French warships, force an Ottoman withdrawal to the line Gaza [map, etc.] - Beersheba [map, etc.] [sub-thread continues at 17th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 28th January] Zionism in WW1 [II - Yet Another Palestine Pamphlet]: [Continued from 1914 (9th November)] The Postmaster-General Herbert Samuel [1914 (9th November)<=>5th February] tables a scoping paper at Cabinet entitled "The Future of Palestine" [Wikisource full text online], in which he argues that the "Jews scattered throughout the countries of the world" (para #1), who he numbers at 12 million, should be "restored to the land to which they are attached by ties almost as ancient as history itself" (ibid.). The pamphlet properly recognises that such a course of action is not going to please anybody except the Jews themselves. Nevertheless, having considered the four main alternatives (see original) it concludes that the Palestinian option is on balance the best, especially if Britain took on the "extended military reponsibilities" (para #10) which would arise [sub-thread continues at 5th February ...]. [THREAD WW1 GRAND STRATEGIES] [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]


1915 [Thursday 28th January] With the threat of German commerce raiders now diminishing HMAS Australia [<=1914 (5th August)] arrives at Plymouth for service with the Grand Fleet. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS]

************ FIRST LARGE-SCALE GAS ATTACK ************

1915 [Sunday 31st January] The Eastern Campaign/Chemical Warfare [VIII/V - The Battle of Bolimów]: [Eastern Campaign continued from 1914 (1st December); Chemical Warfare continued from 2nd January] This battle is fought for control of Central Poland between the German Ninth Army under von Mackensen [1914 (11th November)<=>2nd May] and the Russian forces in said region under Vladimir Smirnow [no convenient biography]. The decisive engagement takes place at Bolimów [map, etc.], 40 miles west of Warsaw, and features a full-blown (or not, as it happens) attack with xylol bromide [<=1825 (ASIDE)] tear-gas shells. However less than ideal wind conditions and low temperatures on the battlefield render the agent more or less ineffective. With the Russian defences uncut the Germans duly cancel the planned follow-up advance [Eastern Campaign continues at 7th February; Chemical Warfare continues at 22nd April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS][THREAD = WW1 CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE]

*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, JANUARY 1915 ***************

*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, JANUARY 1915 ***************

*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, JANUARY 1915 ***************

1915 [Monday 1st February] Present Location of Welsh Units: Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the sixth month of the war ... ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)]): The rebuilt 1st Bn [<=1914 (7th December)] is still in France with 7th Division. The 2nd Bn is still in France with 6th Division. Of the nine service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, and 16th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first
line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is still in France with 1st Division. The remaining three first line territorial battalions - 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn - remain assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. The RWF's second line territorial battalions are 2/4th Bn, 2/5th Bn, 2/6th Bn, and 2/7th Bn, all assigned to homeland defence. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during January. No further service battalions were created during January.

**SOUTH WALES BORDERERS** (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
The rebuilt 1st Bn is still in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn [<=12th January] has just returned from the Far East and has been earmarked for 29th Division [<=12th January]. Of the eight service battalions so far created 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The SWB's only first line territorial battalion is 1/1st Bn, and it is assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. The SWB's two second line territorial battalions are both assigned to homeland defence. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during January. No further service battalions were created during January.

**THE WELCH REGIMENT** (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is now in France with 28th Division. The rebuilt 2nd Bn is still in France with 1st Division. Of the ten service battalions so far created 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, and 16th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR's four first line territorial battalions are 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, all assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. The WR's four second line territorial battalions are all assigned to homeland defence. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during January. One further service battalion was created during January, namely 18th (Service) (2nd Glamorgan) Bn, and this has also been earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division.

**THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT**
1/2nd Bn [2nd December<=1st February] is still in France with 4th Division. 1/1st [1914 (1st September)<=13th February] and 1/3rd Bn [ditto] have both been earmarked for 28th Division [=>13th February] and will land in France during February. The regiment's three second-line battalions are all assigned to homeland defence. No further battalions were created during January.

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, JANUARY 1915 ***************
*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, JANUARY 1915 ***************
*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, JANUARY 1915 ***************

1915 [Monday 1st-6th February] The Battles of the Cuinchy Brickstacks [III - The Brickstacks Taken]: [Continued from 25th January] On 1st February the Germans attack the Brickstacks again, engaging in fierce fighting with 1st Bn Coldstream Guards and 2nd Bn Irish Guards but gaining no ground permanently.

********** "ONE IRISHMAN DEFEATS 10 GERMANS"**********

**CAMEO - MICHAEL O'LEARY:** Click here for the story of how the Irish Guards' Michael J. O'Leary [Wikipedia biography] earned a V.C.\(^2\) in the fighting on 1st February.

On 6th February the fresh 4th Guards Brigade counterattacks in strength and successfully recaptures the trenches lost on 25th January [end of sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

\(^1\) **ASIDE:** This text from a come-and-do-likewise recruiting campaign later in the year. We are unaware of any anti-war campaign featuring the far more numerous "one Irishmen" who were killed or maimed without killing a single German.

\(^2\) **ASIDE - THE TRUTH ABOUT MEDALS?:** In the entry for Courtly Chivalry at 1170 [take me back] we carefully distinguished between awards for gallantry and awards for bravery. But even for the common man it takes more than just bravery to get yourself decorated. In his 1963 satirical comedy novel "How I Won the War" the author Patrick Ryan [Wikipedia biography] looks cynically at what really makes the difference ...
"... And you don't get medals for nowt, do you?" 'No,' I replied, 'of course you don't.' 'You get medals, old cock, for pulling the general's chestnuts out of the fire. **Medals are issued pro rata to the magnitude of the blunder made by the higher command.** [...] The bigger the boob, the more the medals. **The number of gongs given after an action increases in direct proportion to the number of casualties.** In lauding the decorated living, we overlook the wasted dead. Our attention focused on the gallantry of the survivors we forget the top-level botchery that caused the casualties. Ten thousand killed today, sir! Strike up the band! Lob out the V.C.s! And make me a field-marshall. [...] And the biggest medals don't go to the biggest heroes ... they go to the ones with the best reports.... It's the reports, cocky, that win the medals, the citations that capture the gongs .... Brave man - good citation - big medal! [...] If you want to get medals, you want a literate C.O. And a lousy general to make the boos" (online at Google Books).

1915 [Tuesday 2nd February] **German Sabotage in the U.S. [II - The Vanceboro Bridge Incident]:** [Continued from 18th January] At 0110hr a German terrorist1 bomb explodes at the Canadian end of the Vanceboro Bridge, the U.S.-Canadian border crossing, causing minor damage. The perpetrator, one Werner Horn [no convenient biography] is arrested on the (neutral) U.S. end of the bridge and jailed for 18 months [sub-thread continues at 3rd February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 NEUTRALITY]

1ASIDE: We use the word "terrorist" with some reservation because Horn was arrested in hastily donned German army uniform and pointed out in his defence that the Canadian end of the bridge was a legitimate military target. His conviction was therefore for the much lesser offence of unlicensed carriage of explosives on public transport.

1915 [Wednesday 3rd February] **German Sabotage in the U.S. [III - The Hannington Court Incident]:** [Continued from 18th January] German quayside saboteurs plant a timed incendiary device aboard the freighter SS Hannington Court [Wikipedia shipography] as it is about to sail for Britain, but it is discovered before sailing (Fishman, 2013). Other ships are not so fortunate and over the coming months a series of "unexplained" fires variously sink/damage many dozens of vessels [see full list in Landau (1937 online, Appendices)] [sub-thread continues at 2nd February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 NEUTRALITY]


1915 [Thursday 4th February] **The South-West African Campaign [I - The Battle of Kakamas]:** [New sub-thread] This battle takes place as part of the struggle for control of the Orange River border between the Union of South Africa [=modern Namibia] and German South-West Africa [= modern Namibia]. Both sides have been building up forces to invade the other but the Germans, under the command of Erich Franke [Wikipedia biography], strike first against the river crossings at Kakamas [map, etc.]. The South African forces, under the command of Jacobus van Deventer [no convenient biography], successfully hold the river line. The South Africans then begin their own offensive commanded by Louis Botha [1910 (31st May)<=>9th July], capturing the German capital Windhoek [map, etc.] on 5th May [sub-thread continues at 9th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Friday 5th February] **Zionism in WW1 [III - The Pamphlet Successful]:** [Continued from 28th January] The British Postmaster-General Herbert Samuel [28th January<=24th May] follows up his "Future of Palestine" paper [<=28th January] with a meeting with the British Foreign
Secretary Sir Edward Grey at which it emerges that the British Cabinet has been persuaded to move toward a Jewish administration in Palestine after the war. [sub-thread continues at 1916 (27th February) ...]. [THREAD WW1 GRAND STRATEGIES] [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Sunday 7th-22nd February] The Eastern Campaign [IX - The Second Battle of the Masurian Lakes]: [Continued from 31st January] This battle is fought for control of north-eastern Poland between the German Eighth and Tenth Armies under the overall command of von Hindenburg [1914 (11th November) => 1916 (19th August)] and the Russian Tenth and Twelfth Armies under the overall command of Ruzsky [<=1914 (11th November)]. It is the northernmost of three simultaneously executed offensives, the others being in the Polish-Ukrainian Gate region toward Lemberg/Lviv [maplink at 1914 (3rd September)] and Przemyśl [map, etc.]. The battle begins with a two-week German attack on Tenth Army in the Masurian Lakes [map, etc.] which inflicts devastating losses upon the defenders. The Russians then manage to stabilise the situation with a 12th Army counter-attack from the next sector to the south [sub-thread continues at 2nd May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 8th February] Shellshock [II - Hospitals Prepared]: [Continued from 1914 (4th December)] Around this time Britain's Board of Control for Lunacy and Mental Deficiency [Wikipedia factsheet] convenes a management conference in London at which representatives of mental hospitals across the country agree to convert one institution per administrative region to take military casualties. Yorkshire contributes the 2000-bed Wadsley Asylum, Wakefield, renaming it Wharncliffe War Hospital. Wales likewise contributes Whitchurch Mental Hospital [<=1908 (15th April)], renaming it Welsh Metropolitan War Hospital [=>9th June] [sub-thread continues at 13th February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

1915 [Monday 8th February] Presently serving with the RAMC the veteran British neurosurgeon Sir Victor Horsley [Wikipedia biography] publishes a paper entitled "Gunshot Wounds of the Head" [full text online], which, to the present day, provides non-medical readers with a brief but vivid introduction to the subject. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

1915 [Friday 12th February] A 55-year-old veteran of Britain's imperial conflicts named Daniel P. Driscoll [no convenient biography] uses his contacts within the Legion of Frontiersmen [1914 (9th November) => 10th June] to organise the creation of a new infantry battalion from amongst its membership. The unit will be officially known as 25th Bn (Frontiersmen) [Service] Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) [Wikipedia factsheet => 6th May]. Amongst its better known recruits is an even older old-campaigner named Frederick C. Selous [Wikipedia biography => 1917 (4th January)], big-game hunter to the rich and famous. [THREAD = THE WWI ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

   ASIDE: Drawing as it did from retired servicemen and similar colourful characters, and involved as it was soon to be in many a backwoods adventure, the unit soon became affectionately known as "the Old and the Bold".

1915 [Saturday 13th February] German Sabotage in the U.S. [IV - The Haskell Incidents: [Continued from 3rd February] German saboteurs set off explosions at DuPont's Explosives Mill, Haskell, NJ. Over the coming months a series of "unexplained" production/transportation disasters will cause damage/death at other American munitions works [again see Landau (1937 online)] [sub-thread continues at 1st July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 NEUTRALITY]
For reasons which are about to become apparent, students of shellshock need a passing familiarity with both theories of hysteria [pre-read Case, Anna O in this Companion Resource, Hysteria in this Companion Resource, and Personality in this Companion Resource] and the 19th century "railway spine" debate [pre-read <=1875 (Nervous Shock IV)]. Note also the psychodynamic explanatory schemes proposed by Jean-Martin Charcot [<=1882] and Sigmund Freud [<=1885 (?7th October)].

1915 [Saturday 13th February] Shellshock [III - The Syndrome1 Named and Explained]: Presently serving with the RAMC the British physician-psychologist Charles S. Myers [Wikipedia biography] 1916 (1st December) publishes a three-patient case study entitled "A Contribution to the Study of Shell Shock" [full text online] in which he notes a number of "remarkably similar" aetiological factors. The three cases had in common (a) that they had all been injured by a near miss artillery shell, (b) that they had all had sleep problems before their injuries, (c) that they had all had memory disturbances after their injuries, and (d) that they had all had disturbances/dulling of vision, smell, and taste - but not hearing - after their injuries. All three cases showed "gradual improvement by rest and suggestion" (p316). Myers then concludes that "the close relation of these cases to those of 'hysteria'2 appears fairly certain" (p320) [sub-thread continues at ?7th March ...], [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

1ASIDE - ON "SYNDROMES" AND THE PERILS OF "REIFYING" THEM: The standard medical definition of a "syndrome" is that it is "a group of signs and symptoms that occur together" (Merriam-Webster online). The equally standard presumption is that the signs and symptoms - no matter how unrelated they might appear - ultimately share a single underlying physiological disease process. Unfortunately this immediately raises problems for mental illnesses because there is still no universally agreed underlying physiological explanation of most mental illnesses - see, for example, Weir (2012 online). Here, as illustration, are some well-known syndromes, combat-related and otherwise ...


The standard medical risk is that a syndrome's name alone tends to become explanation enough. It becomes enough to record on the case notes that a patient "has" or "is suffering from" this or that named condition even though the underlying pathology might still be obscure. The name becomes "reified" [literally, "made thing/substance/matter"] in other words, and reification - especially when the physician in question is busy - can be the end of enquiry rather than the beginning. For a typical modern discussion of the problem of the reification of syndromes see Banzato and Dantas (2012 online) [payment required]).

2ASIDE - ON "HYSTERIA": Until 1952 psychiatrists simply diagnosed hysteria according to how strongly they followed psychodynamic theories of psychopathology such as Freud's [<=1895 (?7th April)]. In 1952, however, the American Psychiatric Association published its "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" (DSM), in which consistent diagnostic criteria were laid down for all mental illnesses. The hysteries were herein included under the heading "conversion reaction", that is to say, a condition in which an obscure underlying mental pathology is converted into physical symptoms. In 1968 the DSM-1 scheme was upgraded to the DSM-2, and the term "hysterical neurosis" was introduced. In DSM-3 (1980; revised 1987) hysteria was re-classified as either a "somatoform disorder" or a "dissociative disorder". Here is the crucial point of distinction ...
disorders involve involuntary disturbance in the sense of identity and memory” (Owens and Dein, 2006 online).

DSM-IV (1995) specifically excludes the possibility of "feigning", either deliberate (when it is classed as "malingering" [Wikipedia factsheet]) or not (when it is classed as "factitious disorder" [Wikipedia factsheet]) [readers may find the prior mentions of malingering at 1847 (8th March) and 1863 (8th October) informative]. The most recent classificatory upgrade, DSM-5 (2013), introduces a somatoform sub-type known as "somatic symptom disorder" [Wikipedia factsheet].

1915 [Saturday 13th-14th February] **1/1st Bn Monmouthshire Regiment** [1st February=>1st March] and **1/3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment** [ditto] are assigned to 28th Division [Wikipedia factsheet=>1st March] under Sir Edward S. *Bulfin* [Wikipedia biography=>9th April], [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [??th February] **Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment** [XXX - *Nelson's History of the War*]: [Continued from ??th January] This month sees the publication of the first volume (of 24) of "*Nelson's History of the War"*. The work is written, edited, and published by *John Buchan* [1st Baron Tweedsmuir] [1935] [1914 (2nd September)=>14th October] at the request of *Masterman*’s War Propaganda Bureau [1914 (2nd September)=>12th May].

**ASIDE: Nelson's History** volumes are still in print (and many are available in full text in web archives) and were sold in such large numbers that sets are still available in second-hand bookshops real and virtual. However the standard caution is that this is a work of propaganda, a *hagiography* of military saints containing nothing but praise and exaggeration for the Allies and their achievements (and nothing but denigration for the Central Powers).

All profits and royalties from the work are donated to war charities [sub-thread continues at 19th March ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

1915 [Tuesday 16th-18th February] **The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns** [III - The Taskforce Assemblies]: [Continued from 25th January] The seaplane carrier *HMS Ark Royal* [Wikipedia shipography=>25th February] arrives at *Bozcaada/Tenedos* [map, etc.], in the north-eastern Aegean just south of the Mouth of the Dardanelles, and over the coming weeks will provide aerial reconnaissance and wireless-linked artillery spotting resources to the Allied ships in the Dardanelles. Other ships in the build-up include (in alphabetical order) *HMS Agamemnon* [Wikipedia shipography], *HMS Albion* [Wikipedia shipography=>25th April], *HMS Cornwallis* [Wikipedia shipography=>25th April], *HMS Inflexible* [1914 (7th December)=>19th February] (now back in service after damage sustained at the Battle of the Falkland Islands), *HMS Irresistible* [Wikipedia shipography], *HMS Lord Nelson* [Wikipedia shipography], *HMS Majestic* [Wikipedia shipography=>25th April], *HMS Prince George* [Wikipedia shipography], *HMS Swiftsure* [Wikipedia shipography], *HMS Triumph* [Wikipedia shipography=>25th April], and *HMS Vengeance* [Wikipedia shipography]. The French navy sends *Suffren* [Wikipedia shipography], *Bouvet* [Wikipedia shipography], *Charlemagne* [Wikipedia shipography], and *Gaulois* [Wikipedia shipography]. A specially purchased civilian steamer, *SS Ben-my-Chree* [Wikipedia shipography=>10th June] is presently being hastily converted to the role of seaplane carrier at the Cammell-Laird shipyard, Birkenhead, and will arrive later in the year [=10th June]. Secretary of State for War *Kitchener* [1st January=>25th February] also warns 29th Division [12th January=>8th March] (including 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers) for embarkation to assist the fleet's marine contingents in their anticipated occupation duties, only to receive such loud protests from the hard-pressed commanders on the Western Front that he cancels the order [sub-thread continues at 19th February ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

************* ROUND #1 TO THE ALLIES *************

1915 [Friday 19th-24th February] **The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns** [IV - The Mouth Captured]: [Continued from 16th February] The Allied fleet leaves its anchorages around
Moudros [map, etc.] and at 0951hr on 19th February the long-awaited bombardment begins. The initial targets, because their guns command the Mouth of the Dardanelles, are the forts on Capes Helles and Cape Kum Kale [maplinks at 1st January]. The bombardment is then promptly cut short after the first day by five days of bad weather.

1915 [Thursday 25th February-7th March] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [V - The Mouth Lost Again]: [Continued from 19th February] When the Allied bombardment recommences on 25th February the Turkish positions on both capes are abandoned by their garrisons and occupied by landing parties of Allied marines. Over the next few days the British minesweepers move into the lower Strait and sweep up toward the Narrows. Aircraft assist in the spotting process whenever the waters are clear enough ...

ASIDE - ON THE TECHNICALITIES OF WW1-ERA MINESWEEPING: We have already introduced the two main types of anti-shipping mine. The drift mine [=1777 (13th August)] was originally just a waterproofed barrel of gunpowder fitted with a timer and/or contact fuse and floated down onto your intended victim using the prevailing current. The contact mine [=1853] was fitted with a contact fuses and could be "laid" as a "minefield" by equipping each with a sea-bed anchor and buoying them on just enough cable to float them just beneath the surface of the water [=1855 (9th June)]. To start with it took two ships at a time to sweep such mines, each trailing a "kite", that is to say, a sea-bed trawl. If these ships were sent up either side of a suspected minefield then a third cable between their two kites would snag, break, or gather together like a fist-full of balloon-strings any mines present. If the mines clattered together and exploded, so much the better. If they simply popped to the surface then they would require detonating by gunfire. Click here for more details and explanatory diagrams. Later sweeping systems relied on the use of a single ship trailing a "paravane", a streamlined towing buoy so finned as to pull out to one side rather than drag directly behind the towing ship. For the history of the paravane see Cornford (1919 online). The minesweeping force available to Carden consisted to start with of three dozen or so requisitioned trawlers from Britain's fishing fleet, complete with their civilian crews.

DOUBLE ASIDE: It will later emerge [=8th March] that nobody had thought to tell the civilian volunteers that they were going to have to do their fishing for iron under hostile shellfire.

However between 5th and 7th March the Ottoman forces regroup and successfully counter-attack at Capes Hellas and Kum Kale [maplinks at 1st January], bringing with them field artillery to replace the less manoeuvrable and easier to spot fortress guns. Ominously the reorganised Turkish artillery now starts to disrupt the minesweeping operations ...

"The minesweepers could not go forward until the guns were silenced, and the battleships could not get near enough to silence the guns until the mines were out of the way. The Fleet's seaplanes with their new wireless equipment might have solved the problem for the naval gunners by acting as spotters, but each day the sea proved either too rough or too smooth for the machines to take off. In this dilemma Carden [1st January<=8th March] began to hesitate and delay" (Moorehead, 1956, p57; bold emphasis added).

Meanwhile the Commander-in-Chief of the Australian and New Zealand forces assembled in Egypt, [Sir]1917 William R. Birdwood [1st Baron Birdwood]1938 [Wikipedia biography=>11th April], having sailed to the Dardanelles on a fact-finding mission, telegraphs Secretary of State for War Kitchener [16th February<=8th March] on 5th March to warn him that in his view the naval operations are going to run out of steam at some
point, whereupon ground troops (and those he commands are the closest) are going to have to be committed.

On 8th March another storm blows in and it is fast becoming evident "that the first impetus of the attack had spent itself" (Moorehead, 1956, p57) [sub-thread continues at 8th March...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Friday 26th February] The Welsh Guards Regiment [Wikipedia factsheet=>17th August, modern Regimental website] is formally established by Royal Warrant, fielding a single battalion. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]


******************* MONTHLY UPDATE, FEBRUARY 1915 *******************
******************* MONTHLY UPDATE, FEBRUARY 1915 *******************
******************* MONTHLY UPDATE, FEBRUARY 1915 *******************

1915 [Monday 1st March] Present Location of Welsh Units: Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the seventh month of the war...

ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn [<=1914 (7th December)] is still in France with 7th Division. The 2nd Bn is still in France with 6th Division. Of the nine service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, and 16th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is still in France with 1st Division. The remaining three first line territorial battalions - 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn - remain assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. The second line 2/4th Bn, 2/5th Bn, 2/6th Bn, and 2/7th Bn remain assigned to homeland defence. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during February. Two further service battalions were created during February, namely 17th [(Service)] (2nd North Wales) Bn at Llandudno and 18th [(Service)] (2nd London Welsh) Bn at London.

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is still in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn is still assembling as part of 29th Division. Of the eight service battalions so far created 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The SWB's only first line territorial battalion is 1/1st Bn, and it is assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. The SWB's two second line territorial battalions are both assigned to homeland defence. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during February. No further service battalions were created during February.

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is still in France with 28th Division. 2nd Bn is still in France with 1st Division. Of the eleven service battalions so far created 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, and 18th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR's four first line territorial battalions are 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, all assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. The WR's four second line territorial battalions are all assigned to homeland defence. No further territorial battalions were mobilised during February. One further service battalion was created during February, namely 19th (Service) (Glamorgan Pioneers) Bn.

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT
1/2nd Bn [1st February<=>1st April] is still in France with 4th Division. 1/1st [13th February<=>1st April] and 1/3rd Bn [ditto] have now joined them with 28th Division [ditto]. Three third-line battalions were created during February, namely 3/1st Bn, 3/2nd Bn, and 3/3rd Bn. The regiment's six second- and third-line battalions are henceforth all assigned to homeland defence and/or the training of replacements.
**THE WELSH GUARDS REGIMENT**
The brand new 1st Bn [preceding entry <= 17th August] is just being assembled for training.

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, FEBRUARY 1915 ***************
*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, FEBRUARY 1915 ***************
*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, FEBRUARY 1915 ***************

********** "WE WANT TO BE YOUR FRIENDS" **********

1915 [Monday 1st/5th March] **Islam in WW1 [VII - Muslim Prisoners Get their own Camp Magazine]**: [Continued from 1914 (2nd December)] French and British Muslims held as prisoners-of-war in Germany's **Zossen P.O.W. Camp** [maplink at 1914 (14th November)] receive the first edition of the new Arabian-language propaganda newsheet *El Dschihad* (= English *Jihad, "Holy War"*), On 5th March a Russian translation will follow. Later in the year the veteran German diplomat Gottfried Galli [no convenient biography] publishes a short pamphlet under the title "*Dschihad: Der Heilige Krieg des Islams und seine Bedeutung im Weltkriege*" (= *Jihad: Islam's Holy War and its Significance in the World War*) [full text online versions are available], in which he calls for Germany to pursue its policy more thoughtfully, distancing itself especially from Turkish atrocities such as the "Armenian Massacres" [Wikipedia factsheet] (p8) and warning that there is, after all, no single Islamic religious power with which to negotiate [sub-thread continues at 8th April ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1914 [Monday 8th March] **Hindu Nationalism in WW1 [II - The Annie Larsen Affair]**: [Continued from 1914 (?) 7th October)] As part of the campaign of black ops organised by von Oppenheim's *Nachrichtendienst für den Orient* German agents in the U.S. have lately agreed to supply arms to the U.S.-based revolutionary Indian nationalist Har Dayal [Wikipedia biography], founder-member of the anti-British Ghadar Party [Wikipedia factsheet]. On 8th March the shipment departs San Diego, CA, aboard the chartered schooner *Annie Larsen* [Wikipedia shipography], which then makes its way to Socorro Island [map, etc.] off the coast of Mexico, there to await onward transport across the Pacific aboard the oil tanker *SS Maverick* [Wikipedia shipography]. Unfortunately for the plotters the U.S. authorities are aware of the plot and the rendezvous never takes place. The shipment itself will be impounded when the Annie Larsen re-enters U.S. waters on 1st July. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 BLACK OPS]

1915 [Monday 8th-14th March] **Hunting the Dresden [II - End Game]**: [Continued from 21st January] At 1400hr on 8th March SMS *Dresden* [21st January <= *sinks this entry*] is finally spotted by the British armoured cruiser HMS *Kent* [=1914 (8th December)], only to escape again as night falls, anchoring the following morning in Cumberland Bay [map, etc.], Más Afuera [maplink at 1914 (26th October)]. Here she receives permission from Berlin to seek internment by Chile on the grounds of being unfit to return to sea. *Kent*, meanwhile, has been joined by HMS *Glasgow* [=<=1914 (8th December)] but it is still another five days before the latter's Wireless Officer, Charles G. Stuart [no convenient biography], succeeds in discovering Dresden's location by decrypting her wireless intercepts. The two ships arrive off Cumberland Bay at 0830hr on 14th March. Still at anchor Dresden signals that she is no longer a combatant but the British ships are taking no chances and open fire anyway, happy to leave it to their diplomats to smooth things over afterward. The Germans add scuttling charges of their own to the shellfire and Dresden sinks at around 1100hr [visit the wreck courtesy of Shipwreck Central TV on YouTube]. All but eight of her crew survive the action and go into Chilean internment† [end of sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS]

†**ASIDE**: Destined to become far better known in WW2, one of the survivors is the Dresden's intelligence officer, Wilhelm Canaris [Wikipedia biography => 5th August].
1915  [Monday 8th-12th March] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [VI - Mines Prove Easier to Lay than Sweep]: [Continued from 25th February] After dark on 8th March the Turkish minelayer *Nusret* [Wikipedia shipography], under the command of one Yüzbaşı Hakki Bey [no convenient biography=>18th March], slips out of Çannakale [maplink at 1st January] and seeds a line of 20 mines along the deep-water margin of Erenköy Bay [ditto]. After dark on 10th March HMS *Canopus* [<=1914 (7th December)] supports a major minesweeping operation toward the Çannakale Narrows [<=1st January]. Carden’s [25th February<=>13th March] Chief-of-Staff [Sir]1918 Roger Keyes [1st Baron Keyes]1943 [1914 (28th August)<=>13th March] observes the operation and is far from impressed, thus ...

"It was too much for the minesweepers. Four of the six passed over the minefield below [Çanakkale] without getting their kites down, and one of the remaining pair soon struck a mine and blew up. For a time a tremendous fire poured down on the survivors […] Next night Keyes tried again, without [Canopus], hoping to steel up on the Turks unawares. 'The less said about that night the better,' he wrote later. 'To put it briefly, the sweepers turned tail and fled directly they were fired upon. I was furious and told the officers in charge that they had had their opportunity, there were many others only too keen to try. It did not matter if we lost all seven sweepers, there were twenty-eight more, and the mines had got to be swept up. How could they talk of being stopped by heavy fire if they were not hit? The Admiralty were prepared for losses, but we had chucked our hand in and started squealing before we had any" (Moorehead, 1956, p58; bold emphasis added).

In London, meanwhile, Kitchener [25th February<=>19th March] has been planning ahead, firstly deciding on 10th March to reinstate the previously-canceled [16th February] orders to embark 29th Division [16th February<=11th April] (including 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers) for the Dardanelles (via Alexandria) under the command of ("one of the Great War's spectacular incompetents")1 Hunter-Weston [1914 (13th September)<=>11th April], and then on 12th March appointing Sir Ian S. M. Hamilton [Wikipedia biography]=>18th March as Commander-in-Chief of British land forces in the Dardanelles [sub-thread continues at 13th March ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1ASIDE: This description from Carlyon (2006).

********** THE FIRST SET-PIECE BRITISH OFFENSIVE OF WW1 **********
********** THE FIRST SET-PIECE BRITISH OFFENSIVE OF WW1 **********
********** THE FIRST SET-PIECE BRITISH OFFENSIVE OF WW1 **********

BUT
********** "RATHER A FIASCO"1 **********

1915 [Wednesday 10th-13th March] The Battle of Neuve Chapelle: This short-lived British offensive is fought to retake the village of Neuve Chapelle [maplink at 1914 (10th October)], lost during the First Battle of Ypres [<=1914 (21st October)]. It is, however, more than just a local operation, being intended to prepare the ground for a subsequent advance against the Aubers Ridge [maplink at 10th October] and thereby threaten the German base city of Rijssel/Lille [maplink at 1914 (24th August)]. The offensive fields Haig’s [1st January<=>9th May] First Army against von Clauer’s [ditto] VII Corps. The battle begins at 0730hr with an artillery barrage, followed at 0805hr by an infantry assault by Anderson’s [<=10th October] 7th (Meerut) Division [1914 (23rd November)<=>25th September] which succeeds in recapturing the village at 1000hr. However a determined six-hour stand by VII Corps’ 11th Jäger Bn allows German reserves to be brought up. A German counter-attack on 12th March fails to retake the village but consumes so much of Haig’s artillery ammunition that the offensive will be formally discontinued the following day. The battle is noteworthy in the present context for demonstrating that capturing a stretch of enemy front line is
far easier than achieving a viable breakthrough. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGN]

1 ASIDE: This phrase from Dunn (1938, p124), where it is attributed to one of the 2/RWF's officers quoting an unidentified original source.

2 ASIDE: In his 1920 memoir-monograph "Tanks in the Great War" [full text online] (see especially Chapter VIII) the military analyst (and unwitting architect of the Blitzkriegs of 1939-1941) John F. C. Fuller [Wikipedia biography] explains that to break through an enemy line, push out and then shore up defensible flanks, replace accumulating losses, deal with counter-attacks, and then actually "exploit" the breach you have created, you need to have started with immense local superiority; either that or have available to you specialist fast-exploitation assets such as tanks.

1915 [Saturday 13th-15th March] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [VII - The Minefields Still a Problem]: [Continued from 8th March] After dark on 13th March six of Keyes' [8th March<=19th March] minesweepers - now more aggressively crewed - mount their most determined sweep to date. Four are quickly damaged and unable to deploy their sweeps, and the light cruiser HMS Amethyst [=1914 (28th August)], commanded by George J. Todd [no convenient biography], is seriously damaged while coordinating operations and deliberately drawing fire. But although some main channel mines are swept the Erenköy Bay shallows [maplink at 1st January] are too far offset toward the southern bank and the sweep misses the line of mines laid there the week before [=25th February].

On 14th March Winston Churchill [25th January<=9th May] confirms the Admiralty's willingness to take casualties, telegraphing that "two or three hundred casualties[1] would be a moderate price to pay for sweeping up as far as the Narrows" (Moorehead, 1956). Then on 15th March Carden [=8th March] is called back to Britain suffering from stress and overwork and on 17th March one of his subordinates, [Sir]1916 John de Robeck [1st Baronet]1919 [Wikipedia biography]=18th March, is promoted in theatre to replace him. His first act as taskforce commander is to give the go-ahead for the long-awaited frontal attack on the Narrows the following morning [sub-thread continues at 18th March ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1 ASIDE - CASUALTIES AS AN INDEX OF OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: Note the deliberate and dispassionate calculation here. Casualties are expected, demanded almost, because they are the best indication of whether a particular initiative is being sufficiently aggressively pursued. Students of the 21st Century wars in Iraq and Afghanistan can see precisely this calculation openly and explicitly at work in determining how many patrols to send out into hostile territory at any one phase in a campaign [start with the article by West (2011 online) and browse onward by keyword].

1915 [Sunday 14th-17th March] The Battle of St. Eloi: This comparatively localised action takes place at St. Eloi [maplink at 1914 (27th October)] on the south-western stretch of the Ypres Salient between 23rd (Royal Bavarian) Regiment and elements of Snow's [1914 (12th October)<=9th April] 27th Division [Wikipedia factsheet>=9th April]. The battle begins at 1800hr with a "very heavy cannonade" and the exploding of a mine under the British front line. The German infantry then advance to capture the front-line trench and part of the village. A successful British counter-attack is launched at 0200hr on the night of 14th/15th March, with Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry [6th January<=8th May] among the units subsequently commended in dispatch. A second German attack on 17th March makes no progress. The Patricias' commanding officer Francis D. Farquhar [6th January<=d. of wounds 20th March] is killed during these operations. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
1915 [Thursday 18th March] Shellshock [IV - Rivers Joins Up]: [Continued from 13th February] Around this time¹ the physician-anthropologist William H. R. Rivers [1906 (3rd September)<=3rd September] returns from a field trip to Melanesia and offers his services as an attached civilian to the Royal Army Medical Corps, being assigned to Maghull War Hospital² [1914 (4th December)<=1st May] in July [sub-thread continues at 8th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

¹ASIDE: The biographies are vague on dates here. For example Slobodin (1978) simply says "in the Spring of 1915" (p53).
²ASIDE: Maghull is nowadays part of Ashworth Hospital, one of Britain's three high-security psychiatric detention centres. [A local informs me that you pronounce it "m'Gool", to rhyme with school, and stressed on the second syllable.]

1915 [Thursday 18th March] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [VIII - The Attack on the Narrows]: [Continued from 13th March] The Allies now mount their long-awaited set-piece attack up through the lower Strait to engage (and hopefully put out of action) the Çanakkale and Kilitbahir headland batteries at the Çanakkale Narrows [maplink at 1st January]. De Robeck's [13th March<=19th March] capital ships are organised into three waves, each more or less in line abreast. The first wave consists of Queen Elizabeth, Agamemnon, Lord Nelson, and Inflexible, with Prince George and Triumph in support; the second of Gaulois, Charlemagne, Bouvet, and Suffren, with Majestic and Swiftsure in support. The third wave is held in reserve outside the Mouth awaiting developments. Queen Elizabeth and her consorts open the bombardment at 1125hr, with the French squadron moving forward through them to close the range 40 minutes later. Over the ensuing hour Gaulois, Suffren, Agamemnon, and Inflexible are repeatedly hit, and so somewhat before 1400hr de Robeck decides to rotate his damaged ships with fresh ones out of the reserve line. This involves peeling off in succession to starboard through Erenköy Bay [maplink at 1st January], whereupon Yüzbaşı Hakkı Bey's [<=8th March] mines claim their first victim. Bouvet strikes one at speed and is unfortunate enough for it to trigger an onboard magazine explosion which rips open her hull, sinking her in a matter of seconds with only 50 of her 710-man crew surviving.

ASIDE: The consensus amongst de Robeck's officers is that Bouvet had been hit by either a drift mine or a torpedo, and so the fleet continues - to its cost - to manoeuvre close to Erenköy Bay.

The bombardment continues for two more hours but is unable to prevent yet another minesweeping attempt in mid-afternoon from being abandoned in panic once the Turkish gunners takes it under fire. Then at 1611hr Inflexible takes another of Hakkı Bey's mines on her starboard bow, killing 39 of her crew and requiring her to be beached at Bozcaada/Tenedos [maplink at 16th February] to prevent her sinking. Shortly afterward Irresistible is similarly stricken. She, however, loses power and so decides to abandon ship. An hour later Ocean strikes another and she, too, is abandoned. It all does very little to persuade Hamilton [8th March<=19th March], just arrived from Marseilles aboard the fast cruiser HMS Phaeton [Wikipedia shipography] and watching events unfold from the side-lines, that his infantry is not going to be needed [sub-thread continues at 19th March ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

***** "THE FIRST PART OF THE GREAT ADVENTURE WAS OVER"! *****

1915 [Friday 19th-25th March] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [IX - Mission Creep]: [Continued from 18th March] Keyes [13th March<=3rd May] now spends the next few days re-crewing his minesweepers from the crews rescued from Irresistible and Ocean. At much the same time Charles R. Samson [1914 (22nd September)<=25th April] arrives with 3rd Squadron, Royal Naval Air Service and sets about establishing a base at
Bozcaada/Tenedos maplink at 16th February. However already on 19th March Hamilton [18th March => 11th April] has telegraphed Kitchener [8th March => 31st March] predicting that ground troops are going to be needed imminently and advising that they not be landed piecemeal but rather as part of a "deliberate and prepared" amphibious operation "carried out at full strength". Then on 22nd March the senior army and navy commanders hold a council of war aboard Queen Elizabeth, the end-result of which is that de Robeck [18th March => 23rd April] decides not to try to force the Narrows a second time, but rather to await "a better and bigger scheme" involving ground troops, even though this means at least a three-week delay while preparations are made. And in the Straits themselves all falls quiet, except for the sound of the Turks - determined not to be taken unprepared when the British return - making good their entrenchments, bringing in reinforcements, remounting their guns, and refreshing their magazines. With effect from 25th March they will officially be fielded as Fifth Army under the command of von Sanders [1914 (27th October) => 25th April], and one of the specific skills von Sanders insists they work on over the coming weeks is how to throw seaborne invaders back into the sea [sub-thread continues at 11th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SURFACE NAVY OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

Moorehead (1956, p93).

1915 [Friday 19th March or hereabouts] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXI - Hedley le Bas in Ireland]: [Continued from ??th February] The British War Office's publicist-publisher Le Bas [1914 (11th December) => 14th July] travels to Ireland in order to promote British Army recruitment there [sub-thread continues at 22nd April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 RECRUITMENT]

1915 [Wednesday 24th March] As part of his preparations for the Second Battle of Artois [=>9th May] Joffre [1914 (17th December) => 31st March] asks Sir John French [1914 (23rd November) => 27th March] to relieve two French Corps in the Ypres Salient. Sir John agrees in principle but, in the event, will have had so many troops diverted to the Dardanelles Campaign that he will be unable to do so. [THREAD = WW1 GRAND STRATEGY]

1915 [Saturday 27th March] The Shells Crisis [I - The War Office Finally Comes Clean]: [New sub-thread] Having censored the reporting of ammunition shortages for the past five months¹, the War Office Press Bureau [1914 (3rd October) => 19th May] finally floats the issue in the public domain by allowing shortages to be mentioned in an interview with Sir John French [24th March => 31st March] featured in today's edition of The Times [sub-thread continues at 15th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

¹ASIDE: Remember that Sir John had been complaining about the tactical difficulties caused by the shortage of artillery ammunition since the First Battle of Ypres [=1914 (21st October)].

1915 [Wednesday 31st March] Over breakfast Kitchener [19th March => 9th April] tells Sir John French [27th March => 9th April] that unless he and Joffre [24th March => 22nd April] start to make some "substantial advances" on the Western Front he will allocate his New Army Divisions to other theatres of war. [THREAD = WW1 GRAND STRATEGY]

*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, MARCH 1915 ***************
*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, MARCH 1915 ***************
*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, MARCH 1915 ***************

1915 [Thursday 1st April] Present Location of Welsh Units: Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the eighth month of the war ... ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is still in France with 7th Division. 2nd Bn is still in France with 6th Division. Of the eleven service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, and 17th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is still in France with 1st Division. The remaining three first line territorial battalions - 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn - remain assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. One further service battalion was created during March, namely 19th (Service) Bn. 

**NOTE:** The period of rapid creation of new RWF units is now over and we shall henceforth only be logging the progress of the units mentioned above.

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])

1st Bn is still in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn is presently in transit as part of 29th Division heading for the Gallipoli Landings [=25th April]. Of the eight service battalions so far created 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The SWB’s only first line territorial battalion is 1/1st Bn, and it is assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. One further service battalion was created during March, namely 12th (Service) (3rd Gwent) Bn at Newport. 

**NOTE:** The period of rapid creation of new SWB units is now over and we shall henceforth only be logging the progress of the units mentioned above.

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])

1st Bn is still in France with 28th Division. 2nd Bn is still in France with 1st Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, 18th Bn, and 19th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR's four first line territorial battalions are 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, all assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division. 

**NOTE:** The period of rapid creation of new WR units is now over and we shall henceforth only be logging the progress of the units mentioned above.

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT

1/2nd Bn [1st March <= 1st May] is still in France with 4th Division. 1/1st [1st March <= 1st May] and 1/3rd Bn [ditto] have now joined them with 28th Division. 

**NOTE:** The period of rapid creation of new MR units is now over and we shall henceforth only be logging the progress of the units mentioned above.

THE WELSH GUARDS REGIMENT

1st Bn [1st February <= 17th August] remains in training.

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, MARCH 1915 ***************

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, MARCH 1915 ***************

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, MARCH 1915 ***************

1915 [Friday 2nd April] De Maud'huiy [<=1914 (17th December)] is appointed as commander of France’s Seventh Army, being replaced at Tenth Army by d’Urbal [<=1914 (16th November) <= 9th May]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Saturday 3rd April] The German intelligence operative von Rintelen [<=1914 (7th December)] arrives in New York City to help coordinate Germany’s campaign of sabotage against American munitions factories [<=13th February]; also the wooing of Mexico as a German ally. [THREAD = WW1 ESPIONAGE AND INTELLIGENCE]

1915 [Sunday 4th April] Counter-Battery Science [III - Britain's GHQ Memorandum]: [Continued from 1914 (1st November)] Around this time British GHQ circulates a technical memorandum concerning the most effective way to conduct a pre-attack barrage. Henceforth the emphasis must be upon careful mathematical preparation (which in turn requires accurate maps and skilled observers) and a long and methodical bombardment [sub-thread continues at ??th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 ARTILLERY]

1915 [Thursday 8th April] Islam in WW1 [VIII - The British Think Ahead]: [Continued from 1st March] Prime Minister Asquith [1914 (27th August) <= 15th April] appoints Sir Maurice de
**Bunsen** [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (27th February)] to chair a committee to look into the proper nature of Britain's long-term (i.e., post-war) objectives for the territories presently within the Ottoman Empire [continues at 30th June]. One of the committee members is **Sir Mark Sykes, 6th Baronet** [and Member of Parliament (for Hull Central) in uniform] [Wikipedia biography=>1st December], of whom more later [sub-thread continues at 17th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 GRAND STRATEGIES] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Thursday 8th April] **Shellshock [V - The French Approach]**: [Continued from ??th March] The Swiss-born French military neurologist **Gustave Roussy** [Wikipedia biography] publishes a report entitled "À Propos de Quelques Troubles Nerveux Psychiques" [roughly "Cases of Nerves"], in which he identifies two fundamental classifying questions for physicians dealing with psychological rather than physical injury. The first classifier is to separate out "psychotic" conditions such as schizophrenia and melancholia, where the primary diagnostic is a distortion of reality processing, for these require the specialist help of a psychiatrist; and this, because there are fewer psychiatrists than neurologists, means transferring such cases to dedicated centres of excellence in the civilian asylum system. The second classifier is to divide those remaining into one of two groups of "neurotics", namely "neurasthenics" and "psychoasthenics", where the primary diagnostics are nervousness, anxiety, and loss of purpose (peripherally or centrally, respectively), and "hysterics", where the primary diagnostic is a token physical manifestation of some sort.¹ Roussy then reports 54 cases of the hysterical type for which he has accumulated detailed casenotes, and in which the primary signs include uncontrollable trembling, over-reaction to distant shellfire, and paralyses without nerve damage [sub-thread continues at 1st May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

¹**ASIDE:** Roussy's system is merely a condensation of that popularised in the second half of the 19th Century. Readers can either take the above entry at face value or go back and read the multiple entries for the **Neurasthenia** and **Hysteria** sub-threads at 1869-1884 and 1878-1905, respectively.

1915 [Friday 9th April] Around this time **Hannibal C. Ford** [=1909] resigns as Chief Engineer of the **Sperry Gyroscope Company** [=1909] and sets up in business on his own as the **Ford Marine Appliance Corporation** [no convenient factsheet] (later the **Ford Instrument Company**). Among the company's early projects is the **Mark 1 Range Keeper** [use Clymer (1993 online) as factsheet], progressive improvements to which will keep the company busy until well into the Cold War era! [THREAD = WW1 CYBERNETICS, COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE, AND FIRE CONTROL]

1915 [Friday 9th April] **The Second Battle of Ypres [I - The Canadians Arrive]**: [New sub-thread] Responding to **Kitchener**'s [31st March=>15th April] demand for "substantial advances" to be made on the Western Front [31st March=>22nd April], **Sir John French** [31st March=>22nd April] is presently building up forces for a major attack south of Ypres to complement the forthcoming French offensive in Artois. He is also doing his best to replace French units in the Ypres Salient with British. Amongst the fresh units recently arrived in the Salient are **Alderson**'s [1914 (1st September)] and **Bulfin**'s [13th February=>22nd April] 1st Canadian Division¹ [Wikipedia factsheet=>22nd April]. **Snow**'s [14th March=>1916 (29th June)] 27th Division [14th March=>31st May], and **Bulfin**'s [13th February=>22nd April] 28th Division [sub-thread-continues at 22nd April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

¹**ASIDE:** This division's artillery includes **3rd (Montreal) Field Battery** commanded by **Andrew G. L. McNaughton** [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (11th March)], of whom more in due course.
1915 [Sunday 11th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [X - The Invasion Force Gathers]: [Continued from 19th March] As part of the build-up to his campaign Hamilton [19th March<>23rd April] Te-embarks Hunter-Weston's [8th March<>23rd April] 29th Division (including 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers) at Alexandria in readiness for the final 700-mile voyage to Moudros [maplink at 19th February], on the island of Lemnos. Other assets presently in transit include the French 1st Division under d'Amade [1914 (15th September)<=>23rd April], Paris's [1914 (4th October)<=>23rd April] 63rd (Royal Naval) Division [1914 (4th October)<=>23rd April], and Birdwood's [25th February<=>23rd April] ANZACs. The balloon ship HMS Manica [Wikipedia shipography<>19th April] also joins the fleet around this time, as do HMS Queen [Wikipedia shipography<>25th April], HMS Prince of Wales [Wikipedia shipography<>25th April], HMS London [Wikipedia shipography<>25th April] and HMS Goliath [Wikipedia shipography<>25th April] [sub-thread-continues at 19th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 12th-14th April] The Mesopotamian Campaign [IV - The Battle of Shaiba]: [Continued from 1914 (3rd December)] An 18,000-man Turkish/Arab force commanded by Suleyman Askeri [Wikipedia biography<>dies by own hand after this action] attacks the British base at Shaiba Fort, a large oasis camp in the desert west of Basra [maplink at 1914 (11th November)]. After 48 hours of intense fighting the Arabian contingent withdraws unilaterally, thereby forcing Askeri to call off his attack. The battle is noteworthy in the present context for this early sign of an exploitable rift between Arab nationalists and the Ottoman occupation [sub-thread continues at 3rd June ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 15th April] The Shells Crisis [II - Parliament Becomes Curious]: [Continued from 27th March] In reply to an apparently innocent question in the Commons Prime Minister Asquith [8th April<>20th April] concerning the creation of "a Committee to supervise the placing of contracts for munitions of war" replies as follows ...

"The appointment of such a Committee was decided upon a month ago, and the Departments have been busy in preparing the ground for its activities. The function of the Committee is to ensure the promptest and most efficient application of all the available productive resources of the country to the manufacture and supply of munitions of war for the Navy and Army" (Hansard, 71:38-39).

Confusingly, in fact, there are two inter-related Committees, the other being a Departmental Committee within the War Office chaired by Kitchener [9th April<>2nd May] himself [details in Hansard, 71:39-40 if interested]. In the event the entire munitions issue is about to boil over as a focus of some carefully stage-managed public anger, and will require far more than just a few leisurely committees to resolve [sub-thread continues at 17th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1915 [??th April] Counter-Battery Science [IV - British Ranging and Survey]: [Continued from 4th April] To help implement the aforementioned GHQ Memorandum [<>4th April] the army's Ranging and Survey Sections are expanded and flash-spotting courses are held on the Western Front to train up Artillery Intelligence Officers. One of those attending, the Canadian Henry H. Hemming [no convenient biography; some mentions in the London Gazette=<>1916 (1st May)], Subsequently helps develop a "flash-buzzer board" technique [no convenient factsheet] for coordinating the taking of bearings of an enemy gun from two well-separated observation posts [sub-thread continues at ??th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 ARTILLERY]

ASIDE: Basic geometry tells us that when the "bearings" (or "azimuths") of a target object taken from two known positions are plotted on a map then the point where the two lines intersect is where the target is located. Artillery observers are therefore equipped with devices known as "alidades" [Wikipedia factsheet and image] which are aligned to magnetic north using a
compared to the intersection point to a friendly battery as a potential target. Every stage of this process is subject to error (not least because all involved were several hundreds of yards apart, and in the dark, and taking cover), and artillery error is at best wasteful and at worst the cause of blue-on-blue friendly fire casualties [Wikipedia factsheet]. The risk addressed by Hemming was that only one observer might get a clear and reliable bearing on a given event at a time, or there might suddenly be many flashes to choose from. The surveyor therefore equipped each observer with a bell wire buzzer which the observer sounded whenever he was satisfied he had a bearing. The surveyor then used his own judgement from the several incoming buzzes when there was a reasonable chance of two good bearings being available. The Royal Welch Fusilier David Jones [<=1914 (14th November)] served for a time as an artillery observer in the winter of 1916/1917, much of this in the Messines-Wytschaete sector, but was not very good at it: his association with the Field Survey service was, he will later recollect, "shameful and brief" (Dilworth, 2012, p146).

1915 [Saturday 17th April] The Shells Crisis [III - Further Developments]: [Continued from 15th April] Under the headline "Great Developments at Burry Port" today's Llanelli Star welcomes the coming of a new Nobel Explosives Company [<=1907] explosives factory on the dunes at Pembrey, West Wales [map etc.]. It promises 2000 jobs in the area. The same day RMS Lusitania [1906 (7th June)<=22nd April] departs Liverpool on her 201st voyage, the outward-bound crossing to New York City [sub-thread continues at 21st April ...]. [THREAD = THE WW1 FINANCIAL AND ARMAMENTS INDUSTRIES]

ASIDE - A PRESCRIPTION: On its return journey the Lusitania was torpedoed and sunk [=7th May]. One of the survivors of the sinking was the coal magnate David A. Thomas [1st Viscount Rhondda] [1910 (3rd December)<=7th May], who had ostensibly been visiting his coal mining interests in Pennsylvania. Nevertheless because Thomas was shortly to be asked by Lloyd George [1914 (5th October)<=21st April] to organise a major munitions purchasing programme in the United States, we presume that he was already cultivating contacts to this end. Indeed the vessel was carrying munitions on the return voyage, in whose purchase Thomas might have been involved. Our suspicions are strengthened by Neilson's (2012 online [link given at 28th January]) citation of a document dated 17th April detailing steps already taken to increase "the output of munitions" to fulfill British orders.

1915 [Saturday 17th April] Islam in WW1 [IX - A Top Secret Mission]: [Continued from 8th April] Having travelled there by converging routes a secret German mission gathers in Constantinople. The key players are the German soldier-academic-spy Oskar von Niedermayer [Wikipedia biography] [2nd October], the soldier-diplomat Werner von Hentig [Wikipedia biography] [22nd October], and the Indian Nationalist Prince Mahendra Pratap [Wikipedia biography] [21st October]. The aim of the Mission is to persuade Habibullah Khan of Afghanistan [1901 (1st October)<=2nd October] to sever relationships with Great Britain and to make war southward into British India. To do this they need to liaise closely with the Islamic hierarchy in Constantinople, and so now spend the several weeks in planning and scoping talks with Enver Pasha [<=1914 (22nd December)] and the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed V [1914 (14th November)<=20th October], They move on about a fortnight later, heading for Baghdad [sub-thread continues at 1st June ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Saturday 17th April-7th May] The Battle of Hill 60 [I - Overview]: [New sub-thread] This three-week-long battle is fought for control of "Hill 60" [use the Hooge maplink at 1914 (27th October)] and look a mile south-south-westward] on the southern flank of the Ypres Salient. It begins with Thomas Morland's [Wikipedia biography] 5th Division [Wikipedia factsheet] taking the hill in a surprise (and deadly) mine attack and ends with the Germans taking it back in a surprise (and deadly) gas attack. The mines are the first major achievement of the B.E.F.'s recent investment in [Sir] John ["Hellfire Jack"] [Norton-Griffiths]
1915 [Saturday 17th-21st April] The Battle of Hill 60 [II - The First Five Days]: [Continued from preceding entry] At 0705hr on 17th April the British explode six large mines in quick succession under the German fortifications along the Hill 60 crest. An infantry assault then overwhims the dazed survivors, and by 1230hr the British are well dug-in. There then follows a four-day period of costly counter-attacks to and fro which make little change to things [sub-thread continues at 22nd April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Monday 19th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XI - The Balloon Goes Up]: [Continued from 11th April] The balloon ship HMS Manica [11th April<=>25th April] moves inshore and her observers help direct the fleet's bombardment of Turkish positions [sub-thread continues at 23rd April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

***** THE "ARMENIAN GENOCIDE" BEGINS *****

1915 [Tuesday 20th April-5th May] WW1 in the Caucasus [V - The Siege of Van ("Red Sunday")] [Continued from 6th January 1915] On 20th April 1915, having recovered from their setback at Sarikamish during the winter, the Ottomans attack the ethnically Armenian city of Van [map]. There follows a six-week-long campaign of one-sided ethnic cleansing by the Turkish Third Army under Djevdet ("the Blacksmith") Bey [Wikipedia biography] "Blacksmith" because - so it is said - he found it amusing to nail horseshoes to his prisoners' feet! against the lightly armed civilians of the city and its surrounding towns and villages. The clampdown begins on 24th April with the Turkish Interior Minister Mehmed Talaat Pasha [Wikipedia biography] issuing a "Detention Order of Intellectuals" [Wikipedia briefing] proscribing Armenian political organisations as treasonously pro-Russian and giving orders that any rebellious acts by Armenians should be put down by force of arms (upon receipt of which, the Blacksmith's troops indulge in a string of local atrocities and massacres). The siege comes to a provisional end after a Russian column pushes the Turkish forces out of the province on 31st May, but the atrocities continue [sub-thread continues at 6th May 1915 ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 REPRISALS AND ATROCITIES] [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

1915 [Tuesday 20th April] The Shells Crisis [IV - Asquith in Newcastle]: [Continued from 17th April] In a speech to armaments workers in Newcastle-upon-Tyne Prime Minister Asquith [15th April<=>17th May] carelessly over-refutes accusations that military operations have been impaired of late by lack of ammunition. He unwisely gives the following direct (good) but untrue (bad) answer: "I say there is not a word of truth in that statement". Those pulling the strings of the Conservative and Unionist Party see in these few words the opportunity to topple the Government [sub-thread continues at 21st April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1915 [Wednesday 21st April] The Shells Crisis [V - Lloyd George in the Commons]: [Continued from 20th April] In a House of Commons debate on the "Unified Administration of Supply" Chancellor of the Exchequer Lloyd George [17th April (ASIDE)<=>17th May] makes the following statement ...
"No other country in the world has had the same problem to face. We have had to turn out [...] six times more men than anybody in this House ever suggested would be sent abroad as an Expeditionary Force. [...] In this War more ammunition has been expended than any army ever anticipated [...] and it is perfectly clear that the Germans also were taken by surprise. [...] During the fortnight of fighting in an around Neuve Chapelle [=10th March] almost as much ammunition was spent by our Artillery as during the whole of the two and three-quarter years of the Boer War. [...] There is another fact that has got to be borne in mind. There has been a change in the character of the ammunition. It was assumed by every army that shrapnel was the proper shell. [...] What has been the experience? Not that shrapnel is no use, because it has been used for some purposes, but in this special kind of siege warfare it has turned out that the high explosive is the right thing" (Hansard, 71:277-374; heavily abridged).

The leader of the Conservative and Unionist minority in the Commons Bonar Law [1912 (26th January)<=17th May] then speaks to condemn what his party regards as sloppy Liberal government, remarking that the Prime Minister appoints plenty of Committees, but that "if Committees would end the War it would have ended long ago" (ibid.). After the debate he manages to quieten his back-benchers' calls for political blood, but only for a day or two [sub-thread continues at 2nd May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1915 [Thursday 22nd-30th April] The Battle of Hill 60 [III - The Battle Moves Off Awhile]: [Continued from 17th April] After 22nd April the initially relatively self-contained battle for Hill 60 overlaps in both time and space with the broader Second Battle of Ypres [=22nd April], and for the remainder of April the line remains broadly unchanged [sub-thread continues at 1st May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 22nd April] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXII - The Lusitania Affair (The Germans Buy Advertising Space)]: [Continued from 19th March] The German Embassy in Washington, DC, submits copy for a newspaper advertisement to appear on 1st May. It is designed to warn trans-Atlantic passengers - especially those who will be boarding RMS Lusitania [17th April<=1st May]) in New York City that day - that ships under any Allied flag are "liable to destruction" in "the waters adjacent to the British Isles" [sub-thread continues at 1st May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

************* THE SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES BEGINS *************
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1915 [Thursday 22nd April-25th September] The Second Battle of Ypres [II - Overview]: [Continued from 9th April] This five-month-long battle is fought between Württemberg's [1914 (19th October)<=8th May] Fourth Army and the now-largely-British forces holding the Ypres Salient, namely Smith-Dorrien's [1914 (26th December)<=27th April] Second Army. With a major offensive in the east about to commence [=2nd May] this is von Falkenhayn's [1914 (27th October)<=13th July] only major operation on the Western Front in 1915. The Allied lines have been deliberately stripped of reserves of late as Joffre [31st March<=9th May] has been preparing for the forthcoming Second Battle of Artois [=9th May], and Sir John French [9th April<=27th April] has - as promised a month before [<=24th March] - stretched himself thinly to make good the shortfall. The overall outcome is a German victory both in terms of ground gained and casualties inflicted. The battle is noteworthy in the present context (a) for the successful deployment of gas as a weapon of mass destruction, and (b) for the reduction of the Salient to its historic minimum. The following Welsh units are in theatre: 1st Bn Welch Regiment [1914 (22nd December)<=1st May], 1/1st Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [13th February<=1st May], and 1/3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [ditto], all with Bulfin's [<=9th April] 28th Division [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
********** FIRST LARGE-SCALE USE OF CHLORINE GAS **********

1915  [Thursday 22nd April] The Second Battle of Ypres/Chemical Warfare [III/VI - The Battles of s'Gravenstafel Ridge and St. Julien]: [Second Battle of Ypres continued from preceding entry; Chemical Warfare continued from 31st January] Following the poor performance of xylyl bromide in the Battle of Bolimów [<=31st January] Deimling's [1914 (27th October)<=>8th May] XV Corps now carries out a full-scale chlorine gas attack on the dorsal aspect of the Ypres Salient between the canal crossing at Steenstraat, two miles north of Boesinghe [map, etc.], and Langemarck [maplink at 1914 (21st October)].

ASIDE: S'Gravenstafel is actually no more than a few farm buildings even nowadays, but had given its name to the low ridge which runs north-westward out of Langemarck. It is often used as the name for the initial gas attack phase of the broader battle. As we are about to learn, the all-important anchoring point will be at the eastern end of this ridge around the hamlet of St. Julien [use the Langemarck maplink and then come a mile south toward Zonnebeke].

The battle begins at 1700hr 22nd April with the release of 168 tons of Chlorine gas on a four-mile front upwind of the French 45th (Algerian) Division [Wikipedia factsheet] and 87th (Territorial) Division [Wikipedia factsheet]. This attack is a major success, totally disrupting the entire four mile sector; indeed its success surprises even the Germans who have only two reserve divisions immediately at hand and are slow to advance into the gap they have created. To the right/east of said gap (and therefore with its left flank now totally unprotected), is Alderson's [9th April<=>13th September] 1st Canadian Division, and behind/south of it is the Boesinghe-St. Julien reserve line. The German infantry finally move forward around 0130hr on 23rd April, filling the vacuum left by the broken French divisions and occupying Pilckem Ridge [use the Langemarck maplink] and Langemarck itself. However they have more of a fight on their hands against the Canadians around St. Julien, who have had the presence of mind to throw out outposts to their left to block the German advance. The Germans are held back at St. Julien until 24th May whenupon a second gas attack forces the Canadians to evacuate the village.

ASIDE - "DROWNING ON DRY LAND": For more on the physiology of slowly choking on your own mucous secretions, and to learn about the work done by academics safe at home in making the whole process ever more gruesomely effective, see this documentary.

STUDENT EXERCISE - MUCORRHoeA: Check out the report of a modern pepper spray experience at http://www.redhotpepperspray.com/effects-of-pepper-spray.html. Note especially the section entitled "Rhinorrhoea" (think diarrhoea of the nose and you won't be far wrong). Now imagine the same violent mucoid discharge from the lungs. Now thoroughly browse the web for the keyphrase "bitter as the cud" and you'll be quickly up to speed with the issues surrounding gas warfare. End of exercise.

Expensive Canadian and British counter-attacks fail to recover the lost ground, presenting the Germans with a salient-beyond-a-salient around Zonnebeke and Polygon Wood. And this they will shortly be attacking [=>8th May] [Second Battle of Ypres continues at 27th April; Chemical Warfare continues at 1916 (19th January) ...]. [THREAD = WWI MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
1915 [Friday 23rd-24th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XII - Two Days to Go]: [Continued from 19th April] On 23rd April de Robeck [19th March=>25th April] gives the go-ahead for the Allied landings and one-by-one the troopships, supply ships, and their escorts - some 200 vessels in all - slip out of Moudros [maplink at 19th February] and steer for their forward assembly points [details below]. Hamilton's [11th April=>25th April] plan is to put Hunter-Weston's [11th April=>25th April] 29th Division (including 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers) ashore on five beaches around Cape Helles [maplink at 1st October] On the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula, with Birdwood's [11th April=>25th April] ANZACs going ashore at a sixth location, codenamed "Z-Beach", between Kabatepe Head, 15 miles or so up the coast, and Ari Burnu Point two miles beyond that. The arc of this bay includes the small fishing port of Kabatepe [map, etc.]. At the same time Paris's [11th April=>25th April] 63rd (Royal Naval) Division will stage a diversionary presence at Bolayir/Bulair [map, etc.] 40 miles to the north of Kabatepe Head (but not actually go ashore), and D'Amade's [11th April=>25th April] French 1st Division will land at Kum Kale [maplink at 1st January], On the Asiatic side of the Mouth of the Dardanelles.

**ASIDE - KUM KALE:** The coastline by the village of Kum Kale is the same "Trojan Plain" from which the Ancient Greeks conducted the siege of Troy [<=1184BCE]. The ruins of Troy itself [map, etc.] are a mile or so south of the modern village [see Wikitravel resource].

The five Cape Helles beaches are code-named as follows (working from north-east to south-west to start with, then eastward around the Cape, and finally north-eastward into the Mouth of the Dardanelles) [helpful Wikimap] ...

**Y-Beach** three miles north of Tekke Burnu Point, level with the village of Krithia but separated from it by Sughir Dere (codenamed "Gully Ravine") a few hundred yards inland.

**X-Beach** immediately north of Tekke Burnu Point. The heights directly south-eastward of this beach are codenamed Hill 114.

**W-Beach** between Tekke Burnu Point and Cape Helles proper. The heights to the left of this beach are Hill 114 again (but seen now from the south), and the heights to the right are Hill 138.

**V-Beach** just west of Sedd-el-Bahr [map, etc.]. The heights to the left of this beach are Hill 138 again (but seen now from the south-east), and the heights to the right (above the village of Sedd-el-Bahr) are Hill 141.

**S-Beach** in Morto Bay [map, etc.] just east of Sedd-el-Bahr and sweeping round to Eski Hisarlik Point. The heights to the left of this beach are Hill 141 again (but seen now from the north-east), and the heights on the right, that is to say above Eski Hisarlik Point, are Detott's Battery.

**NOTE:** All the heights are well defended, except at Y-Beach where the Turks have judged that nobody in their right mind would ever want to land [if Y-Beach had been properly exploited with an immediate move against Krithia this could have been an expensive misjudgement on their part; as things turned out they got away with it - Ed.]. Note also that Hills 114 and 141 are different places, not a mis-print.

The armada therefore separates. To the north the ships carrying the Naval Division sail up the northern coast of the Gallipoli peninsula to assemble in the Gulf of Saros [maplink at 1st January]. The ships carrying the ANZACs follow suit, but only as far as the island of Gökçeada/Imbros [map, etc.]. Around Cape Helles the ships carrying the 29th and 1st divisions fan out respectively north and south of the Mouth of the Dardanelles. Two thousand of these men are aboard one the fleet's colliers, the SS River Clyde [Wikipedia shipography=>25th April], recently rigged as a landing ship and commanded by Edward Unwin [Wikipedia biography=>25th April]. The rest of the division are on troopships or warships.
and will have (a) to offload in the dark onto smaller makeshift assault craft, (b) be towed toward their allocated beach by motor pinnaces, and then (c) be cast off and rowed in through the surf by sailors [sub-thread continues at 25th April ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

******* THE CURRENTS SIDE WITH THE TURKS *******

1915 [Sunday 25th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XIII - Day #1]: [Continued from 23rd April. We shall work our way around the landing beaches in counter-clockwise order, as listed on 23rd April and without repeating maplinks or alternative names unnecessarily.] Hamilton [23rd April=>next entry] observes the first day of the Gallipoli landings from the conning tower of De Robeck's [23rd April=>9th May] flagship Queen Elizabeth. Here, beach by beach, are the events this soldier and this sailor are trying to control ...

THE SUVLA BAY FEINT: In the north Paris's [23rd April=>26th April] Naval Division goes through the motions of making a landing at Suvla Bay [map, etc.], trying to draw Turkish reserves northward. HMS Manica's [<=19th April] balloon observers use semaphore signalling to report on enemy troop movements and conduct counter-battery artillery spotting. These diversionary manoeuvres continue until darkness falls, whereupon the fleet pulls back and awaits developments on the other beaches.

Z-BEACH (HENCEFORTH ANZAC COVE): Off Kabatepe Head the first wave of Birdwood's [23rd April=>26th April] assault troops - half of the Australian 3rd Brigade - scrambles down into its assault craft in the early hours and as dawn approaches is towed inshore. Unfortunately a northbound cross-current [not all sources agree with this account - see alternative theories] crabs the entire flotilla away from Kabatepe Bay proper and into the smaller Ari Burnu Bay/'Anzac Cove' [map, etc.], a mile or so further north (on and beyond Ari Burnu Point). Here, although there is a decent beach, the terrain inland - the foothills of the Sari Bair massif - is so difficult that it prevents any organised advance. Nevertheless by 0800hr some 8000 first- and second-wave troops are ashore and patrols are making some progress inland [the Wikipedia article entitled "Landing at Anzac Cove" gives the details, if interested]. Covering fire is given by HMS Queen [<=11th April], HMS Prince of Wales [<=11th April], and HMS London [<=11th April], amongst others. Unfortunately for the Allies von Sanders [<=19th March] has stationed some of his most competent units in this vicinity, specifically the 27th Infantry Regiment [Wikipedia factsheet] commanded by Mehmet Şefik Aker [Wikipedia biography] holding the coastline and the 19th Division [Wikipedia factsheet] commanded by Mustafa Kemal [Wikipedia biography=>next entry] (of whom considerably more as events unfold during the year) in reserve at Boghali/Bigali to the east of Chunuk Bair, the first peak of the Sari Bair chain. Kemal is ordered to take one of his battalions toward the coast at 0630hr. He selects 57th Infantry Regiment [Wikipedia factsheet] for this honour and they encounter the Australians on the southern slopes of Chunuk Bair around 0930hr. He immediately, and on his own initiative, orders the remainder of 19th Division forward to support him and launches a determined counter-attack, which succeeds in retaking many earlier Australian gains.

CAMEO - KEMAL TELLS IT LIKE IT IS: Kemal's orders to 57th Infantry Regiment are frequently quoted in military histories: "I don't order you to attack," he told his men, "I order you to die". Unluckily for the Allies the 57th Regiment was already kitted out and assembled, having been scheduled to conduct training manoeuvres on the day in question. Had it not been for this fateful coincidence the Turkish response would have been delayed for several hours.
At 1100hr, with the New Zealand Brigade just beginning to come ashore, a fresh Australian attack secures their perimeter and by nightfall around 16,000 ANZAC troops have been landed and the beachhead is two miles wide by half a mile deep. During the late afternoon the Turks get reinforcements of their own when the other two regiments from 19th Division arrive, and by 2115hr Birdwood's senior officers are reporting difficulties holding the line. They urgently need either reinforcements or evacuation. Birdwood passes this request on to Hamilton who agrees to send in four battalions of the Naval division, but not for at least another 24 hours. Until then, the story goes, his best advice is that the ANZACs should "dig, dig, dig!"

CAPE HELLES: The five 29th Division landings around Cape Helles are as follows, with Hunter-Weston [23rd April=>26th April] doing his best to control the proceedings from his command ship HMS Euryalus [Wikipedia shipography] off W-Beach...

Y-BEACH: The landing at Y-Beach is not helped by the fact that there is, in fact, no beach to land on, just a 200-foot-high cliff (with Gully Ravine beyond). But by the same token there is at least no enemy fire to make things difficult and by mid-morning 2000 men of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, a company of 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers [12th January=>26th April], and the Plymouth Battalion of the Naval Division have scrambled ashore "without a single shot being fired at them" (Moorehead, p145). They find themselves only two miles from the tactically important village of Krithia [clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April], however a combination of unclear orders and a confused command structure [for details see Richards (2000 online)] leads to them spending the morning in inactivity. The opportunity to take Krithia is then lost during the afternoon when Turkish reinforcements arrive there and soon bring the Y-Beach perimeter under heavy fire. The officer commanding the beachhead, the Scottish Borderers' Archibald S. Koe [Wikipedia biography], is one of the first to be killed.

X-BEACH: North of Tekke Burnu Point and covered from very close range by the gunfire of HMS Implacable [Wikipedia factsheet] the first unit ashore is 86th Brigade's 2nd Bn Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) [Wartime Memories Project factsheet], who get ashore relatively easily. They are followed at around 0930hr by 87th Brigade's 1st Bn Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers [Wikipedia factsheet], and together they push three-quarters of a mile south-eastward onto the lower slopes of Hill 114. Here they are pinned down for a while before finally taking the strongpoint in a bayonet attack at around 1230hr.

W-BEACH: South of Tekke Burnu Point the vanguard unit is 86th Brigade's 1st Bn Lancashire Fusiliers [Wikipedia factsheet] and their first wave companies have a very hard time of it before they even reach dry land because the Turks have rigged barbed wire entanglements in the shallows, laid a minefield along the sands, and positioned firing trenches to cover both. Their sniping is "deadly accurate" and directed to start with at the oarsmen in the tows. Samson's RNAS aircraft [19th March=>1916 (14th May)], operating out of Tenedos, use their on-board wireless to spot for close support fire from HMS Goliath [11th April=>10th May], HMS Triumph [16th February=>25th May], and HMS Majestic [16th April=>27th May]. The battalion suffers 533 casualties - roughly half its strength - getting up the beach, and earns itself six V.C.s (three of which
posthumously). Only when the second wave arrives at around 1000hr are the cliff-line defences finally overrun.

**ASIDE - THE FUSILIER MUSEUM, BURY, LANCS:** The Lancashire Fusiliers won six Victoria Crosses "before breakfast" and one hundred years later to the day the regimental museum at Bury, Lancashire, [see museum website] hopes to be able to display all six of them [as at 18th March 2015 they are still one short]. The award citation begins as follows...

"On the 25th April, 1915, headquarters and three companies of the 1st Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers, in effecting a landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula to the West of Cape Helles, were met by very deadly fire from hidden machine guns, which caused a great number of casualties. The survivors, however, rushed up to and cut the wire entanglements, notwithstanding the terrific fire from the enemy, and after overcoming supreme difficulties, the cliffs were gained and the position maintained. Amongst the many very gallant officers and men engaged in this most hazardous undertaking, Captain Bromley, Sergeant Stubbs, Corporal Grimshaw, Private Keneally, Sergeant Richards, and Captain Willis have been selected by their comrades as having performed the most signal acts of bravery and devotion to duty."

The next objective is the aforementioned Hill 114 and the advance here is timed to coincide with the attack from X-Beach [detailed above]. During the afternoon the second wave of landings includes 88th Brigade's **1st Bn Essex Regiment** [Wartime Memories Project factsheet] and the **4th Bn Worcestershire Regiment** [Wartime Memories Project factsheet]. At 1400hr these two units launch a successful two-hour attack on Hill 138.

********** "ABSOLUTELY RED WITH BLOOD"! **********

**V-BEACH:** At Sedd-el-Bahr the landing is a disaster from the very start. **HMS Albion** [<=16th February] opens the bombardment at 0500hr but the Turks are wise to this sort of thing and move out of their entrenchments when the bombardment begins and back in when it dies away. Then at 0622hr the first 20 boats, carrying three companies of 86th Brigade's **1st Bn Royal Dublin Fusiliers** [Wikipedia factsheet=>26th April], supported by the makeshift landing ship **River Clyde**, reach the beach, whereupon the defenders - back in their trenches - open fire with rifles and machine guns. More than one tow arrives containing only dead and wounded. Worse still, it emerges (a) that the beach is too gently sloping for the **River Clyde** to get in closer than 80 yards, and (b) that it is swept right to left by a significant current out of the Dardanelles, making it difficult for assault craft to manoeuvre accurately or to hold a mooring. Crucially, the **River Clyde** only has time to discharge two companies of 86th Brigade's **1st Bn Royal Munster Fusiliers** [Wikipedia factsheet]=>26th April] out over her two pontoon landing platforms (and they simply get mown down like the Dubliners in the tows) before the current pivots her round clockwise on her grounded bow until she points upstream, and her pontoons are dragged backward toward her stern. For the 1800 troops still aboard the ship, dry land is now so near but yet so far, because the 80 yards of sea are too deep to wade and the troops are carrying too much equipment to swim. Elements of three assault battalions - what remains of the Dubliners and the Munsters, plus 88th Brigade's **2nd Bn Hampshire Regiment** [Wikipedia factsheet=>26th April] - are now trapped. Hoping to retrieve the situation **River Clyde's** captain dives into the sea in an attempt to lash a towing rope onto his wayward pontoons ...

**CAMEO - CAPTAIN UNWIN'S VICTORIA CROSS:** Unwin's official medal citation reads ...
"While in SS River Clyde, observing that the lighters which were to form the bridge to the shore had broken adrift, Commander Unwin [<=23rd April] left the ship, and under a murderous fire attempted to get the lighters into position. He worked on, until suffering from the effects of cold and immersion he was obliged to return to the ship, where he was wrapped up in blankets. Having in some degree recovered, he returned to his work against the doctor's order and completed it. He was later attended by the doctor for three abrasions caused by bullets, after which he once more left the ship, this time in a lifeboat, to save some wounded men who were lying in shallow water near the beach. He continued at this heroic labour under continuous fire, until forced to stop through physical exhaustion."

In the end it is only after dark that it will be safe to ferry the survivors ashore, and by then 581 Dubliners have fallen casualty (even their front-line priest Fr William Finn is killed), along with some 600 Munsters. Most of the Hampshire's get ashore in one piece.

**S-BEACH:** At Morto Bay the assault wave consists of the rest of 87th Brigade's 2nd Bn South Wales Borderers [see Y-Beach above], commanded by Hugh Gilbert Casson [no convenient biography]. Lightly opposed, and supported by the battleship HMS *Cornwallis* [<=16th February], the battalion is ashore by 0730hr after taking only 50 casualties and consolidates itself on high ground above the beach and round to Eski Hisarlik Point.

**THE TROJAN PLAIN DIVERSION:** At Kum Kale [maplink at 1st January] the French battleships open fire in support of D'Amade's [23rd April<=28th April] three assault battalions at 0430hr but it will not be until around 1000hr that the infantry starts to get ashore, by which time the Turks have regrouped enough to give heavy counter-fire. During the afternoon troops continue to disembark at Kum Kale, and the fighting there continues until after dark, by which time the three battalions have suffered some 800 casualties.

In short the first 24 hours of the Gallipoli landings have delivered one outright disaster, that at V-Beach, where the culprit has been the current as much as the enemy. Two further disasters are still unfolding, the first at Anzac Cove (where again the culprit has been the current as much as the enemy), and the other at Y-Beach (where the culprit, ultimately, has been a good old-fashioned military cock-up) [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1 **ASIDE:** This phrase from Samson himself, on air patrol over V-Beach at the time. The blood was primarily that of the three companies of Dubliners coming in to the left of the River Clyde in their open boats and the two companies of Munsters from the River Clyde itself.

1915 [Monday 26th-27th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XIV - Days #2 and #3]: [Continued from preceding entry. Again we shall work our way around the landing beaches in counter-clockwise order, as listed on 23rd April and without repeating maplinks or alternative names unnecessarily.] The Allies spend 26th April reorganising themselves as best they can. Here are the main events, considered beach by beach ...

**THE SUVLA BAY FEINT:** Operations north of Anzac Cove at Suvla Bay [maplink at 25th April] have now finished and Paris's [25th April<=27th April] Naval Division remains offshore awaiting developments. It will eventually be landed on Cape Helles on 30th April.
ANZAC COVE: With 16,000 men ashore, and having spent all night *digging to order* \([<=25th\ April]\) the ANZACs spend the 26th April coping as best they can with Kemal's \([25th\ April<=>28th\ April]\) determined counter-attacks. But Kemal's first response units having spent over 24 hours *dying to order* \([<=25th\ April]\) no longer have the manpower needed to pose a major threat and it is only when fresh units arrive on 27th April that the ANZAC perimeter comes under pressure again.

CAPE HELLES: The main events at Hunter-Weston's \([25th\ April<=>28th\ April]\) five 29th Division landings around Cape Helles are as follows ...

**Y-Beach:** At Y-Beach the Turks have been raiding and bombing all night and by 0700hr on 26th April have inflicted around 700 casualties on the British units holding the perimeter. With the road to Krithia now well and truly blocked the decision is taken to abandon this beachhead altogether and the landing force is evacuated by the navy during the rest of the day.

**X-Beach:** Is now secure.

**W-Beach:** Is now secure, and is presently being transformed by naval working parties into a major transit and logistical beachhead.

**V-Beach:** At dawn on 26th April the situation on V-Beach is "desperate" (Ward, 1921, p.14). The River Clyde has now unloaded, so there are adequate troops available, but because most of the senior regimental officers have been killed or injured on 25th it is proving difficult coordinating the efforts of the other ranks. This task now falls to two of Hamilton's \([25th\ April<=>28th\ April]\) General Staff officers, Charles Doughty-Wylie [Wikipedia biography] (seconded to Headquarters from the Royal Welch Fusiliers) and Weir de Lancey Williams [no convenient biography] (seconded to Headquarters from the Hampshire Regiment), who had both been aboard the River Clyde as observers. Between them these two officers conceive and organise a break-out attack up through Sedd el Bahr's old fort, up into the village itself, and then up again to take Hill 141. The attack succeeds, but costs Doughty-Wylie his life ...


**CAMEO - DOUGHTY-WYLIE'S VICTORIA CROSS:** Here are the later recollections of one of the survivors of the Munster Fusiliers ...

"[Colonel Doughty-Wylie] took charge of the situation at once, and after collecting together the whole force, which consisted of the survivors of the Munster Fusiliers, the Dublin Fusiliers, and two companies of the Hampshire Regiment under Major Beckwith, he ordered us to charge in one mass into the Castle and occupy it. He led the charge himself with the other officers, whom he ordered to form up in line in front of their respective regiments. The Castle was occupied finally, and the Turkish snipers found in it all bayoneted, with very small loss to us. The only way into Sedd el Bahr village lay through the Castle, which had two main entrances for this purpose. Each was a stone archway about 15 feet in breadth, but covered by a deadly fire from machine guns and marksmen hidden in the ruins of the village beyond. Anyone attempting to go through [...] was killed instantly, and invariably shot through the head. [...] From 8 a.m. till noon we were gradually forcing our way from house to house up the village, until finally we held a line at the far end, forming up under some garden walls and in a small orchard, waiting for the order to assault Hill 141 [...] While this was in progress Colonel Doughty-Wylie took me up one of the corner turrets of the old Castle, and pointed out to me the way
he intended to carry out the assault. There was a strong redoubt on the top, but
he decided that the remnants of the three battalions should assault
simultaneously immediately after the bombardment. [...] When the order came
to fix bayonets, however, the men scarcely waited for any orders, but all joined
up together in one mass, and swept cheering up [...] to the first line of wire
entanglement [...] On the top was a flat space surrounded by a moat 20 feet
depth with only one entrance leading up over it [...] The men lined round the
top edge of the moat firing down on the retreating Turks, who were retiring
down their communication trenches in the direction of Achi Baba. It was at
this moment that Colonel Doughty-Wylie, who had led his men to the last
moment, was killed by a shot in the head, dying almost immediately on the
summit of the hill he had so ably captured” (Ward, 1921, pp15-17; heavily
abridged).

Most of 27th April is then taken up with consolidating the perimeter, bringing
stores ashore, evacuating the wounded, and burying the dead. Finally there is
a cautious move forward in the late afternoon in readiness for a new attack
being planned for the next day.

**S-BEACH:** At Morto Bay the latest arrivals are the 1er Régiment de
Marche d’Afrique [*Wikipedia factsheet*] and 175e Régiment d’Infanterie
[*Wikipedia factsheet*], who move into the line alongside the 2nd Bn South Wales
Borderers [<=25th April]. Again there is a cautious move forward in the late
afternoon.

**THE TROJAN PLAIN DIVERSION:** At Kum Kale the French diversionary
attack comes to its pre-planned end at 1800hr on 26th April and during the 27th the
survivors are gradually taken off and re-landed at V- and S-Beaches.

In short, Day #2 of the Gallipoli landings completes the disaster at Y-Beach, but goes
some way toward stabilising the situation elsewhere. Day #3 is then a day of
consolidation and preparation [sub-thread continues at next entry but one ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR
BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 27th April] The Second Battle of Ypres [IV - Smith-Dorrien Calls it a Day]:
[Continued from 22nd April] Smith-Dorrien [22nd April<=3rd May; this survivor of the Battle of Isandhlwana (1879)
and hero of the Battle of Le Cateau (1914) now goes into semi-retirement] apparently seeks permission from
Sir John French [22nd April<=2nd May] to withdraw from the eastern extremes of the Ypres
Salient on the grounds that the recent German advances [<=22nd April] have rendered it
tactically untenable. His judgement is militarily perfectly sound, and the proposed
withdrawal will indeed shortly take place [=>4th May], but the price of this sort of
defeatism is to be replaced as Commander-in-Chief of Second Army by [Sir]1916
Herbert C. O. Plumer [1st Viscount Plumer]1929 [*Wikipedia biography*] [sub-thread
continues at 3rd May ...]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Wednesday 28th-30th April] The International Conference of Women: Jane Addams’
[27th February=>awarded Nobel Peace Prize 1931 (10th December)] Woman’s Peace Party [<=9th January]
now leads a party of delegates across the war-torn Atlantic to attend the International
Congress of Women at the Hague, in neutral Holland. Here one of the delegates, the
aforementioned Rosika Schwimmer [9th January<=19th November], formally proposes that a
"Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation” should be convened, a topic she
will take further later in the year [=>19th November]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]

1915 [Wednesday 28th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XV - The First
Battle of Krithia]: [Continued from preceding entry but one] This battle is fought in a largely
unsuccessful attempt to deepen the Cape Helles bridgehead between (for the Allies) Hunter-Weston’s [26th April<=>28th June] 29th Division and d’Amade’s [<=25th April] 1st Division and (for the Turks) the 9th Division [Wikipedia factsheet] commanded by Halil Sami Bey [Wikipedia biography]. The attack begins at 0645hr on 28th April with a two-pronged advance in the general direction of Achi Baba [clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April], the first of the Gallipoli Peninsula's backbone of high points. The units on the left advance out of X-, W-, and V-Beaches and head toward the village of Krithia [map, etc.], following two deep parallel ravines, namely the Krithia Nullah leading directly up to the village from Morto Bay, and the Achi Baba Nullah snaking through the hills half a mile to the east of the village [both ravines are clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April]. The units on the right advance out of S-Beach and head toward the Kereves Spur [also clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April]. Some ground is gained on the left but lack of artillery support combines with a Turkish counter-attack in the afternoon to stop the British advance well short of Krithia. On the right the attack falters when it reaches the heavily defended Kereves Dere [also clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April], a heavily defended mile-long ravine cutting directly across the Allied line of advance from the Kereves Spur all the way down to the sea.

ASIDE: Only now, with two full divisions facing a rough uphill struggle against a well-prepared enemy, does the true enormity of the failure to move forward from Y-Beach start to show itself, for Krithia is now six miles away, instead of two, and the Turks now number in thousands instead of tens! It is not long before the French have named Kereves Dere Le Ravin de la Mort, and in the event neither Krithia nor Achi Baba will ever be taken.

Finally at 1800hr the attack is called off [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 29th-30th April] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XVI - Days #5 and #6]: [Continued from preceding entry] Following the failure of the First Battle of Krithia Hamilton’s [26th April<=6th May] troops spend 29th and 30th April digging in and bringing their artillery ashore. In short, the first week of the Gallipoli landings has successfully delivered on its political promise of opening a new front and diverting Turkish resources from their Russian Campaign. Militarily, however, the campaign is already showing every sign of out-stalemating even the Western Front [sub-thread continues at 1st May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, APRIL 1915 ***************
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1915 [Saturday 1st May] Present Location of Welsh Units: Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the ninth month of the war ...
ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 7th Division, and is about to be involved in the Battle of Festubert [=13th May]. 2nd Bn is in France with 6th Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, and 17th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is still in France with 1st Division. The remaining three first line territorial battalions - 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn - remain assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, now earmarked for the next stage of the Gallipoli Campaign [=8th August].

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn is presently with 29th Division in the thick of the fighting at Gallipoli [=25th April]. Of the nine service battalions so far created 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The SWB’s only first line territorial battalion is 1/1st Bn, and it is assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, now earmarked for the next stage of the Gallipoli Campaign [=8th August].

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 28th Division, and is about to be involved in the Battle of Frezenberg [=3rd May]. 2nd Bn is in France with 1st Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, 18th Bn, and 19th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR's four first line territorial battalions are 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, all assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, now earmarked for the next stage of the Gallipoli Campaign [=8th August].

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT
2nd Bn [1st March<=1st May] is in France with 4th Division. 1st [1st March<=1st May] and 3rd Bn [ditto] have now joined them with 28th Division [ditto]. All three battalions are about to be involved in the Battle of Frezenberg [=3rd May].

THE WELSH GUARDS REGIMENT
1st Bn [1st February<=17th August] has just

1915 [Saturday 1st May] Shellshock [VI - Staff Changes at Maghull]: [Continued from 8th April] William Rees-Thomas [<=1914 (4th December)] and H. L. Burton [ditto] leave Maghull War Hospital [7th March<=8th May] for active service with the RAMC, and are replaced by Ronald G. Rows [no convenient biography=>1916 (5th January)]. Rows spends the next few weeks cultivating a support network of theoretical and clinical advisors, the most senior of which is Manchester University’s [Sir]1934 Grafton Elliot Smith [Wikipedia biography=>3rd September], a world-renowned authority on comparative neuroanatomy [sub-thread continues at 8th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

1915 [Saturday 1st-7th May] The Battle of Hill 60 [IV - The Final Phase]: [Continued from 22nd April] The loss of Hill 60 is recorded under the heading Second Battle of Ypres [=3rd May] [end of sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 1st-5th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XVII - Days #7 through #11]: [Continued from 29th April] On the night of 1st/2nd May the Turks mount a night attack against the French sector of the Helles Front (on the right of the Allied line, above Morto Bay), but are successfully driven back. On 4th May d’Amade [<=25th April] is replaced as Commander-in-Chief of the French Expeditionary Force by Henri Gouraud [Wikipedia biography=>21st June] who proceeds to bring ashore the French 156e Division1 [Wikipedia factsheet] under Maurice Bailloud [Wikipedia biography=>6th May] [sub-thread continues at 6th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1ASIDE: Usually referred to as the 2nd Division, after it had been allocated to the Corps Expéditionnaire d'Orient for service in Gallipoli.

situation for the forthcoming attack on the **Aubers Ridge** [=>9th May] is going to be "all right". Events will prove him quite wrong [sub-thread continues at 9th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

**1915 [Sunday 2nd May-17th June]** The Eastern Campaign [X - The Gorlice-Tarnów Offensive]: (Continued from 7th February) This six-week-long battle is fought to try to reduce the Russian salient in Central Poland between the German Eleventh and Austro-Hungarian Fourth Armies under the overall command of **von Mackensen** [31st January<=>7th October] and the Russian Third Army under **Radko Dimitriev** [Wikipedia biography]. The initial assault breaks the Russians on a 20-mile front, and is then followed by a six-week retreat out of Galicia toward *Lemberg/Lwów* [maplink at 1914 (3rd September)] a hundred miles to the east. The Russians suffer highly disproportionate casualties [sub-thread continues at 13th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**1915 [Monday 3rd-7th May]** The Second Battle of Ypres [V - The Planned Withdrawal]: (Continued from 27th April) Having inherited **Smith-Dorrien**'s [<=27th April] plans for a controlled withdrawal to a shorter and less easily out-flanked defence line **Plumer** [27th April<=>8th May] sets up a secret silent withdrawal from the eastern Salient to the line Shell Trap Farm [use the Hooge maplink at 1914 (27th October), go north to the A19, then west to the junction with the N38, then half a mile due north into the farmland]-**Frezenberg** [use the Hooge maplink at 1914 (27th October) and look one mile northward]-**Hooge** [maplink at 1914 (27th October)]-**Sanctuary Wood** [use the Hooge maplink at 1914 (27th October) and look half a mile southward]-**Hill 60** [maplink at 17th April]. The withdrawal takes place during the night of 3rd/4th May and is followed by three days of artillery bombardment which, since the destination trenches had been "hastily and poorly constructed" (Dixon, 2003, p203), leaves just a chain of muddy craters to be defended. At the end of the withdrawal the locations of the four Welsh units in the Salient are as follows (in clockwise order around the Salient from the north) ...

**QUICK WELSH UPDATE:** 2nd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [1st May<=>8th May] is with 12th Brigade in the eastern half of [Sir]**Henry F. M. Wilson**'s [Wikipedia biography] 26th July 4th Division sector, north of the Ypres-St. Julien road around Shell Trap Farm. 1st Bn Welch Regiment [1st May<=>8th May] and 1st Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [1st May<=>8th May] are both with 84th Brigade in the northern half of **Bullfin**'s [9th April<=>27th May] 28th Division sector, south of the Ypres-St. Julien road in the open countryside between Shell Trap Farm and Frezenberg. 3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [1st May<=>8th May] is with 83rd Brigade in the southern half of the 28th Division sector, around Frezenberg itself. All three battalions recruited from the long-standing heavy industrial towns of south-eastern Wales, not least **Blaenavon** [<=1788], **Caerleon/Ponthir** [<=1749], **Clydach Vale/Blaenau** [<=1704], **Ebbw Vale** [<=1789 (3rd April)], **Pontymoel** [<=1682], **Risca-Pontymister** [<=1796 and 1801], and **Tredgar** [<=1778]. The Recruiting Office for 1/Mons was in Stow Hill, Newport, that for 2/Mons was in Pontypool, and that for 3/Mons was in Abergavenny, and drew from the Heads of the Valleys. To assist casual browsers we shall for the time being be referring to the three battalions as "the Newport battalion", "the Pontypool battalion", and "the Heads of the Valleys battalion", respectively.

Here are the actions in which these four units find themselves involved during the period 4th to 7th May ...

**CAMEO - 1/WR NORTH OF FREZENBERG, 6TH-7TH MAY:** 1st Bn Welch Regiment takes casualties in the German bombardment 4th to 6th May, and is then relieved during the night of 6th/7th May (Dixon, 2003).

**ASIDE - THE SCIENCE OF SHRAPNEL:** Remember that shrapnel wounds are relatively low-velocity ball wounds, as opposed to high-velocity, streamlined and spinning, bullet wounds. Each shrapnel ball arrives from front above (unless you are running away) with a carefully pre-calculated amount of "linear momentum" (the arithmetical product of its mass and its velocity [Wikipedia formal definition]), so that it
neither bounce off the victim (like a paintball) nor goes straight through him and out the other side (which is technically wasteful because you could have delivered more balls for the same effort). Again we commend the Wikipedia factsheet on Shrapnel Shell for explaining the mathematics of this particular method of delivering death. Another mathematical factor to be considered is that the more you lie down behind cover to shield yourself from small arms fire the bigger a target you present to plunging shrapnel balls (and vice versa, of course).

**CAMEO - THE HEADS OF THE VALLEYS BATTALION ON FREZENBERG RIDGE, 3RD-7TH MAY:** 3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment is one of three battalions holding the forward slope of Frezenberg Ridge and suffers "heavy" casualties in the German bombardment and infantry attacks of 4th and 5th May, thus ...

**CAMEO - COLONEL STEEL'S M.C.:** This action is particularly remembered in Monmouthshire [= the modern counties of Gwent and Newport] for the bravery shown by one of the county's sons, Owen W. D. Steel [no convenient biography but several Gazetttings and tangential mentions; sometimes seen as Dyne-Steel], a qualified physician but serving here in a fighting role ...

"The 2nd East Yorkshires, holding the line immediately south of Frezenberg, [...] called for reinforcements to come forward to assist them to hold what little was left of their position in the face of a particularly determined infantry assault. C Company of [3/Mons], under Captain O. W. D. Steel, who had been held in reserve in the G.H.Q. line, responded immediately [...]. As they advanced they came under heavy fire, but worse was to follow. The situation was becoming critical on the East Yorkshires front and so Captain Steel decided to split his company, such that Captain B. M. P. Gorman took half of it [...] to reinforce the right flank [...] while he took the other half directly over the crest of the Frezenberg Ridge to reach the left flank more directly. This manoeuvre in broad daylight was recognised to be very dangerous [...]. Captain Gorman succeeded, under heavy shell and machine-gun fire, in reaching the front line but found that the garrison of the eighty yards of trench he was able to reconnoitre were all dead, victims of the intense shelling, and the line had been almost completely destroyed. [...] Captain Steel succeeded in reaching the front line over the crest but not without considerable casualties [...]. Captain Steel, a doctor by profession, then proceeded to tend the wounded and to bring them under what little cover there was. [...] Such was the effect of Captain Steel's conduct that day that one of his command, Private A. M. Mitchell, was to write home about the action: 'Words utterly fail me to say what a hero Capt. O. W. D. Steel was during that fearful struggle. From every person I meet they tell me the same tale. Under very heavy shell and maxim fire he went out and fetched in wounded, bandaging them, and if he doesn't deserve the V.C. no man on earth ought to get it'. [...] In a similar manner, A Company of [3/Mons], commanded by Captain R. A. Lewis, was called upon to support the 5th King's Own, who were having almost as bad a time of it as the 2nd East Yorkshires. Unfortunately, the results were also similar. Although every effort was made to comply with the order, it was but a limited number of A Company that reached the 5th King's Own trenches. Captain Lewis was one of those to be wounded as the company crested the low ridge and walked into the hail of enemy fire" (Dixon, 2003, pp204-205).

**CAMEO - THE PONTYPOOL BATTALION AT SHELL TRAP FARM, 3RD-7TH MAY:** 2nd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment moves into the front line at Shell Trap Farm during the night of 5th/6th May, withstands constant shellfire for 48 hours, and is then involved in dealing with a German attack on the night of 7th/8th May [...].

As far as south-eastern Wales is concerned, therefore, only the Newport Battalion remains unscathed, and its turn is about to come ...

**CAMEO - THE NEWPORT BATTALION ON FREZENBERG RIDGE, 3RD-7TH MAY:** 1st Bn Monmouthshire Regiment moves forward from the support line after
nightfall on 7th May, taking up positions just behind the crest of Frezenberg Ridge, with orders to cover/replace 3/Mons in the front-line the next day [cameo continues at 8th May ...].

On the extreme British right (where the Salient ends and the line turns southward along the Messines Ridge) Hill 60 falls to the Germans on 5th May following a successful gas attack, who then resist a number of British counter-attacks over the ensuing hours.

And all this before the main¹ German attack has yet begun [sub-thread continues at 8th May ...].

1ASIDE: As recognised by the Official History and the Regimental Battle Flag Honours system the Battle of Frezenberg did not begin until 8th May.

1915 [Thursday 6th May] Wireless Telegraphy, Telephony, and Broadcasting [CXVIII - The SSTC is Created]: [Continued from 1914 (5th September)] In an attempt to improve the training of signallers in the British Army the Corps of Royal Engineers establishes the Signal Service Training Centre (SSTC) under the command of Reginald H. H. Boys [no convenient biography but in several Gazettes]. Over the coming months the SSTC will develop a network of production and field trials facilities spread out across Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire, all working to a research and development laboratory at the Siemens Company's electrical engineering facilities at Woolwich [=1914 (4th August [ASIDE]) [sub-thread continues at 1st June ...]].

1915 [Thursday 6th May] A copy of the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board concerning the employment of disabled soldiers and sailors is made available to the House of Commons. [THREAD = WW1 DEALING WITH DISABLEMENT]

1915 [Thursday 6th May] The East African Campaign [VIII - The Frontiersmen Arrive]: [Continued from 4th February] The troopship SS Neuralia [no convenient shipography] docks at Mombasa to disembark the 25th Bn (Frontiersmen) Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) [12th February <=> 21st June] [sub-thread continues at 21st June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

********** "A MAD ADVENTURE"**! **********

1915 [Thursday 6th-8th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XVIII - The Second Battle of Krithia²]: [Continued from 1st May] This battle is fought on the Helles Front as part of the ongoing Gallipoli Campaign. Hamilton [29th April <=> 31st May] has available to him the vanguard units of the freshly arrived 42nd (East Lancashire) Division [Wikipedia factsheet] Under [Sir] Nov.1915 William Douglas [no convenient biography] and Bailloud's [<=1st May] 156e/2nd Division. Even though the Allied artillery has now been brought ashore it is still too light and too poorly organised to give effective support against the well-entrenched Turkish positions, and after three days and 6500 casualties the attack is called off [sub-thread continues at 9th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1ASIDE: This phrase attributed to one of 29th Division's Staff Officers.

2ASIDE: Numbered in the French histories as the First Battle of Kereves Dere, this being the dominant geographical feature of their sector of the line.

1915 [6th-26th May] WW1 in the Caucasus [VI - The Yudenich Offensive (The Relief of Van)]: [Continued from 20th April 1915] On 6th May 1915, with the Ottomans now diverted by the situation in Gallipoli, General Yudenich launches a major offensive on the Caucasus Front, successfully lifting the Ottoman siege at Van on 17th May [sub-thread
continues at 27th May 1915 ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 REPRISALS AND ATROCITIES] [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

****** "GREAT NATIONAL DISASTER. D. A. THOMAS SAVED"! ******

1915 [Friday 7th May] 
Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXIV - The Lusitania Affair (The Sinking Itself)]: [Continued from 1st May] At 1410hr a torpedo from U-20 [Wikipedia shipography] hits RMS Lusitania [1st May<=>8th May] squarely on her starboard side, possibly/probably triggering a secondary internal explosion, possibly/probably of contraband munitions.

ASIDE: The Germans will use the cargo of munitions to justify [=>next entry] their sinking of a passenger liner. The British use the killing of civilians per se, and neutral civilians especially, to paint the Germans as the villains of the piece, hoping that the American government will see the sinking as a German act of war. For a detailed discussion of the cargo and of the present state of the wrecksite, see the Wikipedia factsheet.

The ship sinks too quickly for more than six of her 48 lifeboats to be successfully launched and 1198 passengers and crew lose their lives, 128 of whom are (neutral) American citizens. One of those lucky enough to make it into a lifeboat is David A. Thomas [1st Viscount Rhondda]1916 [17th April (especially the ASIDE)<=>8th June] [sub-thread continues at 8th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SUBMARINE OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

1ASIDE: Reputedly a contemporary headline.

1915 [Saturday 8th May] 
Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXV - The Lusitania Affair (The German Justification)]: [Continued from 7th May] The U.S.-based German diplomat Bernhard Dernburg [Wikipedia biography] states the German position on the sinking of RMS Lusitania [7th May<=>9th May], specifically accusing the British of using a passenger liner to carry a covert cargo of munitions of war, thereby rendering the vessel a legitimate target. In Wales the editorial cartoonist Joseph M. Staniforth publishes a cartoon on 10th May entitled "Silence Gives Consent" [see it now] in which U.S. President Woodrow Wilson [Wikipedia biography=>20th November] is shown as timidly clinging to "pussycat" neutrality despite provocations such as sabotage and indiscriminate submarine warfare [sub-thread continues at 14th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SUBMARINE OPERATIONS] [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA].

ASIDE - CIVILIAN SHIELDS IN WARTIME: Britain's Bryce Report on "German Outrages" [=12th May] is about to accuse the German Army of systematically using civilians as human shields during their 1914 invasion of Belgium. The German position is that the British were guilty of precisely this offence in hiding a contraband munitions shipment literally under the feet of innocent neutral American citizens. CIVILIAN SHIELDS IN THE CINEMA: Readers unfamiliar with the civilian shield scenario may view a cinematised based-on-fact civilian shield incident in the 1964 WW2 movie "The Train" [YouTube video (at 109 minutes 50 seconds, for two minutes)].

********** THE 1ST MONMOUTHSHIRES ARE DECIMATED **********
********** THE 3RD MONMOUTHSHIRES ARE DECIMATED **********
********** THE PATRICIAS ARE DECIMATED **********

1915 [Saturday 8th-13th May]. The Second Battle of Ypres/Shellshock [VI/VII - The Battle of Frezenberg]: [Second Ypres continued from 7th May; Shellshock continued from 1st May] This six-day-long episode of the broader Second Battle of Ypres [=22nd April] sees Württemberg's [=22nd April] Fourth Army attempt to puncture Plumer's [=3rd May] new front on the line Shell Trap Farm-Frezenberg-Hooge-Sanctuary Wood-Hill 60 [details at 3rd May]. The centre of the German attack is assigned to von Carolitz's [=1914/27th October] XXVII Reserve Corps and focuses on 83rd Brigade's positions holding Frezenberg Ridge and 80th
Brigade’s positions between Frezenberg and an area north of the Menin Road known as **Hooge**

**ASIDE - BELLEWAARDE**: Bellewaarde was actually Bellewaarde Chateau, a stately home. The chateau grounds - nowadays a theme park - is centered on Bellewaarde Lake, to the north-east of which is Bellewaarde Ridge, a southerly continuation of the Frezenberg Ridge already introduced.

The German right wing, attacking from **Pileckem Ridge** to the north is assigned to **von Hügel**'s XXVI Reserve Corps and focuses on 12th Brigade's positions at, and west of, Shell Trap Farm. 84th Brigade fills the gap between 12th Brigade's right and 83rd Brigade's left, that is to say, between Shell Trap Farm and Frezenberg. 28th Division's 85th Brigade, is being held in reserve nearer Ypres, awaiting the call. The German left wing, attacking north-westward toward Hooge, is assigned to **von Deimling**'s XV Corps and focuses on 81st Brigade and 82nd Brigade. Aware that there are imminent British and French attacks further south against **Aubers Ridge** and **Vimy Ridge**, respectively, Plumer is unable to call for reinforcements from out of sector, and this (since it restricts his options for tactical counter-attacking) more or less guarantees local decimations and loss of ground. The German attack begins at 0530hr on 8th May with a three-hour bombardment, followed by at least three heavy and sustained infantry attacks during the day. Here are selected actions during this time ...

**CAMEO - THE PONTYPOOL BATTALION AT SHELL TRAP FARM, 8TH MAY**: In the early hours of 8th May **2nd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment** holds Shell Trap Farm against a pre-dawn attack by von Hügel's **2nd Marine Brigade**. The fire-fight continues until mid-morning, but then dies down as German strength is shifted south onto the Frezenberg sector (see next cameo). Here is an indicative report ...

"The first thing that caught my eye was our commanding officer, with his jacket off, firing like hell [...] to let Jerry know there were still a few of us left to fill the gap they had made shelling during the day. The work of our commanding officer was an inspiration and encouragement to us. He gave us the bit of devil needed at the time"


The battalion was then withdrawn into reserve overnight 8th/9th May.

**CAMEO - 2/KING'S OWN ON FREZENBERG RIDGE, 8TH MAY**: **2nd Bn King's Own Royal Lancashire Regiment** was assigned to the Frezenberg Ridge sector during the general withdrawal of 3rd-4th May, and now finds itself to the left of 3/Mons (see next cameo). It, too, is then subjected to an intense bombardment. At 1000hr a German infantry attack drives any surviving front line troops back to their support line, where they do their best to maintain continuity with 3/Mons.

**RECOMMENDED READING**: John Slaughter's tribute to his grandfather's service in 2/King's Own (Slaughter, 2014 online) is well worth a visit. Note especially the section containing excerpts from the battalion's War Diary, which indicates a casualty rate of 95% (very impressive, even for those days) in the six days of the Frezenberg battle.

**CAMEO - THE HEADS OF THE VALLEYS BATTALION AT FREZENBERG RIDGE, 8TH MAY**: At dawn on 8th May the already depleted **3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment** finds itself stretched out across 83rd Brigade's sector, with one company - B-Company - over on the extreme right, butting up against the first of 80th Brigade's units (the Patricia's, below), and the remaining companies sandwiched between the 2/King's Own (above) and the 1st Bn King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (1/KOYLI). The entire brigade continues to be exposed to the full weight of the German barrage and infantry attacks throughout the morning. However although 3/Mons' strength is gradually being whittled away it continues to inflict casualties on its attackers ...
In the words of Private W. H. Badham: 'They started bombarding at the same time in the morning and ... afterwards we could hear a long blast of a whistle, and the attack started. We were only a handful of men, and they came on in thousands, but we kept them at bay’” (Dixon, 2003, p220-221).

At 1130hr the 83rd Brigade line as a whole is ordered to fall back toward Potijze, the final line of defence before Ypres itself. This forces von Carlowitz to turn against the flanks of the sectors on either side, namely 1/Mons at Frezenberg (see next cameo) and the Patricia's on Bellewaarde Ridge (see next cameo but one).

********** A PERFORMANCE WORTH PAINTING  **********

CAMEO - THE NEWPORT BATTALION AT FREZENBERG RIDGE, 8TH MAY:

[Continued from 3rd May] At dawn on 8th May 1st Bn Monmouthshire Regiment is holding 84th Brigade's right flank in the open farmland just east of Frezenberg village, butting up against 83rd Brigade's left flank (2/King’s Own, above). It therefore narrowly escapes the heavy infantry attacks of the first two hours. However 83rd Brigade's withdrawal (above) exposes 84th Brigade's right flank. The Germans now have to reduce this flank in order to prevent enfilade fire onto their centre, and so for the remainder of the day von Carlowitz from the right and von Hügel from the front combine forces against it, with 3/Mons' D-Company in the teeth of the action. At this point in the battle D-Company's commander, Harold T. Edwards [no convenient biography=>dies this day], is last seen shouting "Surrender, be damned!" and loosing off with his revolver.

WAR ART - "THE EIGHTH OF MAY": The defence in general, and Harold Edward's part in it, pistol in hand, will later be commemorated in Fred Roe’s [Wikipedia biography] "The Eighth of May" [see it now].

RECOMMENDED READING: For further details we recommend this paper from the Wales in the First World War website.

Only following the emergency redeployment of brigade reserves is the flank held. Meanwhile to the right of 83rd Brigade's sector the bastion battalion is 80th Brigade's Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry [<=14th March], dug in on Bellewaarde Ridge ...

CAMEO - THE PATRICIA'S AT BELLEWAARDE RIDGE, 8TH MAY: The story here begins the night before, thus ...

ASIDE - WHERE SHELLSHOCK COMES FROM: The following paragraph gives a single-sample indication of the rate of loss per day per battalion in a support-line barrage ...

"We moved up last night from our support dugouts having been fairly well shelled. Gow (Lieut.) shot badly, was alive when we left, 4 men killed, 9 wounded, 2 went mad, 6 in what is called 'in a state of collapse', having been shelled all day and having to remain underground all day. [...] We now have 400 fighting men and 7 officers” (Lt. Col. Agar Adamson, testimony online).

So that makes 8 out of 22 total casualties are psychological cases, rather than physical, or about 36%, and a daily loss of about 5% to the barrage alone, that is to say, without an infantry fire-fight. The two men who "went mad” and the six men who entered the "state of collapse” are consistent with the sub-types of the shellshock syndrome as they were beginning to emerge in centres of excellence such as Maghull War Hospital [1st May<=3rd September].

Thereafter the story is much the same as that of 1/Mons above, only in mirror-image. During the early morning of 8th May Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry is subjected to heavy German artillery fire, while XXVII Corps concentrates its infantry attacks on 83rd Brigade immediately to its left. However when 83rd Brigade falls back at around 1130hr the Patricia's find themselves under attack both from the flank (the left flank in their case) as well
as from the front. The full weight of the German artillery is also switched in their direction. Their commanding officer Andrew Gault [Wikipedia biography] is seriously wounded and Agar Adamson [Wikipedia biography] takes over. Soon he, too, is wounded and the sole remaining officer, a mere lieutenant, finds himself in command of the battalion (no matter that he had enlisted as a private only eight months previously).

Again only the emergency redeployment of brigade reserves holds the threatened flank, and for the remainder of the day the line hangs on "with all the tenacity that had been asked of them by General Plumer" (ibid., p226). By nightfall 1/Mons, 3/Mons, and the Patricia's, like 2/King's Own (above), will have effectively ceased to exist and will be replaced by elements of 85th Brigade coming forward out of reserve. For the remaining five days of the battle (that is to say, 9th-13th May) the Germans ease their attacks, seemingly reluctant to throw further reserves against Frezenberg now that the Second Battle of Artois has begun further south, and there, as we are about to see, two more Welsh units are about to go to the wall [=>next three entries] [Second Ypres sub-thread continues at 24th May; Shellshock sub-thread continues at 31st May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

********** THE SECOND BATTLE OF ARTOIS BEGINS **********
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1915 [Sunday 9th May-18th June] The Second Battle of Artois [I - The French Attacks (Overview)]: [New sub-thread] Now that the Ypres Salient has been handed over more or less entirely to the British, and with a simultaneous British attack planned against the Aubers Ridge [=>next entry], Joffre [22nd April<=5th August] now initiates a major south-eastward thrust on a nine-mile front centred on Ablain St. Nazaire [maplink at 1914 (1st October)] toward Vimy Ridge [ditto].

GEOGRAPHICAL ASIDE: The modern A26 autoroute splits this battlefield in two, with the Canadian Memorial at Vimy on the eastern hilltop and the French Basilica at Notre Dame de Lorette on the western.

The spearhead formation is d'Urbal's [2nd April<=25th September] Tenth Army, recently reinforced by the troops withdrawn from the Ypres Salient to the north, and by the time the attack proper begins the French barrage has been under way for no less than five days. The overall outcome of the six-week-long battle is a successful German defence, accompanied by seriously disproportionate (roughly 2:1) Allied casualties [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Sunday 9th May-18th June] The Second Battle of Artois [II - The French Attacks (Day #1)]: [Continued from preceding entry] The sixth day of the French bombardment begins at 0600hr, followed by the detonation of mines at 0800hr, followed by a further two hours of shelling. The infantry attack goes in at 1000hr and gains some ground. Generally speaking, however, the advance is broken up by the depth and complexity of the German defensive dugout systems, which routinely are little more than scratched even by the heaviest Allied artillery [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

********** MEANWHILE, A LITTLE TO THE NORTH ... **********
********** "AN UNMITIGATED DISASTER" UNFOLDS **********

1915 [Sunday 9th May] The Second Battle of Artois/The Shells Crisis [III/VII - The British Diversionary Attacks (The Battle of Aubers Ridge)]: [Second Artois continued from preceding entry; Shells Crisis continued from 2nd May] This battle is fought north of the Arras [maplink at 1914 (29th September)] sector to tie down German reserves on the left of the simultaneous French offensive (<=preceding entry). The attack begins with (only) a 40-minute artillery barrage,
followed at 0540hr by the detonation of two one-ton mines under the northern part of the German line and an immediate infantry assault. The attack then founders on the same deep and complex German defensive dugout system as met the French [ *= preceding entry], richly furnished with machine-gun posts and still protected by uncut barbed wire entanglements. Further attacks take place at 0800hr and 1700hr, and both suffer the same fate. Here are some indicative actions ...

CAMEO - THE 2/WELCH AT AUBERS RIDGE, 9TH MAY: Having been rebuilt following its decimation at Gheluvelt [ *= 1914 (27th October)] 2nd Bn Welch Regiment [ *= 1st May <= 1st June] was deployed with 1st Division's 3rd Brigade in the south of the sector. They attacked in two half-waves at 0540hr and 0541hr, but the German fire was so intense that the first half-wave had been cut to pieces before the second could join it, and by only 0600hr the level of casualties brought the attack to a standstill while still in Nomansland. Altogether the battalion suffered 256 casualties on the day.

CAMEO - THE DENBIGHSHIRE BATTALION AT AUBERS RIDGE, 9TH MAY: 1/4th Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers [ *= 1st May <= 1st June] was also deployed with 1st Division's 3rd Brigade in the south of the sector, but in one of the support waves. It nevertheless suffered "severe" losses.

CAMEO - 1/SWB AT AUBERS RIDGE, 9TH MAY: 1st Bn South Wales Borderers [ *= 1st May <= 1st June] was also deployed with 1st Division's 3rd Brigade in the south of the sector, but did not attack until around 1600hr. It nevertheless suffered 233 casualties on the day.

CAMEO - THE 2/RIFLE BRIGADE AT AUBERS RIDGE, 9TH MAY: 2nd Bn Rifle Brigade was deployed with 8th Division's 24th Brigade in the north of the sector, attacking at 0540hr. They succeeded in taking the German front line trench but reinforcements were unable to get through to them so they simply held on until darkness fell and were withdrawn overnight. Altogether the battalion suffered 654 casualties on the day.

By the end of the day the British have suffered some 11,000 casualties for no gain. The war correspondent for The Times, Charles à Court Repington [ Wikipedia biography = 14th May], is present during the assault and deeply affected by the losses suffered by 2/Rifle Brigade (he is a retired Rifle Brigade Lieutenant-Colonel). In his subsequent report to his editor datelined 12th May he includes the observation that the shortage of high explosive ammunition has contributed significantly to the setback²³. Haig [ *= 10th March <= 13th May] confides much the same conclusion to his diary [ sub-threads continue at 10th May and next entry, respectively ...]. [ THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [ THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

¹ ASIDE: Sources too numerous to list.

² ASIDE: The British had spent five days listening to the much more richly resourced French bombardment further south [ *= preceding entry but one].

³ ASIDE: The mathematics of shrapnel [ *= 3rd May (ASIDE)] also mean that it only takes a sturdy plank of wood over the heads of a machine-gun nest to render it impervious to the barrage. Shrapnel is also useless against sandbagged parapets.

1915 [ Sunday 9th May] The Shells Crisis [VIII - The Looming Crisis Anticipated] : [Continued from preceding entry] Neatly anticipating the crisis which is about to break¹ the Welsh editorial cartoonist Joseph M. Staniforth publishes a cartoon entitled "Silver Bullets" [ see it now] in which he reminds the nation that munitions mean taxation [ sub-thread continues at 15th May ... ]. [ THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

¹ ASIDE: Remember that the War Office Press Bureau has been trickling out news on this subject for over a month already [ *= 27th March].
1915 [Sunday 9th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XIX - The 9th May Conference]: [Continued from 6th May] Following the failure of the Second Battle of Krithia [<=6th May] de Robeck [<=25th April] hosts a conference of the commanders on 9th May at which Keyes [<=19th March] suggests a new naval assault on the Narrows. This proposal is then telegraphed to London for consideration. The Admiralty, however, have recently learned that German submarines are heading for the Eastern Mediterranean, and "Jacky" Fisher [25th January<=13th May] has already resolved that his most modern ships should be brought back to safer waters. Moreover Winston Churchill [13th March<=13th May] has lately been involved in the negotiations for Italy's entry into the war on the side of the Allies, one of the pre-conditions of which is that a squadron of Royal Navy battleships be seconded to the Italian Navy. A three-way meeting of Fisher, Churchill, and Kitchener [2nd May<=13th May] is therefore called for 13th May to decide a way forward [sub-thread continues at 13th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 SUBMARINE OPERATIONS]

1915 [Wednesday 12th May] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXVI - The Bryce Report Published]: [Continued from 8th May] After five months assembling and considering the evidence Britain's German Outrages Inquiry Committee [<=1914 (4th December)] publishes a 61-page report [full text online]. Perhaps unsurprisingly (given that the testimony had neither been collected under oath nor subjected to cross-examination) the report finds the German Army guilty of systematic massacres, looting, "wanton destruction", and the use of civilians as "human shields" and hostages.

ASIDE: For the use of civilian hostages by Britain see the ASIDES at 8th May.

The British government immediately sees to it that the "findings" get headlined in the United States, and Masterman's War Propaganda Bureau [7th February<=21st September] sends 41,000 hard copies across the Atlantic to reinforce the message that America really ought to join the Allied cause. In Wales the editorial cartoonist Joseph M. Staniforth publishes a cartoon on 14th May entitled "Guilty of Murder" [see it now] in which the Kaiser cowers before the accusing fingers of the world [sub-thread continues at 19th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 REPRISALS AND ATROCITIES] [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

********** "I'M OFF!!"**********

1915 [Thursday 13th-15th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XX - The 13th May Conference]: [Continued from 9th May] At 0100hr 13th May a Turkish destroyer mounts an attack under cover of darkness against the battleship HMS Goliath [25th April<=sinks this day; visit the wreck courtesy of YouTube], at anchor in Morto Bay, sinking her with torpedoes. So quickly does Goliath go down that 570 out of her crew of 700 are drowned. The report of the sinking does little to ease the concerns of the three-way conference in London later in the morning between "Jacky" Fisher [9th May<=15th April], Winston Churchill [9th May<=24th May], and Kitchener [9th May<=21st May] as to the vulnerability of the Aegean Fleet to submarine operations. Kitchener takes the position that the fleet should be kept where it is, for to do otherwise would mean that he has just spent two months diverting priceless men and munitions away from the Western Front for nothing. Fisher, on the other hand, insists that Queen Elizabeth and the other modern units should be ordered back immediately. Churchill takes the compromise view that replacements for any withdrawn ships can and should be found, and that the potential benefits of the land operation are so great that the effort should actually be intensified. The discussions continue in Cabinet on the morning of 14th May, and here Churchill's compromise plan is approved. During the afternoon Churchill and Fisher have a further meeting to agree which specific replacements are going to be sent. Now it is Churchill's habit to work through into the early hours, and he spends the evening double-checking
the list, adding two extra submarines and leaving a note to this effect for Fisher to see the following day. Fisher sees this note when he arrives at the Admiralty at 0500hr on 15th May and - to put it bluntly - decides that he has had enough of overly political outsiders doing his job for him. Taking just a few minutes to leave the briefest of letters of resignation, he sweeps out and into retirement. He will be replaced as First Sea Lord on 27th May by the pioneer of naval wireless, Sir Henry Bradwardine Jackson.

These words from Fisher's letter of resignation (and it actually does say precious little else).

1915 [Thursday 13th-25th May]. The Second Battle of Artois [IV - The British Diversionary Attacks (The Battle of Festubert)]: [Continued from 10th May] This fortnight-long battle is fought at Festubert on the La Bassée sector of the Western Front between Haig's First Army and local elements of Crown Prince Rupprecht's Sixth (Bavarian) Army. Having initially been unwilling to attack again following the losses on Aubers Ridge, Sir John French is finally persuaded to mount a further diversionary operation at Festubert, five miles to the south-west of Aubers. The battle begins with a sustained and methodically directed artillery barrage along a three-mile-long front from Richebourg l'Avoué to Festubert itself. The infantry do not advance until 2200hr on 15th May. The 1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers is with 22nd Brigade in Capper's 7th Division sector just east of Festubert, who attack at 0315hr on 16th May ...

CAMEO - 1/RWF AT FESTUBERT, 16TH MAY: 1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers is in the first wave of 22nd Brigade's attack against a stretch of German reserve line known as the Northern Breastwork [parallel to, and just south of, the modern D72 road a mile to the east of Festubert itself]. The battalion reaches this system at about 0700hr but no longer has the numbers to capture it. It is also taking heavy reverse fire from the rear left from an intact German redoubt known as the Quadrilateral. It is therefore ordered to withdraw to better cover at 0900hr, and then again to withdraw altogether at around 1930hr for reinforcement.

The battle then ebbs and flows over the ensuing fortnight and costs some 16,000 British casualties for only minor local advantage.

1915 [Saturday 15th May] The Shells Crisis [IX - The Times Points the Finger]: [Continued from 9th May] Today's The Times features Repington's report of the failed attack at Aubers. It blames shortages of artillery ammunition both for the failure of the attack itself and for the disproportionate level of casualties. Here is how Repington's despatch is headlined and introduced ...
The want of an unlimited supply of high explosive was a fatal bar to our success. It is to this need that our Military Correspondent, in the message we print below, attributes largely the disappointing results of the British attacks in the districts of Fromelles and Richebourg on Sunday. By way of contrast, he records the fact that the French, in cooperation with whom we made our movement upon the German lines, fired 276 rounds of high explosive per gun in one day and levelled the enemy's defences with the ground.

The nation as a whole (not least the relatives of those who might have lost their lives unnecessarily) is rightly angered [sub-thread continues at 17th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1915 [Monday 17th May], The Shells Crisis [X - The Conservatives Suggest Power-Sharing]: [Continued from 15th May] With Britain up in arms following last week's The Times exposé [<=15th May] Bonar Law [21st April<=1916 (6th December)] meets with Lloyd George [21st April<=24th May] and persuades him to propose a Conservative-Liberal coalition to Prime Minister Asquith [20th April<=24th May] [sub-thread continues at 21st May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1915 [Monday 17th-20th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXI - The Turkish Counter-Offensive]: [Continued from 15th May] On 17th May an RNAS spotter-plane detects the disembarkation of Turkish reinforcements at Ak Bashi Liman [as far as we can establish this is the C-shaped bay just north of Eceabat on this maplink]. As a result, when the Turks launch a surprise 42,000-man pre-dawn attack at Anzac Cove [maplink at 25th April] on 20th May the defenders are ready for them and in the six hours it takes the Turks to empty their trenches will have inflicted some 10,000 casualties upon them, including the commander of the Australian troops, William T. Bridges [Wikipedia factsheet => d. 18th May] [sub-thread continues at 25th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 19th May-1916 (28th February)] The Senoussi (Western Desert) Campaign [I - Overview]: [New sub-thread] With the First Suez Offensive [<=26th January] defeated the Germans now arrange a similar threat to the Suez Canal, this time from the west. This year-long campaign is fought out in the coastal strip of the Western Desert of Libya and Egypt between the German-radicalised Senoussi Nomads of Libya under an Ottoman Army general named Ja'far Pasha al-Askari [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (26th February)] and Britain's Western Frontier Force (WFF) [Wikipedia factsheet=>1916 (23rd January)] under (initially) Alexander Wallace [no convenient biography=>1916 (23rd January)] and (from January 1916) Sir William E. Peyton [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (23rd January)]. The Senoussi make some progress in the early months [=14th November], only to be then driven back and dispersed by a well-managed counter-offensive in early 1916 [=1916 (23rd January)]. Their commander, Ja'far Pasha, as an Arab in Ottoman service, subsequently changes allegiance and is destined to become a British ally in their 1916 Arab Uprising intrigues in the Middle East [=1916 (10th June)] and thereafter Prime Minister of Iraq twice between 1923 and 1927 [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 19th May] The Senoussi (Western Desert) Campaign [II - The Germans Arrive]: [Continued from preceding entry] After three months of fomenting anti-British sentiments amongst the Senoussi tribal elders a consignment of German arms arrives
at Siwa Oasis [map, etc.], deep in the Western Desert 300 miles west of Cairo. German and Ottoman advisers now start to train up the Senoussi tribesmen for war [sub-thread continues at 14th November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 19th May] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXVII - The Press Bureau Again]: [Continued from 12th May] In a House of Commons questions session the Member of Parliament for Bedford, Frederick G. Kellaway [Wikipedia biography] asks the Solicitor-General Stanley O. Buckmaster [1st Viscount Buckmaster]1933 [1914 (28th September) => 24th May] to explain the terms of reference of the War Office Press Bureau [<= 27th March], thus ...

"I beg to ask the Solicitor-General a question, of which I have given him private notice, namely: Whether it is the rule of the Press Bureau that no article will be allowed to be published which purports to describe any operation of war which has taken place during the preceding five days, as the result of observations made within twenty miles of the front, or which has been compiled under circumstances which otherwise suggest a breach, in letter or spirit, of the prohibition against the presence of correspondents at the front; whether this Regulation has been suspended recently in favour of representatives of a certain group of newspapers; and, if so, whether it is proposed to grant a similar privilege to representatives of other papers?"

The Solicitor-General replies as follows ...

"A Regulation to the effect mentioned in the hon. Member's question was issued by the Press Bureau on the 24th September, 1914. The notice was framed to meet the conditions then prevailing. For a long time, however, our troops have occupied a position which has been comparatively stationary and the rule has not been applied strictly. Recently matter has been sent in from a number of newspaper correspondents that might be interpreted as a violation of this rule, but in the present condition of affairs these articles are not mischievous and they have accordingly been passed. The rule is a very important one and has not been cancelled because the circumstances may change at any moment, and it would then be necessary to enforce it. No distinction has ever been drawn by this office between any one paper or group of papers and any other. All are treated alike." [sub-thread continues at 14th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 CENSORSHIP]

1915 [Friday 21st-24th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXII - Burying the Dead]: [Continued from 17th May] With Nomansland around the Anzac Cove perimeter now thick with an estimated 5000 Turkish dead and untreated wounded a ceasefire is organised and the next 72 hours are spent with stretcher bearers and burial parties moving freely about the battlefield. The shooting war is then restarted at 1645hr on 24th May [sub-thread continues at 25th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**********  THE ITALIANS JOIN THE ALLIES  **********

1915 [Sunday 23rd May], The Italian Adriatic Front [I - The Declaration of War]: [New sub-thread] Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary and proceeds to put its Tyrolean and Adriatic borders on a war footing [sub-thread continues at 23rd June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

**********  THE UN-ELECTED INTERVENE  **********

1915 [Friday 21st May], The Shells Crisis [XI - The Daily Mail Scores a Direct Hit]: [Continued from 17th May] Written personally by the paper's proprietor Lord Northcliffe [1914 (15th September) => 8th July] an article in today's The Daily Mail directly blames Kitchener [13th May => 24th May] for the ammunition shortages which have plagued British military operations for the past seven months. "Lord Kitchener," the article accuses, "has starved the army in France of high-explosive shells", sending them instead shrapnel,
"a useless weapon in trench-warfare", and causing the deaths of thousands of "our poor soldiers" [sub-thread continues at 24th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1915 [Monday 24th-26th May] The Shells Crisis [XII - The Government Collapses]: [Continued from 17th May] Following three days of crisis talks the government is reshuffled as the "Second Asquith Ministry", a wartime coalition1 of the Liberal and Conservative and Unionist parties. Asquith [17th May<=21st September] remains as Prime Minister but a number of Conservative and Unionists are given positions [see full Wikilist], while Lloyd George [17th May<=8th June] is given the task of overhauling the munitions supply system, and given a newly created Ministry of Munitions to help him. Kitchener [21st May<=14th July], interestingly, is kept on as Secretary of State for War because for all his failings he is, for many Britons, the smell of victory. Elsewhere Sir John A. Simon [1st Viscount Simon]1940 [Wikipedia biography>=14th October] replaces Reginald McKenna [=1908 (29th May)] as Home Secretary, and is himself replaced as Attorney General by Sir Edward Carson [1912 (28th September)<=3rd November]. Herbert Samuel [5th February<=1916 (27th February)] returns as Postmaster-General after a 15-month break2. Frederick E. Smith [1914 (3rd October)<=3rd November] replaces Sir Stanley Buckmaster [=19th May] as Solicitor-General and Winston Churchill [13th May<=1916 (3rd June)] is sacked as First Lord of the Admiralty, to be replaced by Balfour [=1911 (13th November)]. Churchill is relegated politically to a largely ceremonial post but militarily retains his Cabinet advisory role, allowing him to continue to promote the view that further reinforcement of the Gallipoli Front could deliver political dividends not foreseeable for the same investment on the Western Front [sub-thread continues at 8th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1ASIDE: A wartime coalition is one where there is no "Opposition" party as such, but where the demands of war make a General Election unwise. The party sizes thus remain as before and the senior offices are shared out in like proportion.

2ASIDE: Samuel had been Postmaster-General between 14th February 1910 and 11th February 1914, but had then relinquished the post in order to become instead President of the Local Government Board [Wikipedia factsheet]. The role of Postmaster-General evolved in the 17th Century (in which era it would have been better titled Spymaster-General [see, for example, 1655 (3rd May) and 1775 (10th May [ASIDE])]) and carried Cabinet membership.

1915 [Monday 24th-26th May] The Second Battle of Ypres [VII - The Battle of Bellewaarde]: [Continued from 8th May] This is the last engagement within the broader Second Battle of Ypres and consists of a successful German gas attack against the British strongpoint at Bellewaarde Chateau, north of Hooge [maplink at 8th May].

CAMEO - 1/WELCH AT BELLEWAARDE, 24TH-25TH MAY: At 0945hr on 24th May 1st Bn Welch Regiment [1st May<=1st June] was deployed out of reserve as part of 84th Brigade in order to mount a counter-attack. However the battalion has only just been rebuilt following its decimation at the Battle of Frezenberg [=3rd May] and was seriously inexperienced. The counter-attack began at 1700hr and immediately came under "heavy and accurate" machine-gun fire (Dixon, 2003, p277), forcing it to sit it out until nightfall. One further attack was attempted at 0030hr on 25th May and succeeded in recovering some ground, but this was then abandoned as untenable toward dawn. The battalion suffered 90% casualties, losing 406 men out of an initial complement of about 450.

The overall outcome of the battle is a German advance of around a kilometre [end of Second Battle of Ypres sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 24th May] The Armenian Genocide [II - Early Reports]: [Continued from 20th April] Reports of Talaat Pasha’s atrocities now start to trickle out [sub-thread
1915 [Tuesday 25th May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXIII - HMS Triumph Lost]: [Continued from 17th May] The battleship HMS Triumph [25th April<sinks this day: visit the wreck courtesy of YouTube] is torpedoed off Kabatepe [maplink at 23rd April] by the German submarine U-21 [Wikipedia shipography], commanded by Otto Hersing [Wikipedia biography], and sinks with the loss of 78 lives [sub-thread continues at 26th May ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SUBMARINE OPERATIONS]

1915 [Thursday 27th May] The depleted 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Bns Monmouthshire Regiment [=3rd May] are amalgamated as "The Monmouthshire Regiment" [=26th July] and assigned to 84th Brigade within Bulfin's [3rd May<=1916 (12th December)] 28th Division. [THREAD = WW1 REGIMENTAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Monday 31st May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXIV - HMS Majestic Lost]: [Continued from 26th May] At 0645hr the battleship HMS Majestic [25th April<sinks this day: visit the wreck courtesy of YouTube] is torpedoed off W-Beach [maplink at 23rd April] by the German submarine U-21 [Wikipedia shipography], commanded by Otto Hersing [Wikipedia biography] (his second battleship in as many days), and sinks with the loss of 49 lives [sub-thread continues at 4th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 SUBMARINE OPERATIONS]

********** "THE DEATH WARRANT TO A WHOLE RACE"! **********

1915 [27th May] WW1 in the Caucasus [VII - The Armenian Deportations (The Tehcir Law)]: [Continued from 6th May 1915] On 27th May 1915 Talaat Pasha declares the Tehcir [=deportation] Law [Wikipedia briefing] which requires that all ethnic Armenians must leave the war zone for resettlement in Mosul and other areas of what is nowadays deepest Syria and northern Iraq. At the same time the Ottomans put together an offensive on the Caucasus Front, quickly reversing most of Yudenich's successes earlier in the month. Yudenich spends the ensuing six months building up his forces [sub-thread continues at 10th January 1916 ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 REPRISALS AND ATROCITIES] [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

1 This phrase from "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story", by the most senior of the neutral diplomats in Constantinople, of which more later [=1918 (31st October)].

1915 [Saturday 29th May] Siegfried Sassoon [1914 (2nd August)<=24th November] transfers to 3rd (Reserve) Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers as a Second Lieutenant awaiting onward posting. [THREAD = WW1 INDIVIDUAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Monday 31st May] After seven months of service with 6th Division [=1914(12th October)], 19th Brigade (including 2nd Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers [1st May<=1st June] is re-assigned to 27th Division [<=9th April]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Monday 31st May] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXV - The Third Battle of Krithia (Conception and Preparation)]: [Continued from 27th May] Hamilton [6th May<=4th June] now starts putting plans together for a third attempt to break through to Krithia on the Helles Front [sub-thread continues at 4th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

to the opinion that the most important therapeutic approach was to develop a "sympathetic rapport with the patient" (McDougall, 1930, p210) [sub-thread continues at 9th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

*********************** MONTHLY UPDATE, MAY 1915 ***********************
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1915 [Tuesday 1st June] Present Location of Welsh Units: Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the tenth month of the war ...

ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 7th Division, and has just been decimated in the Battle of Festubert [<=27th May]. 2nd Bn is in France with 27th Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, and 17th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is in France with 1st Division, and has just been decimated in the Battle of Festubert [<=13th May]. The remaining three first line territorial battalions - 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn - remain assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, are still earmarked for the next stage of the Gallipoli Campaign [=>8th August].

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 1st Division, and has just been decimated in the Battle of Aubers Ridge [<=9th May]. 2nd Bn is presently with 29th Division in the thick of the fighting at Gallipoli [<=25th April]. Of the nine service battalions so far created 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The SWB's only first line territorial battalion is 1/1st Bn, and it is assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, is still earmarked for the next stage of the Gallipoli Campaign [=>8th August].

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 28th Division, and has just been decimated TWICE, once in the Battle of Frezenberg [<=3rd May] and then again in the Battle of Bellewaarde [<=24th May]. 2nd Bn is in France with 1st Division, and has just been decimated in the Battle of Aubers Ridge [<=9th May]. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, 18th Bn, and 19th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR's four first line territorial battalions are 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, all assigned to 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, are still earmarked for the next stage of the Gallipoli Campaign [=>8th August].

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT
2nd Bn is in France with 4th Division. 1st and 3rd Bn are in France with 28th Division. All three battalions have just been decimated in the Battle of Frezenberg [<=3rd May] and are presently amalgamated [<=27th May].

ASIDE - RESERVES, TERRITORIALS, AND NEW ARMY: In the first of our Welsh unit monthly summaries [<=1914 (1st September)] we remarked "that territorial battalions factually would stand little chance in battle against an elite enemy unit (and service battalions - mainly civilians in khaki - even less chance, at least until they had learned their trade)". This was not entirely true, for in fact the Monmouthshire Regiment was one of a handful of Territorial Force formations who were trusted, unescorted, to hold a "hot" sector on the Western Front, where, during the Second Battle of Ypres [<=3rd May], they more than repaid that trust, in blood. That said, we can now see a depressingly predictable pattern emerging, namely that if you send the best troops in first then you are certain to lose them first - and their priceless skills along with them.

THE WELSH GUARDS REGIMENT
1st Bn [1st February] [<=17th August] remains in training.

*********************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, MAY 1915 ***********************
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1915 [Tuesday 1st June or hereabouts] Wireless Telegraphy, Telephony, and Broadcasting [CXIX - The "Y- Stations"]: [Continued from 6th May] Around this time Britain's coastal 'Y-
Stations" start to produce valuable directional intelligence on the movement of German zeppelins and submarines in the North Sea [sub-thread continues at 30th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SIGNALLING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS]

1915 [Tuesday 1st June-3rd July] Islam in WW1 [X - The Pratap Mission Reaches Baghdad]: After a month or so in transit the Pratap Mission arrives in Baghdad on 1st June, and then spends several weeks resting and refreshing its supplies before moving on to Isfahan [map, etc.] in Persia [sub-thread continues at 3rd July ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Thursday 3rd June] The Mesopotamian Campaign [V - The Capture of Amarah]: This battle is fought as part of the ongoing Mesopotamian Campaign between 6th (Poona) Division [Wikipedia factsheet=>then as next] (and supporting units) under Sir Charles Townshend [Wikipedia biography=>28th September] and the Turkish garrison at and around Amarah [map, etc.]. The town, situated on the Tigris River just under halfway to Baghdad from the Persian Gulf, is quickly occupied [sub-thread continues at 28th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 3rd June] 49th (Edmonton) Battalion [1914 (17th November)<=9th October] sails for Britain, where it will eventually be assigned to 3rd Canadian Division [Wikipedia factsheet=1st? December]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Friday 4th June] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXVI - The Third Battle of Krithia¹ (The Battle Begins)]: This one-day battle is fought for a breakthrough on the Helles Front. As on the Western Front, however, the Turks have by now had many weeks to develop their defence works, and by the end of the battle the British have lost 6500 casualties out of the 30,000 men committed, 3rd (Foreign Legion) Bn, 1er Régiment de Marche d'Afrique [26th April<=28th September] is down to about one tenth of its original strength and has lost all its officers, and the overriding tactical objective, the heights of Achi Baba [maplink at 28th April], still loom ominously above them two miles away. Hamilton [31st May<=6th August] is therefore forced to warn the War Cabinet that without a lot more men the Helles Front is stalemated [sub-thread continues at 10th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

¹ASIDE: Numbered in the French histories as the Second Battle of Kereves Dere, this being the dominant geographical feature of their sector of the line.

1915 [Tuesday 8th June] The Shells Crisis [XIII - Lloyd George Gets to Work]: With the immediate political crisis subsiding Lloyd George [24th May<=23rd June] now sets his new Ministry to work on a definitive Munitions Bill [Wikipedia factsheet=>23rd June]. More practically he switches much of the railway companies' heavy engineering capacity from fabricating locomotives and rolling stock to machining shell carcasses, and approves the construction of a dozen or so new munitions finishing plants around the country similar to that presently under construction at Burry Port [<=17th April]. Three such "National Shell Factories (NSF)" will go to Wales, one at Ebbw Vale, the second at Grangetown, Cardiff, and the third to Landore, Swansea. As for how to fill all these shells he has the peace-time entrepreneur Lionel B. Holliday [no convenient biography] brought back from front-line service in France to reassume control over his family's picric acid works at Bradley, West Yorkshire, and arranges to take Read Holliday and Sons [=1899] into state ownership as British Dyes [Grace's Guide factsheet], producing TNT at plants in Yorkshire and Kent. Lloyd George also approves trials of a process developed by the Manchester-based industrial chemist Chaim Weizmann [1904<=1948 (14th May)], later the first president of Israel, to mass-produce acetone - a key
This page contains historical information related to the military conflicts of World War I, particularly focusing on the Royal Navy Cordite Factory, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and the Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns. It also highlights the role of Edwin Goodal, a British double agent, and Lord Rhondda, a British politician associated with Irish Home Rule. The page discusses the sinking of the Lusitania, the sinking of the Titanic, and the involvement of British intelligence services in the war against Germany.

### 1915

**Shellshock [IX - Whitchurch War Hospital Opens]:** (Continued from 31st May) The Welsh Metropolitan War Hospital [<=8th February] Whitchurch is formally opened. Edwin Goodall [<=1914 (5th December)] continues as superintendent, but now with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the RAMC. The hospital specialises in orthopaedics, but about one patient in six either is, or is also, a psychiatric casualty (1883 out of 11,880 for the war as a whole) [sub-thread continues at 3rd September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

********** "THAT BLOODY ENGLISHMAN" BM ORCHESTRA JOIN THE FIGHT **********

##### 1st September

**The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXVII - More Welsh Depart for Gallipoli]:** [Continued from 10th June] The 13th (Western) Division [Wikipedia factsheet] leaves Britain en route for Moudros via Alexandria, taking with it three Welsh service battalions, namely the 8th Bn Royal Welsh Fusiliers [1914 (1st September)]<=7th August, the 4th Bn South Wales Borderers [1914 (1st September)]<=7th August, and 8th Bn Welch Regiment [1914 (1st September)]<=7th August (all three of which are their

1. **ASIDE:** It will be recalled not just (a) that the future Lord Rhondda was one of the survivors of the Lusitania sinking [<=7th May], but also (b) that it is somewhere between vaguely possible and highly likely that it was a shipment of contraband explosives which he had somehow facilitated which helped sink the ship so quickly [<=17th April (ASIDE)]. He complained long afterwards that he could not get the experience of the sinking out of his mind, but that is only to be expected (the ship was going down beneath his feet twice as fast as Titanic had) and cannot be taken as a measure of a guilty conscience: survivor guilt, yes; war crime, not necessarily. For a fuller description of Thomas' role in the trans-Atlantic arms trade at this point in time see Neilson (2012 online [link given at 28th January]).

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2. **ASIDE:** Sources too numerous to list, but difficult to determine the original. Childers' role in the Howth gun-running incident [<=1914 (26th July)] has never been properly explained because as a young man he had combined support for Irish Home Rule with loyal service to the British Empire (Conroy, undated online). By 1914, however, he was willing to risk a charge of treason for gun-running; only to be personally awarded a Distinguished Service Cross by the King for his work in Gallipoli less than two years later. Basically there are three competing theories, namely (a) that he had been (to use the modern term) genuinely "radicalised" against the Unionists in the pre-war period [<=1912 (28th September)], (b) that he was a British double-agent, or (c) that he was an Irish treble-agent.
1915 [Tuesday 15th June or hereabouts] **Reconstructive Surgery and Rehabilitation [II - Val-de-Grace Hospital]:** [Continued from 10th January] The French surgeon Hippolyte Morestin [Wikipedia biography], resident specialist in facial reconstructive surgery\(^1\) at the Val-de-Grâce Hospital [Wikipedia factsheet], Paris, and pioneer in the "flap surgery" technique of tissue grafting still used to this day, is observed at work by Gillies [10th January<=1916 (1st January)] [sub-thread continues at 1916 (1st January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

\(^1\) **ASIDE:** Battlefield injuries to eyes, nose, and jawline are excruciatingly painful but, per se, nowhere near as frequently fatal as injuries to the calvaria [= "brain box"]. Such casualties therefore make it to the base hospitals in some numbers, where, by virtue of the complexity of facial anatomy, they require far greater technical expertise in their management than wounds of the same size to (say) arm and leg. Loss of the entire mandible [= lower jaw] in soldiers caught by a sideways blast, splinter, or bullet was far from uncommon and particularly difficult to repair. For specimen images browse on keywords <traumatic amputation gillies>.

1915 [Tuesday 15th-16th June] **The Second Battle of Artois [V - The British Diversionary Attacks (The Battle of Givenchy)]:** [Continued from 13th May] This battle is fought in the La Bassée sector [maplink at 1914 (27th October)] to tie down German reserves on the left of the ongoing French offensive north of Arras [<=9th May]. The attack is preceded by a 60-hour artillery barrage and manages to take the German front line trench by storm [end of sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 16th June] **The Attack at Bellewaarde:** This local attack by 3rd Division is an attempt to recover some of the ground lost at Bellewaarde [maplink at 5th June] during the Second Battle of Ypres [<=24th May]. The attack begins at 0415hr and quickly captures the German front line trench. Further attacks later in the day are less successful, however, and at 1800hr it is decided to consolidate on the ground already taken. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 21st June] **The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXIX - The Battle of Kereves Dere]:** [Continued from 13th June] After several days of heavy preliminary bombardment Gouraud's [<=1st May] two French divisions launch a successful assault on a position known as the Haricot Redoubt [this redoubt is clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April], high on the Kereves Spur [ditto] and overlooking Kereves Dere [ditto] ravine. The French suffer some 2500 casualties, but the intensity of the French bombardment inflicts 6000 casualties on the defending Turkish 2nd Division [sub-thread continues at 24th June ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 21st-23rd June] **The East African Campaign [IX - The Battle of Bukoba]:** [Continued from 6th May] This three-day-long battle is fought to destroy the German wireless station and base at Bukoba [map, etc.], on the German (i.e., western) shore of Lake Victoria, between a British amphibious taskforce commanded by John M. ["Jimmie"] Stewart [no convenient biography] and the German garrison under Willibald von Stürmer [no convenient biography]. Stewart's force includes the 467-strong 25th Bn (Frontiersmen) Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) [<=6th May], 2nd Bn Loyal North Lancashire Regiment [Wikipedia factsheet], and some Indian Army engineers, some 1600 men in all. After 48 hours of difficult fighting the heavily out-numbered Germans are forced from the town, whereupon the wireless station is destroyed and the Commandant's Imperial Ensign captured [image]. The town is then looted (this professional disgrace is punished by no medals being awarded for the action) and the
attacking force withdraws to the British shore. Their only prisoner is the camp parrot, who comes complete with a repertoire of anti-British insults [sources seem to suggest that the bird squawks too much for its own good and does not last long] [sub-thread continues at 11th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 23rd June-7th July] The Italian Adriatic Front [II - The First Battle of the Isonzo River]: [Continued from 23rd May] This fortnight-long battle is the first Italian infantry action since joining the Allies. It is fought for a breakthrough on the Isonzo/Soča River [map, etc.] between the Italian Second and Third armies under the overall command of Luigi Cadorna [Wikipedia biography] and (outnumbered 2:1) the Austro-Hungarian Fifth Army under the Croatia-born Svetozar Boroević [Wikipedia biography]. The overall outcome is that Boroević totally and persistently out-thinks Cadorna and easily holds his ground [sub-thread continues at 18th July ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

********** "WE ASSUMED THAT VICTORY WAS OUR DUE"1 **********

1915 [Wednesday 23rd June] The Shells Crisis [XIV - The Munitions Bill]: [Continued from 8th June] Lloyd George [8th June<=>6th July] presents his draft Munitions Bill [<=8th June] to the House of Commons, opening the debate personally. He is, for example, concerned that the nation's manufacturing resources should work together, thus ...

"We have in this country a vast amount of machinery which is essential to the production of material of war. But then we are short of other machines equally important. It is the old problem of the bottle-neck. It is no use getting fifty parts of the machine ready and finding you are stopped by the fifty-first. Therefore it is a question of organising over the whole field of what is essential for the supply of material of war" (Hansard, 72:1183-1276).

He is also concerned about the need to match people to jobs, thus ...

"Take London, for example. London has an infinite variety of shops, some fairly large, but a large number of small shops doing some of the finest work. That is the most difficult work of all. [...] An artillery fuse, for example] is supposed to be simple, but it takes 100 different gauges to turn out. One of the difficulties of turning out shells is that you can get a large number of people who would drill out the steel parts, but there are comparatively few who can do this particular kind of work. That is exactly where London has come to the rescue [...] for] they will be able to turn out prodigious quantities not merely of shells, but what gives us far greater anxiety, those particular parts of the shell which firms cannot supply in other parts of the country" (ibid.).

He also introduces (but does not yet name) what will soon [=>25th December] prove to be the highly sensitive notion of "dilution", as now profiled ...

"So the first step in order to increase our output in the interval, before we can expand our new sources of supply, is to secure the necessary skilled labour [...] The next step is that such skilled labour as we have - it is quite inadequate in numbers - should be eked out as much as possible by unskilled labour. There is a good deal of work which can be done by unskilled labour if you have skilled men looking after it. I was told by a firm at Bristol, which was undertaking to turn out shells, that if they were allowed to use unskilled labour, they could double their output, because they could then have a night shift, and could use exactly the same machinery. [...] In France a vast amount of work in the way of turning out shells, and especially the delicate work of fuse making, is done by female labour" (ibid.).

This in turn raises issues of industrial relations, rates of pay, and even social unrest [sub-thread continues at 1916 (4th January) ...], [THREAD = WW1 FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE]

1ASIDE: This phrase from the beginning of Lloyd George's introductory speech. He goes on to say that this had been a dangerous assumption to make, and that we would instead have to work for victory. In fact the speech is a masterly commentary upon the relationship between
requirement, production, skills, wages, and the economy at large. Our own view is that no student of history or economics (and these are generally one and the same thing) should leave the Lloyd George's 23rd June speech unread.

1915 [Thursday 24th June] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXX - New Australian Commander]: [Continued from 21st June] Following Bridges' [<=17th May] death his (in the event only temporary) replacement, James G. Legge [Wikipedia biography=>10th July], arrives at Moudros [maplink at 19th February] to take up duties as commander of the Australian Imperial Force [sub-thread continues at 28th June ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 28th June-5th July] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXI - The Battle of Gully Ravine]: [Continued from 24th June] After the failure of the Third Battle of Krithia [<=4th June], and duly impressed by the French success at Kereves Dere [<=21st June], Hunter-Weston [28th April<=1916 (29th June)] orders a localised British attack at Gully Spur [clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April] and the Boomerang Redoubt [ditto] over on the left of the Helles Front. The attack is preceded by a 48-hour artillery barrage and makes limited progress, but only at the customary high casualty rate. The initial gains are then subjected to strong Turkish counter-attacks through to 5th July, but these are beaten back and very heavy losses inflicted [sub-thread continues at 8th July ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 30th June] The De Bunsen Committee [<=8th April] publishes its report on the ideal fate of the Middle East should the Ottoman Empire be defeated. It recommends that if and when this happens it should be broken up and replaced by a federation of component princedoms and kingdoms1. [THREAD = GRAND STRATEGIES] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1ASIDE: The states proposed will be given some very familiar-sounding names! See 1st December for details.

1915 [Thursday 1st July] German Sabotage in the U.S. [V - Sayville Wireless Station Closed Down]: [Continued from 13th February] Finally convinced that the theoretically neutral Telefunken wireless station at Sayville [<=1914 (5th September)], Long Island, is anything but neutral despite measures previously taken the U.S. government raids it and shuts it down altogether. The Providence Journal made public the reasoning behind this move a few days later, thus ...

"These, in brief, were because the station was owned by the German government and that most of its directors were simply dummies to conceal such ownership; that the company had been distributing money to German secret service men under orders of the Berlin government; that code messages were sent when censors left the room for a few minutes; that thousands of code messages were sent in the guise of commercial messages; that Mexican affairs were forwarded in code to Berlin; and that sailings of vessels from American ports were transmitted to Berlin" (Providence Journal online at http://www.pdfooz.net/k-27985885.html)1 [sub-thread continues at 28th December ...], [THREAD = WW1 NEUTRALITY]

1RECOMMENDED READING: This resource also describes dozens of arson and bomb attacks against American heavy industry, transportation, and docking facilities during late 1915 and through 1916.

1915 [Saturday 3rd July] 53rd (Welsh) Division [<=1st June], including the eight first-line territorial battalions previously identified [ditto], is warned for embarkation for Gallipoli. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]
**1915 [Saturday 3rd July] Islam in WW1 [XI - The Pratap Mission Passes Isfahan]: [Continued from 1st June] The Pratap Mission departs Isfahan and weaves its way past hostile British and Russian patrols and guard posts toward Afghanistan. It passes Tabas [map, etc.] on 23rd July, crosses the Afghan border on 19th August, and finally reaches Kabul on 2nd October [sub-thread continues at 13th July ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

********** "A CAMPAIGN OF RACE EXTERMINATION" **********

**1915 [Wednesday 7th-16th July] The Armenian Genocide [IV - Ambassadors Keep Notes]: [Continued from 27th May] As a neutral nation Sweden has been able to keep open its Embassy in Constantinople, and its Ambassador Per Anckarsvärd [Wikipedia biography] now takes a personal interest in the Armenian deportations, almost inventing the term "final solution" 20 years too early. The American Ambassador Henry Morgenthau Snr [Wikipedia biography] does likewise, and by 16th July has sufficient evidence to telegraph Washington, DC, to the effect that: "Deportation of and excesses against peaceful Armenians is increasing and from harrowing reports of eye witnesses it appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion" [sub-thread continues at 13th September ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = THE TRUE CAUSES OF WAR]

**1915 [Thursday 8th July] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXII - The Daily Mail Attacks Again]: [Continued from 28th June] Lord Northcliffe's [21st May<=10th September] The Daily Mail launches another direct attack on government handling of the Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns, claiming that "all the world knows that the Dardanelles Expedition was bungled" [sub-thread continues at 6th August ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**1915 [Friday 9th July] The South-West African Campaign [II - The Battle of Khorab]: [Continued from 4th February] This German defeat brings the South African invasion of German South West Africa to an end [sub-thread ends]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**1915 [Sunday 10th July] The latest drafts of trained-up Australians in Egypt are prepared for shipment out as 2nd Australian Division [Wikipedia factsheet] under the command of James G. Legge [24th June<=2nd September]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

**1915 [Tuesday 13th July-3rd August] The Eastern Campaign [XI - The Summer Offensive in Poland]: [Continued from 2nd May] This battle is an attempt by the Germans (northern and East Prussian fronts) and Austro-Hungarians (southern front) to further destabilise the Russian salient in Poland following the highly successful Gorlice-Tarnów Offensive
of early summer [<=2nd May]. It is fought between (eventually) 11 Central Powers armies under the strategic direction of von Falkenhayn [22nd April <=> 1916 (19th August)] and nine understrength Russian armies under Nikolaevich [<=1st January]. The offensive goes well, with Warsaw falling on 5th August, Brest-Litovsk on 25th August, and Vilna on 19th September. By the time Winter brings von Falkenhayn’s troops to a halt the Russians have been driven back to the line Riga [map, etc.] - Pinsk [map, etc.] - Ternopil [map, etc.]. Casualties total 200,000 killed, wounded, and missing, for the Central Powers. The Russians, however, suffer a massive 500,000 killed, wounded, and missing, plus another million men taken prisoner [sub-thread continues at 1916 (4th June) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 13th July] Islam in WW1 [XII - The First Prison-Camp Mosque]: [Continued from 3rd July] Still eager to foster anti-British and anti-French sentiment amongst its Muslim prisoners-of-war Germany’s Zossen P.O.W. Camp [maplink at 1914 (14th November)] provides its inmates with their own Mosque, complete with dome and minaret [Wikipedia image] [sub-thread continues at 14th July ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

********** THE SUNNI MUSLIMS COURTED **********

1915 [Wednesday 14th July] Islam in WW1 [XIII - The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence (The Counter-Courting of the Arabs)]: [Continued from 13th July] Concerned at ongoing German intrigues in the Islamic world the British High Commissioner in Egypt Henry McMahon [Wikipedia biography=>24th October] opens a secret correspondence with the Sharif of Mecca Hussein bin Ali [Wikipedia biography=>24th October] - the senior direct descendent of the Prophet Muhammad - with a view to cultivating (and supporting militarily if necessary) anti-German/anti-Ottoman regimes in the Ottoman Empire, not least in the oilfields of Arabia and the Persian Gulf [sub-thread continues at 2nd October ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

THE WHOS, WHEREAS, AND WHATS OF ARAB POLITICS IN WW1 (AND NOW!!):

Abdullah bin al-Hussein [Wikipedia biography=>1921 (1st April)]: Son of Hussein bin Ali (above) and the future emir of Transjordan [=>1921 (1st April)] and king of Jordan [=>1946 (25th May)]. Older brother to Faisal (below).

Damascus Protocol: A secret diplomatic understanding arrived at in late April 1915 after discussions between Abdullah bin al-Hussein (above) and Kitchener [26th May <=6th August]. It bound the Arabs to rise up against their Ottoman rulers in exchange for national independence after the war. The McMahon-Hussein correspondence described in the main entry above is simply working through the details of how this objective is to be achieved, and when the uprising should take place. Caution: Things will not, in the fullness of time, work out entirely to plan!

Faisal bin Hussein [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (23rd October)]: Son of Hussein bin Ali (above) and the future king of Syria [=>1920 (8th March)] and Iraq [=>1921 (23rd August)]. Younger brother to Abdullah (above).

Hashemites [Wikipedia factsheet]: The tribe of Hussein bin Ali (above).

Hejaz [map, etc.]: This is the region of modern Saudi Arabia bordering the Red Sea and to the south of modern Jordan. Its capital city is Jeddah [map, etc.] and it also contains the Islamic holy cities of Mecca [maplink at 1908 (1st September)] and Medina [ditto].

Shia Muslims: Shia, or Shi’ite, Muslims are followers of the Shia branch of Islam [Wikipedia factsheet], and, with an estimated quarter of a billion followers world-wide, make up 15% or so of the religion as a whole. They recognise themselves as a breakaway from the religion as originally practised [shia = "follower of ..."] but claim that their pathway is doctrinally purer. Geographically speaking the Shi’ites are the dominant force in Iran, and restless minorities in Syria, Lebanon (not least Hezbollah), Iraq, and Pakistan.

Sunni Muslims: Sunni Muslims are followers of the Sunni branch of Islam [Wikipedia factsheet], and, with well over a million followers world-wide, make up 85% or so of the religion as a whole. Geographically speaking the Sunni are the dominant faction across
North Africa, Saudi Arabia (including, therefore, the Hejaz), Afghanistan (not least the militant Taliban) and the Islamic republics of Central Asia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and Indonesia.

1915 [Wednesday 14th July] **Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXVIII - Irish Recruitment Promoted]**: [Continued from 19th May] It is briefly confirmed in Parliament that earlier in the year the publicity consultant **Le Bas** [19th March<=1916 (22nd August)] was in Ireland "for some months in the capacity of adviser to the military authorities" and moreover that his advice was "most valuable in attracting new recruits" *(Hansard, 73:813-815)* [sub-thread continues at 15th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 RECRUITMENT]

**ASIDE**: Le Bas’ involvement in Irish recruitment will be explained in much greater detail in a further debate a year later (=1916 (22nd August)).

1915 [Thursday 15th July or hereabouts] The latest offering from **Hepworth Studios** [<=1904 (8th February)] is "*The Man who Stayed at Home*" [IMDB entry], a cops-versus-German-spies drama. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS]

1915 [Thursday 15th July] **Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XXXIX - The National Registration Act]**: [Continued from 14th July] The British Parliament passes the **National Registration Act**, by which instrument it is made compulsory for all male citizens aged between 15 and 65 years to register (but not actually to enlist) at their local recruiting hall and state their trade. When the collated results become available two months later they will identify some 5 million men not in the military, two-thirds of whom are not in service-exempt occupations either [sub-thread continues at 17th July ...]. [THREAD = WW1 RECRUITMENT]

1915 [Saturday 17th July] **Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XL - The Germans Denounce the Bryce Report]**: [Continued from 15th July] The German government releases its own report on the Belgian Atrocity stories, claiming that most Belgian "civilian" casualties had been franc-tireurs - resistance fighters of some sort or other - and that executions had only been carried out in self-defence and after due court martial. Henceforth, in the eyes of the Germans, the **Bryce Report** [<=12th May] will constitute as great an atrocity as anything their army had done [sub-thread continues at 9th September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PROPAGANDA]

1915 [Sunday 18th July-3rd August] **The Italian Adriatic Front [III - The Second Battle of the Isonzo River]**: [Continued from 23rd June] The Italians renew their offensive along the Isonzo/Soča River [maplink at 23rd June], but make no progress [sub-thread continues at 18th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 19th July] **Counter-Battery Science [V - Sir Lawrence Bragg Joins the Team]**: [Continued from ??th April] The 25-year-old Australian-born Cambridge physicist **Sir W. Lawrence Bragg** [Wikipedia biography=>12th November], about to become history's youngest-ever winner (jointly with his father) of the Nobel Prize for Physics, is called to see **Sir W. Coote Hedley** [Wikipedia biography], head of the Geographical Section (later M14) of the War Office, and asked to turn his research skills to the problems of artillery ranging. He agrees and is seconded to the Topographical Sub-Section (a.k.a. "Maps HQ") *(Van der Kloot, 2005 online)*. Assisted by **Harold Roper Robinson** [Wikipedia biography] he will spend the next few months based at Kemmel Hill [maplink at 1914 (7th October)] in the Ypres sector conducting fact-finding studies of competing sound-ranging techniques [sub-thread continues at 12th November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 ARTILLERY]
1915 [Monday 19th July] The Battle of Hooge [I - The British Mine]: [New sub-thread] At 1900hr a large British mine is detonated under a German strongpoint at Hooge [maplink at 1914 (27th October)] on the south-eastern curve of the Ypres Salient, followed by an infantry rush to secure the crater. The mine is the second major achievement for Norton-Griffiths [10th April] in 1916 [4th November] tunnelling companies, the first having been at Hill 60 [maplink at 17th April] in April [<=10th April] [sub-thread continues at 30th July ...]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Thursday 26th July] The 2nd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment is now separated back out of the amalgamated Monmouthshire Regiment [<=27th May] and re-assigned to 12th Brigade within Wilson's [3rd May<=18th December] 4th Division, presently taking up new positions at Auchonvillers [map, etc.] on the developing Somme Front. [THREAD = WW1 REGIMENTAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Monday 26th July or just after] The East African Campaign [XI - The Royal Navy Heads Inland]: [Continued from 11th July] In an attempt to deny the Germans free traffic along Lake Tanganyika [map, etc.], which for some 500 miles is the eastern border of Belgian Congo and the western border of German East Africa, the British Admiralty delivers two disassembled patrol boats - HMS Mimi and HMS Toutou [Wikipedia shipography] to the coppermine railroadhead at Fungurume [map, etc.], deep in Belgian Congo [= modern Democratic Republic of Congo]. The pieces than begin a three-month journey by dirt-track and river headwaters to Kalemie [map, etc.] half way up the Belgian side of the lake. The expedition is commanded by the Tasmanian-born Geoffrey B. Spicer-Simson [Wikipedia biography] [sub-thread continues at 2nd August ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 28th July] The Armenian Genocide [V - Discussions in the House of Lords]: [Continued from 7th July] Reports of the ongoing Turkish atrocities in Armenia are discussed in the British House of Lords and reference made to specific atrocities and the general practice of "wholesale massacre and wholesale deportation" (see Hansard, 19:774-778 for details) [sub-thread continues at 13th September ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = THE TRUE CAUSES OF WAR]

********** SHOCK AND AWE, 1915 STYLE **********

1915 [Friday 30th July] The Battle of Hooge [II - The Germans Counter-Attack]: [Continued from 19th July] In retaliation for the explosion of the Hooge mine on 19th July [<=q.v.] the Germans mount a surprise counter-attack at 0315hr on 30th July using their new flamethrower detachments. The British line is overrun on a front of several hundred yards [end of sub-thread]. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

ASIDE - THE STICK GRENADE: Another debut weapon which is beginning to make an impact around this time is the German "stick grenade", the Stielgranate [German Stiel = "stem/stalk" (hence "handle"); Granate = "grenade"] [YouTube tutorial], popularly known as the "potato masher". This consists of a small charge of TNT on the end of a foot-long wooden throwing handle. The charge was not usually enclosed in a fragmentation case (thus saving weight) and so relied on its high-brisance [see1832 (ASIDE)] concussion effect.

1915 [Friday 30th July or hereabouts] Wireless Telegraphy, Telephony, and Broadcasting [CXX - The "Moritz" Listening Stations]: [Continued from 1st June] Future histories¹ will record that by around this time the Germans had discovered that they could detect British field telephone traffic by pushing electrodes into the earth and amplifying the signals picked up, and are deploying listening stations into tunnels dug out into the (comparative) quietness, deep under Nomansland [sub-thread continues at 22nd September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 SIGNALLING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS]
ASIDE: For example, Byledbal et al (2012 online). There is, however, little information available about the system itself, and it may be that it was just a convenient generic codeword. The German literature gives credit for their listening stations to one Otto Arendt [no convenient biography] and refers to them as “Arendtstationen”. Probably only coincidentally, Moritz was the middle name of Erich von Hornbostel [Wikipedia biography], and he was working at this time on the Wertbostel aircraft sound location system (see next), so we might be looking at a conflation of terms in the intelligence officers’ mess, perhaps.

SOME TECHNICAL GERMAN: The following keywords may assist readers wishing to browse the German literature ...

Abfangen = to intercept
Abhören = to overhear, hence Abhörstation(en) = listening station(s)
Ausstatten = to equip, hence Ausstattung = equipment
Funkverkehr = wireless traffic
Horchen = (archaic) roughly to harken, hence Horchapparat [try to avoid this one because it means different things to different people] = (generic) listening equipment generally, which might be subterranean (counter-mining operations), subterranean (phone-tapping), surface (counter-battery), or surface (anti-aircraft); also (specific) a particular Ringrichter aircraft locating system
Hören = to hear in its simple sense, hence Hörer = listener
Kopfhörer = earphones
Nachrichten = generally news, but in the present context military intelligence
Ortungsgerät = generic locating equipment
Richtungshörer = directionally sensitive sound detection equipment
Ringrichter = an array of Trichter, more or less circular [image, etc.]
Signalschnitt = signals section/unit
Streusströmen = residual- or side-current
Trichter = horn or funnel in the sense of an auricle [Wikipedia factsheet] (as in an ear-trumpet)
Wertbostel = a particular Trichter system - [check it out]

1915 [Thursday 5th August] The Salonika Expedition [I - The Preliminary Plan]: [New sub-thread]
Concerned (a) that the Gallipoli Campaign is going nowhere, and (b) that the situation in Serbia is deteriorating, the French government appoints Sarrail [1914 (10th September)<=>12th October] (recently sacked as commander of Third Army) to look into the feasibility of Allied landings on the Turkish or Greek mainland west of Gallipoli. Serious disagreements soon emerge between Sarrail and Joffre [9th May<=>next entry] as to the best plan of action. Sarrail proposes landings in the western Aegean at, perhaps, Salonika [see inset below]. Joffre, on the other hand, prefers a second, outflanking, landing further east nearer Gallipoli [sub-thread continues at 28th September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

THE WHOS, WHERESES, AND WHATS OF GREEK POLITICS IN WW1 (AND NOW):

Chalkidiki: See Halkidiki.
Constantine I of Greece [1913 (18th March)<=>5th October] : Save for a period in exile 1917-1920 =>1917 (11th June), Greek king until deposed in 1922 =>1922(27th September). Husband of Sophia (below), and therefore broadly (as the brother-in-law of Kaiser Wilhelm II [1914 (15th December)<=>26th October]) pro-German.
Gounaris, Dimitrios [Wikipedia biography]: Leader of the right-wing People's Party and opponent of Venizelos (below); Greek Prime Minister February to August 1915.
Halkidiki: [Or Chalkidiki if the Greek letter Chi is properly emphasised] A series of peninsulas and inlets on the north-western extremes of the Aegean Sea, nowadays popular as a holiday region.
Salonica [Wikipedia factsheet]: The second-largest city in Greece, after Athens. The bridgehead port for the Salonika Campaign.
Sophia of Greece [1889 (27th October)<=>1917 (11th June)]: Queen Consort to Constantine I of Greece (above).
Thessalonika: Same as Salonika.

Venizelists: Followers of Venizelos (next).


Zaimis, Alexandros [Wikipedia biography=>5th October]: Opponent of Venizelos (above), whom he replaced in the constitutional crisis of October 1915.

1915 [Thursday 5th August] Having decided that they would be more profitably deployed elsewhere Joffre [preceding entry=>31st August] orders the removal of most of the heavy weapons from the forts of the Verdun sector. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Thursday 5th August] The aforementioned Canaris [8th March=>1916 (?7th November)] succeeds in escaping his internment in Chile, hikes across the Andes to Buenos Aires to pick up false identity papers from German agents there, and then takes a neutral ship back to Germany via Holland. [THREAD = WW1 ESPIONAGE AND INTELLIGENCE]

1915 [Friday 6th-10th August] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXIII - The Summer Offensive (The Suvla Bay Landings)]: [Continued from 8th July] In an attempt to outflank the stalemated fronts at Cape Helles and Anzac Cove Hamilton [4th June=>21st September] opens a new bridgehead at Suvla Bay [maplink at 25th April]. Here he commits the five divisions of IX Corps under Sir Frederick W. Stopford [Wikipedia biography=>next entry but two]. The initial landings are made by two of Kitchener's [14th July=>25th September] "New Army" Divisions, namely Mahon's [1914 (21st August)]=>next entry but two 10th (Irish) Division [1914 (21st August)]=>next entry but one and Frederick Hammersley's [Wikipedia biography=>next entry but two] 11th (Northern) Division [Wikipedia factsheet]. Unsurprisingly it had been impossible to keep all these movements from German agents, both in their ports of embarkation and in the ports of assembly dotted around the Greek Islands, and the Turks have been reinforcing their defences for several days already. However they choose not to invite a fight on the beaches of Suvla Bay, so the landings begin promisingly enough, with only one casualty amongst the 7000 men of the vanguard battalions. Once in the hills above, however, the attackers come up against the horizontal and vertical depth and complexity of the Turkish entrenchments, and stalemate follows here, too (although enough ground will be taken in the first 48 hours of the assault to give a continuous Suvla-Anzac beachhead rather than two separate ones).

ASIDE: Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove are separated by Nibrunesi Point [map]. Viewed from the west (that is to say, from the Aegean) there is then a series of important geographical features, each higher than the one before, all of which played a part in the ensuing battle. These are (half a mile inland) Lala Baba, (a mile inland) Chocolate Hill, and (two miles inland) Scimitar Hill [all shown on the map just referenced], and then, leading up toward mid-peninsula, the Anafarta foothills. These features are worth noting in the present context because the more of them the British could occupy the more it brought Suvla and Anzac together as a single wide bridgehead rather than two adjacent narrow ones.

The landings are supported by diversionary attacks on the other fronts [see next four entries], all of which are soon similarly unsuccessful. On 9th August 53rd (Welsh) Division [<=1st June] comes ashore, followed on 10th August by 54th (East Anglian) Division [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
1915 [Friday 6th-13th August] **The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXIV - The Summer Offensive (The Battle of Krithia Vineyard)]:** (Continued from preceding entry) This battle is fought on the Helles Front as a diversionary attack during the Suvla Bay landings [<=preceding entry] between elements of VIII Corps (i.e., 29th Division and 42nd (East Lancashire) Division) under (acting corps commander) Harold E. Street [no convenient biography] and the Turkish line at Krithia Vineyard [clearly shown on the helpful Wikimap at 23rd April], only a mile south of Krithia village itself [ditto]. Outnumbered by around 6:1 only a little ground is gained and that only at the cost of 88th Brigade being decimated [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**NOTE:** The Battle of Lone Pine (next) was actually the southernmost element of the more drawn out Battle of Sari Bair (next but one). However we shall follow the official histories and treat them separately.

1915 [Friday 6th-9th August] **The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXV - The Summer Offensive (The Battle of Lone Pine)]:** (Continued from preceding entry) This battle is fought at Anzac Cove [maplink at 25th April] as a diversionary attack during the Suvla Bay landings [<=preceding entry but one] between the 4600-strong 1st Australian Brigade under [Sir] Harold B. Walker [Wikipedia biography] and the Turkish defenders at Lone Pine [map, etc.], the high ground on the beachhead perimeter about a mile to the south-east of the beach. The attack begins at 1400hr on 6th August with the detonation of three mines in Nomansland, in order to create some advanced cover. This is followed at 1630hr by an hour-long artillery barrage during which the infantry move forward into their jumping-off positions. The final assault begins at 1730hr and successfully occupies the Turkish front-line trench system, albeit at the cost of heavy casualties. A Turkish counter-attack at 1900hr is unsuccessful, as are a succession of further counter-attacks over the ensuing 72 hours. The final outcome of the battle is a gain of some 150 metres on a 300 metre front. Seven Australian Victoria Crosses are earned [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Friday 6th-22nd August] **The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXVI - The Summer Offensive (The Battle of Sari Bair)]:** (Continued from preceding entry) This battle is fought as a diversionary attack during the Suvla Bay landings [<=preceding entry but two] between [Sir] Alexander J. Godley's [Wikipedia biography] ANZAC Division at Anzac Cove [maplink at 25th April] and two Turkish divisions dug in above the cove on the foothills of Sari Bair [map, etc., at http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/files/styles/fullsize/public/sari-bair-offensive.jpg?itok=S2dW2VN4].

**ASIDE:** The main features of the Anzac Cove foothills, considered in clockwise order from Nibrunesi Point [maplink at preceding entry but two] (and all visible on the map just referenced), are Damakjelik Hill, Hill Q (and Hill 971 behind it), Chunuk Bair, Battleship Hill, Baby 700, and - already separately mapped above - the Lone Pine Spur.

The ANZACs have been supported by elements of the newly arrived 13th (Western) Division [13th June <=12th December], commanded by [Sir] Frederick S. Maude [Wikipedia biography] 1916 (7th January), which includes (40th Brigade) 8th Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers [<=13th June], (40th Brigade) 4th Bn South Wales Borderers [<=13th June], and (divisional reserve) 8th Bn Welch Regiment [<=13th June]; also by elements of Mahon's [preceding entry but two] 28th September 10th (Irish) Division. The battle begins at 2000hr with attacks on the left and right to hold the flanks of a more complex advance in the centre.
RECOMMENDED READING: For fuller technical details of the separate axes of advance, their individual objectives, and how these objectives were, or were not, achieved see General Hamilton's own account of this action.

4/SWB is in the "advance guard" on the left, making for a hill called Damakjelik Bair

CAMEO - 4/SWB AT ANZAC COVE, 6TH-9TH AUGUST: Here is General Hamilton's own account of the action on the left on the first day ...

"The rapid success of [the movement to secure the left flank] was largely due to Lieutenant-Colonel [Franklin M.] Gillespie [no convenient biography=>Killed in action 9th August], a very fine man, who commanded [...] the Fourth South Wales Borderers, a corps worthy of such a leader. Every trench encountered was instantly rushed by the Borderers, until, having reached the predetermined spot, the whole column was unhesitatingly launched at Damakjelik Bair. Several Turkish trenches were captured at the bayonet's point, and by [0130hr on 7th August] the whole of the hill was occupied" (from the Recommended Reading above).

Two days later a determined Turkish counter-attack was driven back and Colonel Gillespie was amongst those killed. Losses for the period 6th-22nd August totalled "over 400" out of the 775 men landed (Regimental website, 2012).

CAMEO - 8/WELCH AT CHUNUK BAIR, 8TH AUGUST: At 0300hr on 8th August 8th [Service] (Pioneer) Bn Welch Regiment and 7th Bn Gloucestershire Regiment supported a New Zealand Division attack on Chunuk Bair (above), finding it undefended. However from 0500hr onward the Turks counter-attacked persistently and in strength, and by the end of the day 8/Welch had lost about half its strength.

On 9th August, with the Turks on Scimitar Hill [maplink at preceding entry but two] still controlling the hills dividing Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove, Stopford [<=preceding entry but two] now orders Hammersley's [preceding entry but two=>21st August] 11th (Northern) Division to advance on it, but during a day's fierce fighting it makes little progress. Meanwhile to the south 13th (Western) Division's 38th Brigade, commanded by Anthony H. Baldwin [no convenient biography=>killed in action 10th August] is part of a follow-on attack on the position known as Hill Q [use the Chunuk Bair maplink above and look right of centre]. This stage of the battle begins at 0430hr with an artillery barrage, followed at 0515hr by the infantry attack. Baldwin's brigade promptly loses its way in the rough and poorly mapped terrain, and the resulting delay means that units intended to be covering each other's flanks are unable to do so. The brigade pays a heavy price for this, being gradually decimated as the day passes. Finally a full-scale Turkish counter-attack at 0530hr on 10th August overruns the two remaining battalions and re-establishes Turkish control of the Chunuk Bair heights. To complete the British failure a renewed attack on Scimitar Hill is another expensive disaster ...

CAMEO - 53RD (WELSH) DIVISION AT SCIMITAR HILL, 10TH-14TH AUGUST: We have been tracking 53rd (Welsh) Division in our monthly summaries since 1914 [<=1914 (1st September)], and in August 1915 it contained several of the best-trained Welsh Territorial Force battalions. As landed at Suvla the order of battle of the division's twelve fighting battalions is as follows ...

158th Brigade under TBA [] contains 5th, 6th, and 7th Bns Royal Welch Fusiliers, and 1st Bn Herefordshire Regiment.

159th Brigade under Ernest A. Cowans [no convenient biography] contains 4th and 7th Bns Cheshire Regiment and 4th and 5th Bns Welch Regiment.

During the 48 hours after disembarkation battalions were repeatedly stripped out of these three brigades and sent inland as emergency reinforcements for actions nearby. The remainder were committed on 10th August in a first-blooding attack on Scimitar Hill which dragged on until 14th August, by which time the Division as a whole had suffered over 2000 casualties.

Fighting continues on and off from 11th-20th August, with a distinct lack of direction as Stopford is relieved of his command (16th August) and replaced (24th August) by Sir Julian Byng. Finally on 21st August the British make one further attempt on Scimitar Hill [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 7th August] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXVII - The Summer Offensive (The Sixth Battle of Kereves Dere)]: [Continued from preceding entry] This battle is fought in the French sector of the Helles Front as a diversionary attack during the Suvla Bay landings [<=preceding entry but three] [sub-thread continues at 12th August ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]


1915 [Wednesday 11th August] Now back at full(ish) strength the amalgamated Monmouthshire Regiment [<=27th May] is broken up into its original 1st and 3rd Bns [=>2nd September], and reattached to 28th Division’s 83rd Brigade at Kemmel [maplink at 1914 (7th October)]. [THREAD = WW1 REGIMENTAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Thursday 12th August] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXVIII - The Torpedo Bomber Comes of Age] [Continued from 7th August] Piloted by Charles Edmonds [Wikipedia biography] an RNAS seaplane from HMS Ben-my-Chree [10th June=>1916 (10th June)] successfully sinks a Turkish freighter using a released-in-flight torpedo from a height of 14 feet [sub-thread continues at 21st August ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 AVIATION]


1915 [Thursday 19th August] Outward bound from Liverpool to New York City the White Star liner SS Arabic [Wikipedia shipography=sinks this day] is sunk off Kinsale Head, Ireland [map, etc.] by a single torpedo from U-24 [Wikipedia shipography] commanded by Rudolf Schneider [http://uboat.net/wwi/men/commanders/304.html]. As with the sinking of the Lusitania three months earlier [<=7th May] the fact that neutral American citizens are amongst the 44 people who lose their lives causes an immediate diplomatic spat between Washington and Berlin, the end result of which is that on 28th August the German Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg [<=1914 (29th July)] instructs U-boat commanders not to sink passenger ships without firstly ensuring that their lifeboats are safely away. [THREAD = WW1 SUBMARINE OPERATIONS]
1915 [Wednesday 21st August] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XXXIX - The Summer Offensive (The Battle of Scimitar Hill)]: [Continued from 12th August] In one final attempt to ease the situation on the Suvla-Anzac beaches, the acting commander of IX Corps, De Lisle [1914 (27th October)<=1916 (29th June)], has ferried some of his most experienced troops round from the Helles Front and now mounts an all-out attack on the Turkish positions atop Scimitar Hill [maplink at 6th August]. De Lisle's own 29th Division attacks the hill directly, while Hammersley's [<=6th August] 11th (Northern) Division attacks a mile or so to the south. Yet again the very nature of the terrain makes both columns easy targets for Turkish artillery and small-arms fire, and the attack suffers 5300 casualties in the day, out of 14,300 troops committed. One Victoria Cross is awarded (to a Private Frederick W. O. Potts [Wikipedia biography]) [sub-thread continues at 10th September ...].

[THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, AUGUST 1915 ***************
*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, AUGUST 1915 ***************
*************** MONTHLY UPDATE, AUGUST 1915 ***************

1915 [Wednesday 1st September] Present Location of Welsh Units: Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the 13th month of the war ...

ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 7th Division. 2nd Bn is in France with 27th Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, and 17th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is in France with 1st Division. The remaining three first line territorial battalions, namely 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, are with 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, and have just been decimated in the Suvla Bay landings [<=6th August (fourth entry)].

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn is presently with 29th Division in the thick of the fighting at Gallipoli. Of the nine service battalions so far created 4th Bn is with 13th Division and has just been decimated in the Suvla Bay landings [<=6th August (fourth entry)], whilst 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division.

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 28th Division. 2nd Bn is in France with 1st Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 8th Bn is in Gallipoli with 13th Division, and has just been decimated at Chunuk Bair [<=6th August]. 9th Bn has just gone to France with 19th (Western) Division, and 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, 18th Bn, and 19th Bn are all earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR's four first line territorial battalions, namely 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, are with 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, and have just been decimated in the Suvla Bay landings [<=6th August (fourth entry)].

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT
2nd Bn is in France with 4th Division. 1st and 3rd Bn are in France with 28th Division.

THE WELSH GUARDS REGIMENT
1st Bn [1st February]<=17th August] has just joined the Guards Division in France.

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, AUGUST 1915 ***************
*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, AUGUST 1915 ***************
*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, AUGUST 1915 ***************

1915 [Thursday 2nd September] 3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [11th August<=19th December] is now transferred to 49th Division at Elverdinge [map, etc.] on the northern extreme of the Ypres Salient and reclassified as a pioneer [= field engineering] battalion. [THREAD = WW1 REGIMENTAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Thursday 2nd September] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XL - HMT "Southland Sunk"] [Continued from 21st August] James G. Legge [10th July<=1916 (7th April)] is aboard the troopship "Southland" [Wikipedia shipography] with the first contingent of his 2nd Australian Division [10th July<=1916 (7th April)] when it is severely damaged and subsequently forced to beach by a torpedo fired from U-14 [Wikipedia shipography] [sub-thread continues at 10th September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
1915 [Friday 3rd September] **Shellshock [X - Further Staff Changes at Maghull]**: [Continued from 9th June] [Sir]1934 Grafton Elliot Smith [Wikipedia biography] and a fellow Manchester University academic, the psychologist Thomas H. Pear [Wikipedia biography], are formally accepted as part-time staff at the Maghull War Hospital [<=8th May]. The same meeting of the Hospital Board also approves Rivers [Wikipedia biography] [7th March<=1916 (16th October)], another of Smith's recommendations, who comes funded by the Medical Research Committee (Jones, 2010 online). Others to join the staff around this time are the RAMC physicians J. W. Astley Cooper [no convenient biography] (already a specialist in alcoholism and later in "mental and physical exhaustion", that is to say, what we nowadays call "depression") and the neurologist William Brown [Wikipedia biography] [=>1916 (25th January)] (destined to become a specialist in "NYD(N)" [=>1917 (TBA)] and "dissociation" [this fundamentally important theoretical construct is introduced in detail in Companion Resource]) [sub-thread continues at 30th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

1915 [Monday 6th September] **The Invasion of Serbia [I - Bulgarin Sides with the Central Powers]**: [New sub-thread] With a mind to invading hard-pressed Serbia Ferdinand I of Bulgaria [1913 (29th June)<=14th October] sides his country with the Central Powers and prepares to issue mobilisation papers to his armed forces [sub-thread continues at 11th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

**ASIDE:** This in fact proved to be a major diplomatic and military coup for the Central Powers because it meant that the Serbs now had to fight on both a northern and an eastern front. The Serbian collapse, when it came [=>11th October], would be total. It also freed up some quarter of a million German and Austro-Hungarian troops from the Belgrade Front, many of whom were thrown against the Allies on the Salonika Front [=>23rd November].


1**ASIDE:** This nickname from the 1920s is, of course, intended to contrast him with another equally forthright newspaperman, Lord Northcliffe [<=8th July]. Keith Murdoch will go on to found the Melbourne Herald/Sydney Sun newspaper group during the 1920s, expanding it during the 1930s to the News Limited [Wikipedia factsheet] radio and newspaper group. This period sees the open use of mass media to influence not just the Australian political process, but also - as the price of the group's endorsement - the shaping of party political manifestos and agendas accordingly. Upon his death in 1952 control of his company passed to his son K. Rupert Murdoch [Wikipedia biography] who continues the family puppeteering tradition to the present day across the English-speaking world.

1915 [Monday 13th-16th September] **The Armenian Genocide [VI - The Expropriations]**: [Continued from 28th July] The Turkish parliament now passes laws formally transferring abandoned Armenian land, business, plant, cattle, etc. to state ownership. Four days later, on 16th September, the American philanthropist Cleveland H. Dodge [Wikipedia biography] organises the first meeting of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (ACASR) [Wikipedia factsheet] in New York City. It succeeds in raising $60,000 for Henry Morgenthau Snr's [7th July<=1916 (23rd March)] relief efforts [sub-thread continues at 6th October ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = THE TRUE CAUSES OF WAR]
1915 [Monday 13th-17th September] Having been assembling in Kent since June 2nd Canadian Division is now ferried across to France to join with 1st Canadian Division (<=22nd April) to form the Canadian Corps, under the overall command of Alderson [22nd April<=9th October]. They gradually take over the Ploegsteert Wood - Wytschaete sector south of the Ypres Salient. [THREAD = WW1 DIVISIONAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Monday 20th September] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XLII - The Newfoundlanders Arrive]: [Continued from 10th September] The Royal Newfoundland Regiment [1914 (4th October)>=1916 (1st July)] lands at Suvla Bay [maplink at 25th April] and is assigned to 29th Division's 88th Brigade [sub-thread continues at 21st September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 20th September] The East African Campaign [XII - The Third Battle of Longido]: [Continued from 2nd August] This latest raid on Longido in German East Africa is fought between a British column including Barry-Smith's 17th Cavalry, the East African Mounted Rifles [no convenient factsheet], and the King's African Rifles [Wikipedia factsheet] and the German garrison at and around Longido. Poorly positioned from the outset the British fail to engage and the attack is called off in some disarray [sub-thread continues at 24th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

"THE MOST GHASTLY AND COSTLY FIASCO" ¹

1915 [Tuesday 21st September] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns/Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XLIII/XLI - The Murdoch Affair]: [Dardanelles and Gallipoli sub-thread continued from 20th September; Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment sub-thread continued from 17th July] A few days previously, hearing that his fellow war correspondent Keith Murdoch was leaving for London, needing to find a way around the wall of official censorship, and knowing that they shared similarly negative views of how the Gallipoli Campaign was being handled, the Daily Telegraph's Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett [Wikipedia biography] entrusted him with a "whistle-blowing" letter [full text online] to be mailed to Prime Minister Asquith upon his arrival in London. However the existence of the (potentially) illegal document is brought to the attention of the military authorities by a third party, and Murdoch is arrested when he disembarks at Marseilles and the letter confiscated. Murdoch then continues the exposé in his own correspondence in both Australian and British diplomatic circles. In a letter dated 23rd September he is particularly scathing as to the qualities of the British military establishment, describing them as conceited, complacent, and incompetent. Ashmead-Bartlett joins him in London a fortnight later and the two men have the satisfaction of seeing Hamilton [6th August<=16th October] scapegoated for what in truth have been the failings of his staff (or, more correctly, of the entire British military establishment) [=16th October]. It is probably about now that the Charles Urban Trading Company [<=1911 (12th December)<=20th December], now closely associated with the War Propaganda Bureau [<=12th May], releases the specialist cameraman F. Percy Smith's six-minute stop-motion animation of the campaign under the title "Fight for the Dardanelles" [BFI entry and video] [Dardanelles and Gallipoli sub-thread continues at 16th October ...; Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment sub-thread continues at 11th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = WW1 CENSORSHIP]

¹ASIDE: From the Ashmead-Bartlett letter.

RECOMMENDED READING: Hamilton (1920 [Project Gutenberg full text online]) includes details of the above affair.
1915 [Wednesday 22nd September] Wireless Telegraphy, Telephony, and Broadcasting [CXX - Fuller Joins the SSTC]: [Continued from 30th July] An experienced Royal Engineers officer named Algernon C. Fuller [Wikipedia biography] is gazetted as an instructor at the SSTC [<=6th May] [sub-thread continues at 1916 (TBA) ...]. **[THREAD = WW1 SIGNALLING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS]**

**ASIDE:** We suspect that Fuller had for some time been working on the problem of securing field telephone systems against enemy eavesdropping from their Moritz stations [<=30th July], it having become apparent during the summer that the Germans often knew of British attacks and movements in advance, much to their prejudice. Here is Priestley ([1921 online] on this ...

"... until in the summer of 1915 the enemy did suddenly appear to be extraordinarily well informed of all that was going on behind our lines. This was manifested in many ways. Carefully planned raids and minor attacks were met by hostile fire, exactly directed, and timed to the minute of the attack. Trenches where a relief was taking place were heavily shelled at the very time of the relief, when they were naturally filled with double their complement of men. This occurred too often to be a mere coincidence."

Priestley also conveys the lovely story of the Germans greeting the arrival of one Scottish battalion in the line (theoretically a well-kept secret) by playing them their regimental march by way of welcome!

**FURTHER READING:** We recommend Priestley’s (op. cit.) "The Signal Service in the European War", particularly Chapter VI relating to "Enemy Overhearing" from which the quotation above has been lifted.

1915 [Saturday 25th September-4th November] The Third Battle of Artois [I - Overview]: [New sub-thread] This battle is fought as an Autumn continuation of the Second Battle of Artois [<=9th May] against the German line north of Arras [maplink at 1914 (29th September)] between the French Tenth Army under d'Urbal [<=9th May] and local elements of the German Sixth (Bavarian) Army under Crown Prince Rupprecht [13th May<=next entry]. A simultaneously executed British push around Loos-en-Gohelle [map, etc.] to the north has been arranged to cover the French left and draw off reserves, but this will be dealt with separately [=>next entry]. The French take the village of Souchez [map, etc.] on the first day but the offensive then gets bogged down on the approaches to Vimy Ridge [maplink at 9th May] and Joffre [31st August<=9th December] will call the operation off after six weeks. The overall outcome is that the German line holds and the French suffer disproportionately higher casualties [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. **[THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]**

********** THE BATTLE OF LOOS **********  
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1915 [Saturday 25th September-19th October] The Third Battle of Artois [II - The British Supporting Attacks (The Battle of Loos - Order of Battle)]: [Continued from preceding entry] This one-month-long battle is fought in the Loos-en-Gohelle [preceding entry] sector between Haig’s [13th May<=next entry] First Army and local elements of the German Sixth (Bavarian) Army under Crown Prince Rupprecht [preceding entry<=1916 (19th July)], and has been timed to coincide with, and give support to, the French push north of Arras [preceding entry]. The northern boundary of the battle is the La Bassée Canal [maplink at 1914 (27th October)], the southern boundary - a mere five miles to the south - is with the left flank of the French Tenth Army at Grenay [map, etc.]. Since the sector as a whole is dotted with coal mines, quarries, slagheaps, canals, and railway lines it is worth
checking out some of the man-made and natural features fought over during the battle before we go any further ...

[print a copy of http://www.windhillorigins.co.uk/familyhistory_files/stewart/images/generalmapofloos.gif]
The main features of the Loos sector, considered from north to south (and all visible on the map just printed), are **Auchy-les-Mines** [map, etc.], **Haisnes** [map, etc.], the **Fosse 8 slagheap** [a.k.a., "the dump"], the **Hohenzollern Redoubt** [map, etc.], Cité St. Elie, the **Hulloch quarries**. **Hulloch village** [map, etc.], **Corons de Ruoire** [map, etc.], Hill 70 (and the Hill 70 Redoubt high on its northern slope), Cité St. Pierre, St. Augustine [now disappeared into the northern suburbs of Lens, approximately between Rue Robert Schumann and Rue de Londres on the Lens town map], and Lens [map, etc.].

Haig's order of battle is as follows ...

**MAIN ATTACK** (six divisions, here listed from north to south)

- **Gough's** [1914 (27th October)<=1916 (29th June)] I Corps
  - 2nd Division [<=1914 (12th October)]
    - 7th Division [<=1914 (27th October)] (including 1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers [13th May<=5th October])
  - Rawlinson's [1914 (27th October)<=1916 (29th June)] IV Corps
    - 1st Division [<=1914 (12th October)] (including 2nd Bn Welch Regiment and 1st Bn South Wales Borderers)
    - 15th (Scottish) Division [Wikipedia factsheet]
    - 47th (2nd London) Division [Wikipedia factsheet]=>29th September]

**ARMY RESERVE**


  **NOTE:** The units listed above are Haig's to command. Those listed below have been promised to him but can only actually be committed with Sir John French's [13th May<=next entry] approval. This added layer of decision-making takes a finite amount of time, and at Loos - as we shall shortly be seeing - may well have cost the British the battle [=next entry].

**G.H.Q. RESERVE** (dates and times of release in main narrative)

  - Guards Division (including Welsh Guards in 3rd Guards Brigade)

**LATER TRANSFERS** (dates of transfer in main narrative)

- 12th (Eastern) Division [Wikipedia factsheet]
- 28th Division [=13th February]
- [Willcocks] [1914 (20th December)<=31st October] Indian Corps
- 19th (Western) Division [Wikipedia factsheet] (on attachment as a temporary makeweight and including 9th Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers, 9th Battalion Welch Regiment, and 5th Bn South Wales Borderers)
- 7th (Meerut) Division [=10th March]

The immediate British objective is the village of Loos-en-Goëlette (nowadays the north-western suburb of Lens), but with the broader (and in the event totally unfulfilled) strategic objective of breaking through to the east-south-east to form the left pincer in a highly ambitious French plan to cut off all German troops south of the line Laon-Reims (that is to say, to do to the Germans in France what the Germans had been doing to the Russians in Poland [=13th July]). The battle sees the first action of the newly assembled **Guards Division** [=17th August] (which includes 1st Bn Welsh Guards
A four-day preliminary bombardment has done its best - despite the prevailing ammunition shortages - to disrupt the German wire entanglements and suppress known strongpoints and artillery batteries. Nevertheless the German line holds and inflicts significantly disproportionate British casualties (roughly 60,000 against 26,000).

1 **ASIDE:** The British dead and missing from the Third Battle of Artois are commemorated at the Loos Memorial [Wikipedia factsheet], the German at the Lens-Sallaumines Friedhof [factsheet at http://www.volksbund.de/kriegsgraeberstaette/lens-sallaumines.html], and the French at Notre Dame de Lorette [Wikipedia factsheet].

**HISTORIC LOST OPPORTUNITY AT HILL 70**

1915  (Saturday 25th-28th September) **The Third Battle of Artois [III - The British Supporting Attacks (The Battle of Loos - The First Four Days)]:** [Continued from preceding entry] The first day of the Battle of Loos sees the following indicative actions (north to south) ...

**I CORPS**

With a view to creating a stable northern flank for the attacks further south, **2nd Division** mounts two attacks on 25th September, one with its 5th Brigade north of the La Bassée Canal toward Givenchy-lès-la-Bassée [maplink at 1914 (10th October)] and the other with its 19th Brigade south of the canal toward Auchy-les-Mines. Both attacks suffer heavy casualties and grind to a halt short of their objectives.

**CAMEO - 2/RWF AT AUCHY-LES-MINES, 25TH SEPTEMBER:** In 19th Brigade's sector **2nd Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers** [1st June <=] 1916 (1st January)] advanced in the second wave behind **1st Bn Middlesex Regiment** [Wartime Memories Project factsheet]. However the attack was disrupted from the outset when a scheduled British gas release went ahead despite an unfavourable wind. The troops also had to advance over the broken ground created by their own barrage (made doubly treacherous by torrential rain overnight) and toward wire entanglements which in places were still 25 yards thick. The brigade as a whole suffered 840 casualties in the first five minutes, of whom 120 were from 2/RWF (Dunn, 1938), and by 0900hr the survivors had either fallen back to their start positions or else were laying low in Nomansland until nightfall. The fact that Auchy was not taken had a deleterious knock-on effect on the advance of the **9th (Scottish) Division** to their right ...

The objectives of **9th (Scottish) Division**'s spearhead brigades, 28th and 26th Brigades, are respectively the north and centre of the Hohenzollern Redoubt-Fosse 8 Slagheap [further detail for both] strongpoints. These attacks go in at 0630hr but intense fire from machine-gun nests at a position on the Vermelles-Auchy road codenamed "Mad Point" [use the maplink immediately above and look top left] drives 28th Brigade to ground before it even reaches the German wire, and at 1330hr the survivors are permitted to withdraw. Meanwhile 27th Brigade has moved forward out of reserve to support 26th Brigade in the centre, and although the combined force takes heavy casualties the combined force now succeeds in getting in behind the main redoubt.

Further south again **7th Division** skirts the Hohenzollern system and presses forward toward the Hulluch Quarries, a mile to the south-east ...

**CAMEO - 1/RWF AT THE HULLUCH QUARRIES, 25TH SEPTEMBER:** 1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers was with 7th Division's 22nd Brigade and by 0845hr had driven a wedge into the German line south of the Hulluch quarries. They then turned their axis of attack round to the left and at around 0930hr succeeded in taking the quarries from the south. Here they consolidated.
IV CORPS
On I Corps' right (that is to say, south of the Vermelles-Hulluch road [= the modern D39]), 1st Division's objective is Hulluch village, with 1st and 2nd Brigades as spearhead and 3rd Brigade following up. Both spearhead brigades take very heavy losses but only 1st Brigade makes any progress to speak of because the wire in front of 2nd Brigade remains intact. At 1055hr, lacking the manpower to do any more, the survivors consolidate their gains about half a mile short of Hulluch.

CAMEO - 2/WELCH AND 1/SWB AT HULLUCH, 25TH SEPTEMBER: 1st Bn South Wales Borderers and 2nd Bn Welch Regiment were both with 1st Division's 3rd Brigade, and came up into the front line at about 1100hr. At that point in time 1st Division had a one mile open right flank, and so 3rd Brigade spent the next six hours fighting its way through to the Lens-La Bassée road [= the modern D947] a mile south of Hulluch, thereby re-establishing a tolerably contiguous front. They were, however, unable to break through to the village [cameo continues at 26th September below ...].

********** OPPORTUNITY FOR BREAKTHROUGH? **********
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********** OPPORTUNITY FOR BREAKTHROUGH? **********

To the right of 1st Division, 15th (Scottish) Division attacks parallel to, but to the north of, the Béthune-Lens road [= the modern D943]. It successfully overruns the German fire and support trenches, and by 0800hr has advanced to take Loos village itself. The next objectives are the tactically important German positions on Hill 70 - both on the western aspects of the hillside itself and also in the Hill 70 Redoubt part way down the northern slope - and by around 0900hr, after a sharp fire-fight, the defenders of the western slope have been driven back over the hilltop in some disorder to their second line a quarter of a mile further east in front of the aforementioned hamlet of St. Auguste. The Hill 70 Redoubt, however, with its excellent field of fire to the north, remains in German hands.

ASIDE - A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY?: The German second line behind Loos had been a year in the construction and was perfectly capable of holding back a full-scale attack. However in this particular sector and at this precise moment in time it was insufficiently manned. But because it would not take long for this situation to be remedied (they were built to be fallen back into when needed), the window of opportunity to break through was no more than an hour or two, and perhaps considerably less. Unfortunately for Haig all his divisional reserve brigades had already been committed and the situation was not yet open enough to use Briggs' [<=preceding entry] 3rd Cavalry Division. What Haig needed, therefore, were the three infantry divisions making up Haking's [preceding entry<=29th November] XI Corps, still held in G.H.Q. reserve, and he needed them immediately. Now Sir John French [preceding entry<=29th September] was temporarily out-stationed in a requisitioned chateau near Lillers [map, etc.], 15 miles to the north-west, and had no tactical telecommunication available to him other than the chateau's civilian telephone, which he had been using to keep in touch with G.H.Q. proper at St. Omer [maplink at 1914 (5th August)], 20 miles further away again.

ASIDE: Readers are reminded that the British field telephone system was presently very much out of favour because it was known to be "leaky" [<=22nd September]. On the other hand, people had been tapping into telephone and telegraph systems ever since the technology had first been invented [<=1864 (9th June); 1899 (12th October [ASIDE])].

Haig's [preceding entry<=29th September] Army H.Q. was at Hinges [map, etc.], mid-way between Lillers and the front line. And Haking's Corps H.Q. was at Vermelles [maplink at 1914 (10th October)]. So the message chain was as follows: (1) the battalions on and around Hill 70 reported what they saw to their respective Brigade headquarters using whatever system was available (often runner), (2) Brigades then passed progress reports on to Division using field telephone or telegraph, (3) Division did likewise to Corps and Corps likewise to Army, and then (4) Army either spoke to G.H.Q. over the civilian telephone network (perhaps field telephone or telegraph, perhaps wireless - the issue is obscure and still being debated), or else awaited a personal visit by the peripatetic Commander-in-Chief.
By Haig's later account he sensed the breakthrough opportunity as early as 0700hr and sent an officer to Lillers asking that Haking's reserves be made ready (an impossible request, in fact, given that they were still as much as a day's march away). Then at 0845hr he sends another officer to Lillers with a formal request for the transfer of command. This has the effect of bringing Sir John French to him personally at Hinges at 1130hr. French, having checked the situation, agrees to release the 21st and 24th Divisions (but not yet the Guards Division) from G.H.Q. reserve, and then drives to Haking's Headquarters at Vermelles to complete the necessary paperwork. This takes another 40 minutes.

**ASIDE - SIR JOHN FRENCH'S VERSION OF THINGS:** It will in due course emerge that Sir John French's recollection of the timing of these events is materially different to Haig's, and something of a blame-game develops. Both narratives will be formally submitted as evidence to [Kitchener](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Douglas-Scott) [6th August<>29th September] and the War Cabinet over the coming months, resulting eventually in Sir John's dismissal [=>18th December].

**DOUBLE ASIDE:** A more pertinent blame-game would have been to have asked why the reserves were still a day away when needed!

For whatever reason, therefore, there is no mid-morning, war-winning, assault against the German line south of Hulluch, and by the time one can be put together (see 26th September below) the Germans will have rounded up more than enough reserves to man their defences.

**********  THE OPPORTUNITY PASSED  **********
**********  THE OPPORTUNITY PASSED  **********
**********  THE OPPORTUNITY PASSED  **********

Finally, on the far right of the attack [47th (2nd London) Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/47th_Division) advances to the south of the Béthune-Lens road. It successfully storms the German front-line trench at 0705hr, and then, despite coming under heavy fire from Cité St. Pierre on the right, pushes eastward to secure a relatively stable right flank for the operation as a whole. By midday its spearhead battalions will have taken the southern defences of Loos village and - as noted above - the western rising of Hill 70.

Haking finally orders the head-of-column units of 21st and 24th Divisions forward at 1435hr, with orders to assemble in the developing salient between Hulluch and Hill 70. However the rear-of-column units are still too straggled out to be of any practical use before nightfall. One of the first brigades to arrive is 24th Division's 73rd Brigade, which is sent to the left to support 9th (Scottish) Division in its struggle to hold the Fosse 8 area. It arrives at 1630hr and is immediately involved in fighting off a determined German counter-attack from the direction of Auchy-les-Mines and Haisnes.

By dawn on 26th September all six of 21st and 24th Division's brigades are at the battlefront, and have been deployed as follows ...

**21st Division**
- 62nd Brigade - on the eastern outskirts of Loos, a mile west of the Hill 70 Redoubt (four battalions available)
- 63rd Brigade - directly north of 62nd Brigade, a mile north-west of the Hill 70 Redoubt, facing Chalk Pit Wood (only two battalions available)
- 64th Brigade - behind 63rd Brigade (four battalions available)

**24th Division**
- 71st Brigade - behind 2/Welch (only one battalion available)
72nd Brigade - between 63rd Brigade and 2/Welch; is having to guess at its objectives since it has received no detailed written orders (four battalions available)

73rd Brigade - defending Fosse 8 (see above); has already suffered heavy casualties

KITCHENER'S NEW ARMY GOES TO WAR

These new troops now take part in what is already a hopeless last attempt to break the German second line south of Hulluch ...

ASIDE - THE FULLER MULTIPLE: Readers are reminded that it takes immense local superiority to break - and then successfully push through - a well-prepared defence line [<=10th March (ASIDE)].

CAMEO - 2/WELCH AND 1/SWB IN THE HULLUCH SALIENT, 26TH SEPTEMBER: [Cameo continued from 25th September above] With 1st Bn South Wales Borderers providing a firm left flank south of the Hulluch quarries, 2nd Bn Welch Regiment was the only regular army battalion in a three-division, two-mile-wide, attack from Hulluch village down to the Hill 70 Redoubt. The attack went in at 1100hr and was - this being a salient - immediately under fire from three sides, that is to say, from the Hulluch strongpoints to the north, from the second-line strongpoints to the east, and from the Hill 70 strongpoints to the south. Fortunately the grass was long and allowed those who crawled the final yards to make it as far as the enemy wire, only to find it uncut, there having yet been no prior artillery barrage against the German second line. These troops fell back in despair at around 1300hr, taking those behind them with them in what by account and implication was nothing short of a rout. Even the German machine-gunners took pity on them, ceasing fire once the dazed survivors started back the way they had come! The Hulluch Salient, in other words, had been a deliberately constructed killing ground all along, designed to lure the unwary to their doom; and thanks to Haig's incautious mind it had done its job to perfection. Fosse 8 and the Hulluch quarries were also retaken by the Germans that same afternoon.

ASIDE - THE CITIZEN SOLDIER REVISITED: Britain's much-hailed New Army had been tested and (in the eyes of the military establishment, at least) found distinctly wanting. They were "untried and untrained", and prone to panic under fire. The professional soldiers of the old school raised their eyes to heaven, shook their heads, and tutted countless "I told you so's" into their moustaches. Modern analyses, however, stress that the civilians-in-uniform of 21st and 24th Divisions - the first to volunteer, remember - had suffered all the ills which the military establishment could possibly have inflicted upon them. It will later emerge, for example, that 21st Division had marched "every day for a fortnight", had arrived in the assembly area "exhausted and soaking" at 0600hr, and had then been given orders at 0640hr to be in action at 0630hr (Snowden, 2001 online)! The military establishment now spends the winter of 1915-1916 wondering how to improve their "untried and untrained" volunteers, but in 1916, in a battle several times the size of Loos [=>1916 (1st July)], they will still be asking them to walk patiently across Nomansland, defended only by the hope that the artillery will have destroyed enough of the enemy's machine guns to let them live. And as events will famously demonstrate hope is not always enough.

At 1602hr on 26th September the Guards Division is also formally placed under Haig's command. After Hulluch, however, it is painfully apparent that there is not going to be any breakthrough, and so the priority now is to go for local positional advantage where possible. Haig therefore earmarks the Guards Division for the task of taking Hill 70 once and for all. Again it will take a day to get the units into their forward positions. 1st Guards Brigade replaces 71st Brigade on the Hulluch flank, 2nd Guards Brigade replaces 72nd Brigade in the centre, attacking the Hill 70 Redoubt (and its outposts) from the north-west, and 3rd Guards Brigade replaces 64th Brigade, attacking Hill 70 from the west. The attackers move up into their forward positions at 1500hr on 27th September. We shall take the 2nd Guards Brigade's sector first, for there are some important themes to be developed ...
The outposts facing the 2nd Guards Brigade advance were Chalk Pit Wood, half a mile directly north of the Hill 70 Redoubt, Pithead #4 behind it and Bois Hugo east of it, and Chalet Wood at the foot of Hill 70's northern slope. All four were strongpoints in their own right, and the foremost - Chalk Pit Wood - was allocated to 2nd Bn Irish Guards, with 1st Bn Coldstream Guards to its left and 1st Bn Scots Guards to its right. 2/IG's attack on Chalk Pit Wood began at 1600hr, and the area was occupied "with very few casualties". 2/IG also detached a company to assist 1/SG's attack on the Pithead to their right, but that attack was flayed by numerous "scientifically" sited machine-guns, and the survivors fell back in disarray. In this localised action an 18-year-old 2nd lieutenant named John Kipling received a severe facial wound, fell and was separated, and was subsequently recorded officially as "missing in action". After a year in uniform he had been in harm's way for around two hours. By 1700hr the attack as a whole was abandoned and the survivors consolidated on and behind the line through Chalk Pit Wood.

ASIDE: This quotation, as well as much of the detail, from Rudyard Kipling's post-war regimental history (Kipling, 1923 online). The John Kipling in question was his only son ...

RESEARCH ISSUE - A PARENT'S GRIEF: Readers who are not yet parents can only imagine the lifetime of worry which the birth of a child brings with it. A parent's natural part, in short, is to die first, and a child's natural part is to continue the parental line. In Rudyard Kipling's case, however, when the agony of his son's death did hit him it was as part of a greater tragedy ...

RESEARCH ISSUE - GUILT, PATRIOTIC DUTY, GRIEF, AND POETRY: Kipling Senior, it will be remembered, became one of the founder members of Britain's War Propaganda Bureau soon after the war started, and his writings had for a year now been encouraging Britain's sons to join up and do their bit. In fact John Kipling had volunteered for service on 17th August 1914, his 17th birthday, only to be turned down for short-sightedness. Reportedly somewhat reluctantly his father had then pulled a few strings and a week later had organised a commission for his son in the Irish Guards. The parental grief on this occasion was therefore compounded by a fair amount of soul-searching. In the end, however, the Kiplings were just children of their times and - father, mother, son, the world indeed - still had no idea of how much the industrialisation of war had changed things. The mother put her finger on the issue when she confided to her own mother that the family simply had had no option but to let John have his way because all their friends' sons had gone. Why war, therefore? Because all too often you have let the circumstances arise where it is the only option. War - to use today's terminology - is just a failure of our accumulated prefrontal cortices to think sufficiently far outside the box!

JOHN KIPLING ON THE STAGE AND ON FILM: John Kipling was the subject of David Haig's play "My Boy Jack" (Haig, 1997) by director Brian Kirk. Subsequently filmed for television in 2007 (same title) by director Brian Kirk.

RECOMMENDED READING: "Kipling's Choice" (Spillebeen, 2005). This is the work whose guestimation of how John Kipling met his end fits the precious few hard facts available; the work does however conflate splinter and shrapnel injuries - shell splinters are often wrongly referred to as shrapnel but the injuries caused by the heavier pieces are far, far, nastier [curious readers may browse using the keywords <face wounds shell splinter ww1> for indicative images]). "If Any Question Why He Died" (Flothow, 2007 online). "John Kipling and the First World War" (Hamer, 2013 online).

In 3rd Guards Brigade's sector, the Welsh Guards advance to the right of 1st, 2nd, and 4th Bn Grenadier Guards in a frontal assault on the Hill 70 Redoubt proper ...
CAMEO - WELSH GUARDS AT HILL 70, 27TH SEPTEMBER: Having sustained a number of shrapnel and high explosive casualties during their approach march 3rd Guards Brigade mounted an attack at 1800hr against Hill 70. This, too, was driven to ground by concentrated German machine-gun fire. The attack is formally called off at 2300hr and positions consolidated on the eastern outskirts of Loos village.

So by nightfall on 27th September the early gains at Fosse 8 and the Hulluch quarries have both been lost to German counter-attacks, and the Hohenzollern and Hill 70 redoubts are now doing what they were designed to do with murderous efficiency.

On 28th September the situation calms down somewhat as both sides struggle to replace spent units with fresh ones, and by nightfall the broken 21st and 24th Divisions are preparing to be replaced in their turn by 12th (Eastern) Division and 46th (North Midland) Division. The blame game will now begin in earnest, with Ramsay [<=preceding entry] being immediately replaced as commander of 24th Division (Lloyd, 2008), and Forestier-Walker [<=preceding entry] being scapegoated shortly afterward for the poor performance of 21st Division and sent home to lighter duties (Snowden, op. cit.). Even Sir John French is ousted, although he manages to drag it out until Christmas [==>18th December] [sub-thread continues at 29th September ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 25th-26th September] Further Action at Bellewaarde: In an attempt to divert German reserves from the Loos sector [=preceding two entries], the British in the Ypres sector now make an attempt to recover the ground taken by the Germans in the Battle of Hooge [=<=30th July]. The spearhead unit is VI Corps' 3rd Division under [Sir]1918 James Aylmer Haldane [Wikipedia biography] in the Sanctuary Wood [details at 3rd May] sector seem typical ...

CAMEO - 1/4/GH AT BELLEWAARDE, 25TH-26TH SEPTEMBER: Christopher McDonald's commemorative history of the 1/4th Bn Gordon Highlanders [check it out], though confessedly a work in progress, is well worth a visit. Note especially the section containing the battalion's War Diary and the constant haemorrhaging of casualties, many of them identified by name.

The fighting will be allowed to subside on 26th September. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 28th September] The Mesopotamian Campaign [VI - The Capture of Kut-al-Amarah]: [Continued from 3rd June] Having spent three months consolidating Amarah [=<=3rd June] as a forward base Townshend's [3rd June<=1st November] augmented 6th (Poona) Division now advances and seizes Kut-al-Amarah [map, etc.], 100 miles further up the Tigris River [sub-thread continues at 5th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 28th September] The Salonika Expedition [II - The Final Proposal]: [Continued from 5th August] The Allied high commanders finally agree to create their second Aegean front through the port of Salonika [maplink at 5th August]. The following day Mahon's [6th August (two entries)<=>5th October] 10th (Irish) Division is warned to prepare for transfer to the Salonika Front, as also is 1er Régiment de Marche d'Afrique [map, etc.]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 29th September-12th October] The Third Battle of Artois [IV - The British Supporting Attacks (The Battle of Loos - The Haig Letter and Days #5 through #18)]: [Continued from 25th September] Angered by the (probably illusory) historic lost opportunity at Hill 70 on 25th September [=<=v.], and blaming it all on Sir John
French's [25th September<=>18th December] (what we would nowadays call) micro-management of the reserve divisions, Haig [25th September<=>18th December] complains directly to Kitchener [25th August<=>16th October], thereby initiating a process of enquiry which will eventually result in French's dismissal [=>18th December]. On the Loos battlefield, meanwhile, the next four days see the replacement of spent units with fresh. 12th (Eastern) Division [25th September<=>13th October] is committed in the Hohenzollern Redoubt sector, 46th (North Midland) Division [25th September<=>13th October] and the Guards Division are brought up alongside it, and 47th (2nd London) Division [<=25th September] replaces the Guards in the now-static defence line separating Loos from Hill 70 [sub-thread continues at 13th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 2nd-25th October] Islam in WW1 [XIV - The Pratap Mission Forced to Kill Time]: [Continued from 14th July] After nearly six months on the road the Pratap Mission is formally received in Kabul and accommodated as state guests at the palace of the Emir Habibullah Khan [<=17th April]. Here they will be kept waiting for three weeks while the Emir does the necessary political and military due diligence (including, more or less certainly, taking advice from British diplomats on what the British Empire can offer him instead) [sub-thread continues at 24th October ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Tuesday 5th October] The Mesopotamian Campaign [VII - A New Turkish Army]: [Continued from 28th September] The Turks reinforce and reorganise their troops south of Baghdad as Sixth Army. The main base is Mosul [map, etc.] and the commander is Nureddin Ibrahim Pasha [Wikipedia biography=>1st November] [sub-thread continues at 1st November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 5th October] The Salonika Campaign [III - Venizelos Resigns]: [Continued from 28th September] Following a sustained campaign to get Constantine I of Greece [5th August<=>1916 (30th August)] to commit the Greek Army in support of the Allied landings in Salonika the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos [5th August<=>1916 (30th August)] resigns and Alexandros Zaimis [<=5th August] is appointed in his place. The Greek Army will duly remain neutral through the winter of 1915-1916, and will remain so until the sensitive issue of Greek neutrality brings about the "Great Schism" [=>1916 (26th May)]. On the same day Mahon's [28th September<=>12th October] 10th (Irish) Division embarks at Moudros [maplink at 19th February] en route for Salonika, arriving there five days later [sub-thread continues at 12th October ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Tuesday 5th October] One of the replacements for 1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers' [25th September<=>24th November] losses in the Loos-en-Gohelle Offensive [<=25th September] is a 24-year-old subaltern named Bernard Adams [no convenient biography=>1916 (1st February)]. Until eventually killed in action at the Battle of Puisieux [=>1917 (26th February)] he will accumulate detailed diary notes on his experiences, which are then posthumously published to critical acclaim under the title "Nothing of Importance" (Adams, 1917 [Amazon]). [THREAD = WW1 INDIVIDUAL HISTORIES] [THREAD = WW1 REGIMENTAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Wednesday 6th October] The Armenian Genocide [VII - Further Discussions in the House of Lords]: [Continued from 13th September] The House of Lords hears the latest intelligence from Armenia. Further "exceedingly systematic" atrocities are mentioned (see Hansard, 19:994-1004 for details) [sub-thread continues at 15th December ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = THE TRUE CAUSES OF WAR]

1915 [Saturday 9th October] 49th (Edmonton) Battalion [3rd June<=>1916 (TBA)] joins 3rd Canadian Division [Wikipedia factsheet], presently assembling in France as part of Alderson's [13th
1915 [Thursday 7th-13th October] **The Invasion of Serbia [II - The Battle of Belgrade]**: [Continued from 6th September] On 7th October the German Eleventh Army under von Gallwitz [1914 (20th August)<=1916 (9th April)] and the Austro-Hungarian Third Army under Hermann von Kövesháza [Wikipedia biography], under the overall direction of von Mackensen [2nd May<=1916 (2nd May)], invade Serbia from the north, taking the Serbian capital, Belgrade, on 9th October [sub-thread continues at 14th October ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Monday 11th-16th October] **Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XLII - The Derby Scheme (Attestation Begins)]**: [Continued from 21st September] In order to attract the 3.3 million "slackers" identified by the summer's National Registration exercise [=15th July] Edward G. V. Stanley, 17th Earl of Derby [=1914 (24th August)] is appointed Director-General of Recruiting. As already explained [=15th July] the resulting "Derby Scheme" is based on a process of "attestation", that is to say, registration prior to enlistment. Registration begins on 16th October in local recruiting offices and each registrant is given a distinctive red crown armband to mark him out as no longer a slacker. Around the same time American Vitagraph's [=1898 (3rd July)] J. Stuart Blackton[ditto] releases a 90-minute feature drama entitled "The Battle Cry of Peace" [IMDB entry], in which the allegorical line is taken that pacifism is a sure route to getting invaded (hence the oxymoron of the title) [sub-thread continues at 14th October ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

********** "TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE"1 **********

1915 [Tuesday 12th October] **The Salonika Campaign [IV - Sarrail Arrives]**: [Continued from 5th October] Sarrail [5th August<=23rd November] arrives in Salonika to supervise its development as a bridgehead for the broader campaign northwards into Serbia via the Vardar valley through the mountainous Krivolak [map, etc.] area of (then Serbian) Macedonia. Unfortunately for the Allied strategists the Central Powers no longer have a soft, vulnerable, underbelly in this region following von Mackensen's [7th October<=1916 (5th January)] recent victories in Serbia [=7th October], Mahon's [5th October<=26th October] 10th (Irish) Division is ordered to move forward toward the Greek-Serbian border [the modern Greek-Macedonian border] around Lake Doiran [map, etc.] [sub-thread continues at 1916 (5th January) ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1These words from Edmonds' (1928) *Official History*.

********** A USELESS SLAUGHTER OF INFANTRY1 **********

1915 [Wednesday 13th-14th October] **The Third Battle of Artois [V - The British Supporting Attacks (The Battle of Loos - The North Midland Division Attacks)]**: [Continued from 29th September] The final substantive battle within the broader Loos-en-Gohelle Offensive [=25th September] takes place at the Hohenzollern Redoubt using XI Corps' recently arrived 46th (North Midland) Division [25th September<=1916 (1st July)] and 12th (Eastern) Division [29th September<=1916 (29th June)]. The attack goes in at 1400hr, captures some frontline positions, but then comes under such concentrated machine-gun fire that like all the others it is forced to go to ground and await nightfall. 46th Division alone records 3763 casualties, "mostly in the first ten minutes". The official histories regard the Loos offensive as over on 14th October [end of sub-thread], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
1915 [Thursday 14th October] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XLIII - Rules Are Rules]: [Continued from 11th October] Following recent allegations in The Times questions are raised in the House of Commons (Hansard, 74:1459-1463) concerning the censoring of professionally complimentary phrases concerning the "nerve, tenacity, and skill" of the German Army from a dispatch authored by the entirely trustworthy John Buchan [1st Baron Tweedsmuir] to the effect that the censorship followed "the usual practice" and had taken place at GHQ in France. Moreover the grounds for the redaction had been, he understood, the giving of unsafe operational detail, not praise for the enemy per se [sub-thread continues at 15th December ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS]

1915 [Thursday 14th October-9th November] The Invasion of Serbia [III - The Morava Offensive]: [Continued from 7th October] On 14th October Ferdinand I of Bulgaria supports the ongoing German/Austro-Hungarian offensive by committing his First Army under Kliment Boyadzhiev alongside them in the north while his Second Army under Georgi Todorov mounts a flanking attack into Macedonia [sub-thread continues at 10th November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 16th October] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XLIV - Hamilton Sacked]: [Continued from 21st September] Having presided over six months of largely unsuccessful and costly trench warfare, and with the issue of command competence suddenly top of the agenda in the War Cabinet thanks to both the Murdoch Affair and the Haig Letter, Hamilton is informed by a "Secret and Personal" telegram from Kitchener that he is to be replaced as Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force by [Sir] Charles Munro [1st Baronet]. He sails for England the following day [sub-thread continues at 7th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

RECOMMENDED READING: Hamilton (1920 [Project Gutenberg full text online]) covers his dismissal in detail, if interested. The work also includes details of the Murdoch Affair [<=21st September].

1915 [Monday 18th October-3rd November] The Italian Adriatic Front [IV - The Third Battle of the Isonzo River]: [Continued from 18th July] The Italians renew their offensive along the Isonzo/Soča River, but still make no progress [sub-thread continues at 10th November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Tuesday 19th October] Sir Edward Carson [24th May-1916 (10th July)] rescinds as Attorney General, superficially because of disagreements over the government's handling of the war in Serbia [<=14th October] we shall leave suspicious readers to browse for the alternative conspiracy theory - Ed.]. Explanations are demanded in the House of Lords the following day (Hansard, 19:1104-1108): was the resignation, in truth, a disagreement over Irish Home Rule, perhaps, etc. The questions are stone-walled, however, and Carson will be replaced on 3rd November by Frederick E. Smith [24th May-26th June]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Thursday 21st October] Egypt and the Canal Zone [II - The Beersheba Railway Opens]: [Continued from 26th January] After only nine months in the building the Ottoman/German Expeditionary Force opens a new 100-mile section of the Ottoman Railway from Ramla to Beersheba [sub-thread continues at 1916 (3rd August ...)]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Sunday 24th October] Islam in WW1 [XV - The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence (The British Offer the Arabs a Deal)]: [Continued from 2nd October] The latest secret despatch from Henry McMahon's [=14th July] to the Sharif of Mecca Hussein bin Ali [14th July<=>1916 (5th June)] includes the following caveat ..."The districts of Mersina and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo, cannot be said to be purely Arab, and must on that account be excepted from the proposed limits and boundaries. [...] Subject to the above modifications, Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs within the territories in the limits and boundaries proposed by the Sherif of Mecca."

The thrust of this paragraph is that the British are no longer offering the Arabs those parts of the Middle East which can justifiably be regarded as not "purely Arab", and these are therefore excluded from the ongoing promissory negotiations [sub-thread continues at 26th October ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Sunday 24th October] The East African Campaign [XIII - "Simson's Circus"¹ Back Afloat]: [Continued from 20th September] After their 3000-mile journey across the Belgian Congo HMS Mimi and Toutou [26th July<=>22nd December] arrive at Kalemie [maplink at 26th July] on the Belgian side of Lake Tanganyika. Of course before they can go into action Spicer-Simson [26th July<=>22nd December] has to put them back together again [sub-thread continues at 22nd December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

¹ASIDE: A semi-affectionate contemporary description of the expedition.

1915 [Tuesday 26th October] Islam in WW1 [XVI - The Pratap Mission Receives Audience]: [Continued from 24th October] Von Niedermayer [=17th April], von Hentig [17th April<=>1916 (24th January)], and Pratap [17th April<=>1st December] finally get their audience with Habibullah Khan [2nd October<=>1st December]. They present him with a letter of goodwill from Kaiser Wilhelm II [1914 (15th December)<=>1916 (18th January)] and one from the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed V [=17th April] inviting him to join his Jihad [=1914 (5th November)] by taking the war to the British in India. The Emir, however, has a number of (presumably well-rehearsed) searching questions about the practicality of either Empire delivering on its promises of assistance and it is agreed to hold further talks [sub-thread continues at 1st December ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Tuesday 26th October] The Salonika Expedition [V - Questions in the Lords]: [Continued from 12th October] Robert Reid, 1st Earl Loreburn [Wikipedia biography] asks whether the British involvement in Salonika has been approved by the Government's naval and military advisors. He is assured by Cabinet Member Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, 5th Marquess of Lansdowne [Wikipedia biography=>1916 (25th January)] that where "amateur strategists" are involved in decisions of this gravity they are indeed appropriately advised (Hansard, 20:18-43). In theatre, meanwhile, the vanguard units of Mahon's [<=12th October] 10th (Irish) Division reaches Lake Doiran¹ [maplink at 12th October] [sub-thread continues at 23rd November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
RECOMMENDED READING: For a vivid description of the transportation, logistical, and communication difficulties encountered on this advance we recommend this article from the Dublin Fusiliers website.

1915 [Saturday 30th October] Shellshock [XI - New Cases Analysed]: [Continued from 3rd September] Writing in the *Lancet*, the Canadian military physician A. P. Proctor [no convenient biography] publishes a report entitled "Three Cases of Concussion Aphasia", in which the primary clinical manifestation of three cases of shellshock was an "aphasia" - the loss of speech *without physical damage to the phonatory or articulatory mechanisms involved.*

ASIDE - CAUSES AND SUBTYPES OF APHASIA: By introducing the term "concussion aphasia" Proctor was adding a subtype of aphasia to an already well-established but highly technical clinical area [see Companion Resource, if interested in this sort of thing].

Of Proctor's three cases, one got better after a night out with the boys and the other two after a brief anaesthetisation [c.f., 1847 (8th March)] [sub-thread continues at 1916 (5th January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MILITARY MEDICINE AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE]

1915 [Sunday 31st October] To avoid exposing them to the rigours of a second European winter the two divisions of Willcocks' [25th September] I Indian Corps are withdrawn from the Western Front and begins the long process of trans-shipment to Basra for service instead in Mesopotamia. Around the same time an improved "Type B" Brodie helmet [=16th August] goes into production, using the significantly stronger Hadfield Steel [=1882]. Within six months a million such units will have been shipped to the front lines. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

1915 [Monday 1st-2nd November] The Second Battle of Agua Prieta: This battle takes place during the Mexican Civil War [Wikipedia factsheet] between a "Villista" column under the revolutionary Pancho Villa [1914 (3rd January)=1916 (9th March)] and the "Carrancista" garrison at Agua Prieta [map, etc.] under the loyalist Plutarco Calles [Wikipedia biography]. Villa's main attack is launched by his cavalry during the night of 1st/2nd November but a combination of searchlights, electrified barbed wire, land-mines, and machine guns rips it to pieces. Villa judges that the U.S. has improperly assisted Calles in preparing his defences and stages the Columbus Raid [=1916 (9th March)] by way of reprisal the following Spring. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]


1915 [Wednesday 10th November-4th December] The Invasion of Serbia [IV - The Kosovo Offensive]: [Continued from 14th October] Following its success in the Morava River [=14th October] Offensive, the Bulgarian First Army now advance toward Niš [map, etc.] (taken on 5th November) and Pristina [map, etc.] (taken on 24th November), and then capture Debar [map, etc.], on the Macedonia-Albania border, on 4th December. During the coming winter Peter I of Serbia [Wikipedia biography] will lead his people on a modern-day Exodus across Albania to the Adriatic coast. From here they will be evacuated by Allied ships to a safe haven on the island of Corfu, there to establish a government-in-exile [end of sub-thread (but see now Salonika Expedition at and after 23rd November ...)]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]
1915 [Wednesday 10th November-2nd December] **The Italian Adriatic Front [V - The Fourth Battle of the Isonzo River]:** [Continued from 18th October] The Italians renew their offensive along the Isonzo/Soča River [maplink at 23rd June], but still make no progress. Then the winter makes the region impassable anyway [sub-thread continues at 1916 (9th March)] ...

1916 (11th March) ... [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Friday 12th November or hereabouts] **Counter-Battery Science [VI - Bragg and Robinson Struggling]:** [Continued from 19th July] Having spent the summer evaluating French sound-ranging technology (specifically, the aforementioned **Bull-Weiss String Galvanometer** [15th January<=>1916 (11th March)], **Bragg** [19th July<=>1916 (15th February)] and **Robinson** [<=19th July] are finally able to identify that system's fundamental flaw. The problem lies with the sensitivity of the microphones used given the frequency of the sounds to be detected. Here is Van der Kloot (*op. cit.*, [<=19th July]) on the technicalities as they stand toward the end of 1915 ...

"The firing of cannon produces very low frequency sound waves: a field gun booms at 25Hz, and larger artillery pieces produce sound at 10Hz. The diaphragms on their microphones scarcely moved in response to such low tones, and hence the signal recorded by the string galvanometer was almost undetectable on the photographic film. It was especially frustrating because there was abundant energy in the sound waves from the guns. [...] Another problem was that high velocity guns make two sounds, a loud 'shell-crack' generated when the projectile breaks the sound barrier - loud, but useless for accurate gun location - followed by the dull, barely audible boom, the 'gun-wave'. The microphone diaphragm was still vibrating in response to the crack when the boom came, so the boom could not be distinguished on the film. They called this 'washout'. In contrast, the microphones were all too sensitive to rifle shots, buzzing insects, nearby bad language, and the like. They did not solve this problem for months" (pp276-277) [Sub-thread continues at 1916 (11th March)] ...

1915 [Sunday 14th November] **Czech/Slovak Nationalism [I - The Story So Far (Masaryk Stakes His Claim)]:** [New sub-thread] On 14th November 1915 the exiled Czech nationalist **Tomáš Masaryk** [Wikipedia biography], presently in exile in London, publishes a manifesto calling for an independent Czech-Slovak state. His proposal is well publicised in the British press because those two ethnically historical regions are part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with whom Britain is presently at war, and there is accordingly a divide-and-rule propaganda value - compare, for example, German moves to foment discord among the Muslims in the British Empire [see 2nd October 1914]

[sub-thread continues at 5th December 1917 ...], [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = THE COLD WAR IN THE MAKING]

1915 [Sunday 14th November] **The Senoussi (Western Desert) Campaign [III - The Battle of Sollum]:** [Continued from 19th May] This battle is fought as part of the broader Senoussi Campaign for control of the port of Sollum [map, etc.] on the Libya-Egypt border. The British outpost, massively outnumbered, withdraws 120 miles eastward to Mersa Matruh [map, etc.] [sub-thread continues at 25th December ...], [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Friday 19th November] **The Peace Ship [I - The Mission Conceived]:** [New sub-thread] The American industrialist **Henry Ford** [Wikipedia biography] is persuaded by one of his aides, the peace activist **Louis P. Lochner** [27th February<=>20th November], to take up **Rosika Schwimmer**’s [28th April<=>4th December] proposal at the Hague earlier in the year [<28th April] that the neutral countries should actively and continuously broker peace negotiations between the warring powers. Schwimmer's unique angle is that she has (or claims to have) promising diplomatic contacts in the relevant governments. Already sympathetic to the pacifist ideal Ford proceeds to charter cabins on SS Oscar
II [no convenient shipography=>24th November], due to sail for Oslo, Norway, in a few days [sub-thread continues at 24th November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]

1915 [Saturday 20th November] The Peace Ship [II - Ford Seeks Presidential Backing]: [Continued from 19th November] **Ford** [19th November<=24th November] and **Lochner** [<=19th November] now present their planned peace initiative to President **Wilson** [8th May<=4th December], asking for his official endorsement. Being advised that the Peace Ship has little chance of being taken seriously and even less chance of success¹, Wilson turns them down [sub-thread continues at 24th November ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]

¹ASIDE: On 7th December [=q.v.] Wilson is scheduled to deliver his Third Annual Message to Congress, and in it he will be asking for large increases in American military spending. We may safely presume that he was already working on this speech and did not want to confuse its Message by peace stunting at the same time.

1915 [Monday 22nd-24th November] The Mesopotamian Campaign [IX - The Battle of Ctesiphon]: [Continued from 1st November] This three-day-long battle is fought as part of the British/Indian advance up the Tigris River toward Baghdad between **Townshend's** [1st November<=7th December] augmented 6th (Poona) Division and the Ottoman garrison in and around Ctesiphon [= modern Salman Pak; **map, etc.**] under **Nureddin** [5th October<=7th December]. The defenders give as good as they get and by the third day Townshend's force has suffered some 40% casualties and is falling back toward Kut-al-Amara [**maplink at 28th September**] [sub-thread continues at 7th December ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

¹RECOMMENDED READING: The Dublin Fusiliers' experiences during this withdrawal are set out in this article.

1915 [Tuesday 23rd November-12th December] The Salonika Expedition [VI - The Expedition Forced Back]: [Continued from 26th October] With their armies now freed up by the retreat of the Serbian Army [<=10th November] the Central Powers now reinforce their Salonika Front, giving **Sarrail** [12th October<=1916 (4th March)] little choice but to withdraw his troops to a defensive perimeter around Salonika¹, there to await developments [sub-thread continues at 9th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 24th November] Siegfried Sassoon [29th May<=1916 (25th May)] is assigned from regimental reserve to 1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers [5th October<=1916 (1st January)] in the Festubert [**maplink at 1914** (10th October)] Sector. [THREAD = WW1 INDIVIDUAL HISTORIES]

********** "WE'RE GOING TO STOP THE WAR"! **********

1915 [Wednesday 24th November] The Peace Ship [III - The Mission Press Conference]: [Continued from 20th November] **Ford** [20th November<=4th December] calls a pre-sailing press conference. His lack of preparation now catches him out big time, however, as reporter after reporter exposes the woolliness of his plans. The **Detroit Free Press** even goes so far as to report: "Repeated questions disclosed not the slightest evidence that Mr. Ford has a definite plan as to what he is going to do when he gets to Europe" (quoted in Alvarado and Alvarado, 2001 [**Amazon**], p51) [sub-thread continues at 4th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]

¹ASIDE: This phrase from Henry Ford at this Press Conference.

1915 [Monday 29th November-4th December] 38th (Welsh) Division at War [II - Learning the Ropes (Shipping Out)]: [Continued from 1914 (19th September)] After a year or so in basic training the division parades at Crawley Down [**map, etc.**] for a ceremonial eve-of-sailing
review by Queen Mary and the Princess Royal (Dilworth, 2012). They then march out under load and in rain in the early hours of 1st December, passing via Winchester to Southampton Docks, a distance of 17 miles. Here they spend 24 hours waiting for their transport, disembarking at Le Havre at 0700hr on 3rd December, from where they are taken by rail to an encampment at Roquetaire [map, etc.], near St. Omer. Hughes (1982) provides some indicative numbers ...

"... by 6 December 1915, 526 officers; 15,447 other ranks; 1580 horses and mules; 526 horse-drawn vehicles; 515 bicycles; 70 lorries; 36 cars; 29 motor cycles and other paraphernalia of the division were safely delivered to a billeting area 10 miles south of St. Omer" (p41).

The division is then attached to Haking's [25th September<=1916 (19th July)] XI Corps. Its three brigades are now numbered 113th, 114th, and 115th, under Llewelyn A. E. Price-Williams, V.C. [Wikipedia biography], [Sir] Thomas O. Marden [Wikipedia biography], and Horatio J. Evans [no convenient biography], respectively, and the divisional commander is Sir Ivor Philipps [Wikipedia biography] (p41).

1915 [Wednesday 1st December] Islam in WW1 [XVII - Pratap Gets a Throne]: [Continued from 26th October] Faced with lack of progress getting Habibullah Khan [26th October<=1916 (24th January)] to bring Afghanistan into the war on the side of the Central Powers, Pratap [26th October<=1916 (24th January)] finally takes the bull by the horns and has himself declared President of a Provisional Government of India [sub-thread continues at next entry ...]. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Wednesday 1st December or hereabouts] Islam in WW1 [XVIII - The Arab Bureau (Founded)]: [Continued from preceding entry] Following a tour of duty in Cairo and London Sir Mark Sykes [8th April<=1916 (27th February)] proposes a new Foreign Office department, which he would head, charged with collating and analysing intelligence on the enemy's attempts to promote anti-British propaganda across the Islamic world, and working in close liaison with [Sir] Gilbert F. Clayton's [Wikipedia biography=1916 (24th January)] intelligence headquarters in Cairo. This necessarily means recognising the ambitions for independence amongst the Arabian provinces presently controlled by the Ottoman Empire, and promising them statehood if they rose in rebellion as British and French allies. As to what these new nation states might be called Sykes suggests resurrecting the old provincial names from Classical times, not least Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Palestine [sub-thread continues at 1916 (24th January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 GRAND STRATEGIES] [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Saturday 4th-13th December] The Peace Ship [IV - Oscar II Sets Sail]: [Continued from 24th November] Having already started to attract ridicule in the press Oscar II [24th November<=22nd December] sails from Hoboken, NJ, with Ford [24th November<=14th December] himself, plus 50 staff, 83 assorted peace delegates (including Rosika Schwimmer [19th November<=22nd December]), 57 reporters, and 18 invited students on board. The crossing is not entirely peaceful, with delegates bickering over what should be done when they arrive and reporters fighting for access to the vessels wireless telegraph. Not surprisingly the delegates become particularly factional when on 7th December they hear news of President Wilson's [20th November<=7th December] appeal to Congress for funds to expand America's Army and Navy. Some think that these proposals should be condemned as unacceptable warmongering, others that it is now only patriotic to back them (and, indeed, unpatriotic to continue with the Ford Mission at all). And then, to cap it all, the ship falls prey to an outbreak of influenza (one death), leading Ford to confine himself to his state-room [sub-thread continues at 18th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]
1915 [Sunday 5th-18th December] 38th (Welsh) Division at War [III - Learning the Ropes (St. Omer)]: [Continued from 29th November] The division spends a rainy two weeks at Roquetoire [maplink at 29th November]. Dilworth (2012) outlines their duties at this time as follows...

"[T]hey did short route-marches through the saturated countryside and platoon-drill and arms-drill behind billets [...]. Now with rifles to fix bayonets to, they practised bayonet-drill properly. On especially wet days, they assembled in a barn to hear lectures" (pp62-63) [sub-thread continues at 19th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 DIVISIONAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Tuesday 7th December] The "Preparedness" Committee [I - President Wilson Gets the Ball Rolling]: [New sub-thread] President Wilson [4th December<=1916 (9th March)] presents his Third Annual Message to Congress [full text online]. It includes specific proposals to expand America's Army from its present 108,008 officers and men to 141,843, an increase of some 31%. It also details a proposed programme of naval expansion for the period to 1921, in order to produce "a navy fitted to our needs and worthy of our traditions". Overall the theme is one of national "preparedness" [sub-thread continues from 1916 (28th May) as Economics, Social Confrontation, and War ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [7th December] The Flip Sides of Patriotism [I - Those Ungrateful Immigrants (Wilson's "Poison of Disloyalty" Speech)]: [New sub-thread] In the same speech, President Wilson also lays into against America's immigrant communities, setting the agenda for what will go on to become the 1917 Espionage Act [see 14th April 1917]. Here is the nub of his complaint ...

"There are citizens of the United States, I blush to admit, born under other flags but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to the full freedom and opportunity of America, who have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life: who have sought to bring the authority and good name of our Government into contempt, to destroy our industries wherever they thought it effective for their vindictive purposes to strike at them, and to debase our politics to the uses of foreign intrigue ... I urge you to enact such laws at the earliest possible moment and feel that in doing so I am urging you to do nothing less than save the honour and self-respect of the nation. Such creatures of passion, disloyalty, and anarchy must be crushed out. They are not many, but they are infinitely malignant, and the hand of our power should close over them at once. They have formed plots to destroy property, they have entered into conspiracies against the neutrality of the Government, they have sought to pry into every confidential transaction of the Government in order to serve interests alien to our own."

[Sub-thread continues at 14th April 1917 ...]

[THREAD = THE DEATH OF DEMOCRACY] [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS] [THREAD = THE COGNITIVE SCIENCE OF POLITICAL PROPAGANDA]

1915 [Tuesday 7th December] The Mesopotamian Campaign [X - The Siege of Kut-al-Amara]: [Continued from 22nd November] Having snapped at the heels of the retreating British ever since the Battle of Ctesiphon [<=22nd November] Nureddin's [<=22nd November] Turkish Sixth Army finally surrounds Townshend's [22nd November<=1916 (6th January)] augmented 6th (Poona) Division at Kut-al-Amara [maplink at 28th September]. He then proceeds to prepare north-and-south-facing defences to the south of the town in order to prevent either a break-out by Townshend or a break-in by a British relief column. On 15th December the German Field Marshall Wilhelm von der Goltz [1897 (24th March)<=1916 (6th January)] and his staff arrive in Baghdad to take command (much to the chagrin of Nureddin who feels he has been doing a pretty good job on his own up until now) [sub-thread continues at 1916 (6th January) ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

***** "LIKE A THUNDERBOLT FROM A CLEAR BLUE SKY"1 *****
1915 [Tuesday 7th December] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XLV - Kitchener Calls the Whole Thing Off]: [Continued from 16th October] After due consultation with the British War Cabinet Kitchener [16th October<=9th December] finally approves a program of withdrawal from the Gallipoli peninsula. On 11th December 53rd (Welsh) Division [1st August<=1916 (1st January)] is one of the first divisions out, being transported to Alexandria for service in Egypt [sub-thread continues at 12th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1ASIDE: This phrase from the commander of the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade [Sir] John Monash [Wikipedia biography], upon hearing the news, who sees the withdrawal as dishonouring the 6000/20,000 Australians already killed/wounded in that theatre of war.

1915 [Thursday 9th December] The Salonika Expedition [VII - The Mission Re-Scope]: [Continued from 23rd November] Now that they are facing far more powerful Central Powers forces than they had anticipated the Entente leaders hold strategy talks in Paris. The most senior representatives are the British Secretary of State for War Kitchener [7th December<=1916 (26th May)], the British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey [5th February<=1916 (9th May)], the (only recently elected) French Prime Minister Aristide Briand [Wikipedia biography], and Joffre [25th September<=next entry]. The outcome is that the best course of action is to sit out the winter in the Salonika Perimeter and to use the breathing space to evacuate and then rebuild the Serbian Army [=10th November] [sub-thread continues at 1916 (5th January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Thursday 9th December] The Schneider Company's [<=???th January] prototype tank is tested on the battlefields of Souain-Perthes-lès-Hurlus [map, etc.]. The machine proves impressive over terrain broken up by shellfire but - due to its short wheelbase - finds it difficult to cross trenches without "ditching" [= nose-diving in]. One of the officers observing, the artilleryman Jean Estienne [Wikipedia biography] (14th July) then oversees a number of design changes and, in its improved form, Joffre [preceding entry<=1916 (4th March)] will on 25th February 1916 place an order with Schneider for a production run of 400 machines. [THREAD = WW1 ARMoured FIGHTING VEHICLES]

1915 [Sunday 12th-20th December] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XLVI - Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove Evacuated]: [Continued from 7th December] Between 19th and 20th December 13th (Western) Division [6th August<=1916 (7th January)] is evacuated from Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove and re-landed at Cape Helles to act as rearguard for the evacuation there. In the eight months of the Gallipoli Campaign the Australians have lost 8708 men killed, and the New Zealanders 2721. Their cemeteries attract transgenerational mourners and war tourists to this day [sub-thread continues at 21st December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 15th December] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XLIV - The Derby Scheme (Attestation Closes)]: [Continued from 14th October] This is the last day for attestation under the Derby Scheme [=11th October]. When the sums are finally done it will emerge that 215,000 men have enlisted, and a further 2,185,000 attested. Since this still leaves many slackers unaccounted for the scheme will be re-opened in the new year [...] [sub-thread continues at 21st December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 15th December] The Armenian Genocide [VIII - The Tally to Date]: [Continued from 6th October] Today's New York Times reports that the Turkish "policy of extermination" against the Armenians has now killed or exiled a million people [sub-thread continues at 1916 (23rd March) ...]. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD] [THREAD = THE TRUE CAUSES OF WAR]
1915 [Saturday 18th December] The Peace Ship [V - Oscar II Arrives Oslo]: [Continued from 4th December] Oscar II now docks at Oslo but her arrival is a bit of an anti-climax because Ford [4th December => 22nd December] and many of the delegates are still sick. Indeed Ford will be unable to appear in public until 22nd December [sub-thread continues at 22nd December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 18th December] Following the three months of enquiry initiated during the Loos-en-Gohelle Offensive [<= 25th September] the British War Cabinet finally approves Haig [29th September => 1916 (26th May)] as a replacement for Sir John French [29th September => 1916 (24th April)] as Commander-in-Chief of the B.E.F. Five days later Sir William Robertson [1st Baronet] takes over as Chief of the Imperial General Staff. [THREAD = THE WW1 ARMIES (ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS)]

********** "OLD WHISKEY-SODDEN MILITIAMEN"1 **********


1ASIDE: This phrase attributed to the new corps commander - a staunch Unionist - upon inspecting his new arrivals - Irish Nationalists fighting (and about to die in some numbers) for an empire which may or may not be planning to renege on promises to give them home rule [=> 1916 (24th April)].

1915 [Sunday 19th December] The Heads of the Valleys Battalion at Elverdinge: Having been at Elverdinge [maplink at 2nd September] for over three months 3rd Bn Monmouthshire Regiment [2nd September => 1916 (14th February)] suddenly finds itself on the receiving end of a surprise German gas attack, and suffers 40 casualties. [THREAD = WW1 REGIMENTAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Sunday 19th-27th December] 38th (Welsh) Division at War [IV - Learning the Ropes (Riez Bailleul)]. [Continued from 5th December] On 19th December the division moves on to Riez Bailleul, some two miles south of Estaires [map, etc.], where it is attached to the resident regular division for mentoring prior to relieving them in the line. This places the division in the Reserve Line, a mile and a half behind the firing line, and, as such, it is exposed to long-range German shelling for the first time. That night the division's twelve battalions start the complex rotation between reserve, support, and firing lines, in two-, three-, or four-day stints, until by 26th December the hand-holding is over and the out-going division is withdrawn, leaving 38th Division to its own devices [sub-thread continues at 28th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 DIVISIONAL HISTORIES]

********** "A CLEVER ADVERTISEMENT"1 **********

1915 [Monday 20th December] The latest offering from the Charles Urban Trading Company [<= 21st September] is "Britain Prepared" [IMDb entry], a 165-minute celebration of Britain's war effort covering such activities as munitions manufacture, launching ships, and training for trench warfare. Charles Urban [= 1903 (17th August)] will personally promote the film in the U.S. during 1916, as part of MI7's [= 1902 (31st May [ASIDE])] efforts to swing American public opinion against Germany. [THREAD = THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS]

1ASIDE: Contemporary German description.

1915 [Tuesday 21st-22nd December] Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XLV - Asquith Appeals to Unmarried Men]: [Continued from 15th December] Prime Minister
Asquith moves a motion in the House of Commons calling for a million-man increase in Britain's land forces (Hansard 77:213-437 and 536-574). The ensuing debate dwells at length on the less-than-total success of the Derby Scheme and the consequent likelihood that some form of conscription system is going to be needed to replace it before finally carrying the motion [sub-thread continues at 25th December ...]. [THREAD = WW1 RECRUITMENT]

1915 [Tuesday 21st-22nd December] The Dardanelles and Gallipoli Campaigns [XLVII - More Questions in the House]: [Continued from 12th December] In the same debate [preceeding entry] the Member of Parliament for Waterford City and Leader of the (moderate) Irish Parliamentary Party, John Redmond [1914 (21st August)<=1916 (2nd March)] expresses "the deepest sense of thankfulness" that the Expeditionary Force has been successfully evacuated from Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove [12th December], but wonders when Hamilton's [16th October] report on the "ghastly failure" of those landings will be received. Prime Minister Asquith [preceding entry] replies that said despatch has only been received "in the last few hours" [sub-thread continues at 1916 (7th January)] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 22nd December] The Chinese Empire (Briefly) Reborn: Having dissolved Sun Yat-Sen's [1914 (8th August)<=1915 (25th August)] Kuomintang [1913 (1st September)], Yuan Shikai [1911 (29th December)<=d. 1916 (6th June)] proclaims himself Emperor. His reign is short-lived and fails to unite the provincial warlords behind him. [THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD]

1915 [Wednesday 22nd-26th December] The East African Campaign [XIV - The Battle of Lake Tanganyika]: [Continued from 24th October] Spicer-Simson's [24th October<=1916 (8th February)] HMS Mimi and Toutou [24th October<=1916 (8th February)] are finally ready for operations and on 26th December manage to damage and then put a boarding party onto the German patrol boat SMS Kingani [Wikipedia shipography]. She is duly repaired and taken into the Royal Navy as HMS Fifi [sub-thread continues at 1916 (8th February)] [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Wednesday 22nd-23rd December] The Peace Ship [VI - Ford's Final Press Conference]: [Continued from 18th December] Having lost a number of days to sickness Ford [14th December], no longer backed by the pro-President Wilson faction amongst his delegates of course, is finally well enough to hold a press conference. Again, however, he wastes the opportunity by demonstrating no little ignorance of the complexity of the problems to be overcome. The following day he takes passage back to the U.S. in another ship leaving the remaining peace campaigners to their own devices (he maintains their funding, however). They make some minor progress over the coming two months and Rosika Schwimmer [4th December<=1916 (1st June)] finally has her ideas recognised when she helps to found the International Committee for Immediate Mediation the following year [1916 (1st June)] [end of sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 PACIFISM]

********** CHRISTMAS IS CANCELLED **********

1915 [Friday 24th-25th December] There is no significant Christmas Truce on the Western Front this year, (a) because it is now highly frowned upon to fraternize with those you have been sent to kill, (b) because in most sectors specific orders for specific raids and bombardments have been given, and (c) because there is in any event precious little to celebrate, for in too many soldiers' parlours from Sligo to Siberia the festive ribboning this year is black. Nevertheless ...

CAMEO - ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS AT LAVENTIE: Soldiers from the 15th Bn (London Welsh) Royal Welch Fusiliers [1914 (1st November)<=1916 (TBA)], newly arrived in
the front line, will later report having had an impromptu kick-about in Nomansland with the Germans opposite them - check out Bertie Felstead [Wikipedia biography] d. 2001 (22nd July) aged 106. [THREAD = NONE]

1915 [Saturday 25th December] **The Senoussi (Western Desert) Campaign [IV - The Battle of Mersa Matruh]:** [Continued from 20th November] Around this time the British stage a number of flying column raids as part of the broader Senoussi Campaign for control of the desert oases south-westward of Mersa Matruh [maplink at 14th November]. Too lightly armed the Senoussi withdraw their forward base to B'ir Halazin [use the Sollum maplink at 14th November and look 50 miles into the desert to the west-south-west] [sub-thread continues at 1916 (23rd January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 MAJOR BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS]

1915 [Saturday 25th December] **Censorship, Propaganda, and Recruitment [XLVI - Dilution of Labour]:** [Continued from 21st December] Britain's "best-paid Munitions worker" Lloyd George [20th December - 1916 (4th January)] makes a speech on "dilution" at St. Andrew's Halls, Glasgow, in which he attempts (unsuccessfully) to convince Clydeside's militant trades unionists that dilution is a perfectly reasonable - eminently Socialist, even - way of increasing production for the benefit, ultimately, of the brothers, sons, and neighbours of the audience, who are presently - on Christmas morning - risking their lives in the trenches. The Clydesiders, however, give him a very hard time of it and interrupt continuously. Their point, as a militant but rather traditionalist workforce, is that more fool they, for nothing can ever justify workers killing workers for profit's sake. Eventually the meeting breaks up in confusion and the press is reduced to printing a highly sanitised version of the proceedings from Lloyd George's speech (The Times, 27th December). The Independent Labour Party newspaper, Forward [no convenient factsheet], then responds by printing what actually happened [full text online at http://sites.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/de/120c.html - well worth a read!], and gets itself closed down under the Defence of the Realm Act for its troubles! The Welsh editorial cartoonist Staniforth [1916 (21st November)] covers (the Establishment view of) the events in a cartoon on 28th December entitled "Equal to the Demand" [see it now], in which he depicts dilution as a bitter, but nonetheless necessary, national medicine [sub-thread continues at 1916 (4th January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 RECRUITMENT] [THREAD = WW1 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION] 1

**ASIDE:** This phrase from *The Worker*, the Clyde Workers' Committee's house journal, in adding its own report a few days later.

1915 [Tuesday 28th December-1916 (6th January)] **38th (Welsh) Division at War [V - Learning the Ropes (Merville)]:** [Continued from 19th December] On 28th December the division moves out of the line to Merville [map, etc.], where it undergoes further training [sub-thread continues at 1916 (7th January) ...]. [THREAD = WW1 DIVISIONAL HISTORIES]

1915 [Tuesday 28th December] **German Sabotage in the U.S. [VI - Von Papen Sent Packing]:** [Continued from 1st July] The German diplomat Franz von Papen [Wikipedia biography] is expelled from the United States for suspected complicity in the German sabotage campaign this year [end of German Sabotage in the U.S. sub-thread]. [THREAD = WW1 ESPIONAGE AND INTELLIGENCE]

1916 [Saturday 1st January] **Present Location of Welsh Units:** Here is the status of the British Army's essentially Welsh units at the end of the 17th month of the war ... ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS (the ancestral 23rd Regiment of Foot) [<=1881 (1st July)]

1st Bn is in France with 7th Division. 2nd Bn is in France with 27th Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, and 17th Bn are ...
earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The first line territorial battalion 1/4th Bn is in France with 1st Division. The remaining three first line territorial battalions, namely 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, are with 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, and have just been evacuated from Suvla Bay and shipped to Alexandria for service in Egypt [<=7th December].

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS (the ancestral 24th Regiment of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 1st Division. 2nd Bn is presently with 29th Division in the thick of the fighting at Gallipoli. Of the nine service battalions so far created 4th Bn is with 13th Division and is presently covering the Helles Front evacuation [=>1916 (7th January)], whilst 10th Bn and 11th Bn are earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division.

THE WELCH REGIMENT (the ancestral 41st and 69th Regiments of Foot [<=1881 (1st July)])
1st Bn is in France with 28th Division. 2nd Bn is in France with 1st Division. Of the twelve service battalions so far created 8th Bn is in Gallipoli with 13th Division and is presently covering the Helles Front evacuation [=>1916 (7th January)], 9th Bn has just gone to France with 19th (Western) Division, and 10th Bn, 13th Bn, 14th Bn, 15th Bn, 16th Bn, 18th Bn, and 19th Bn are all earmarked for 38th (Welsh) [New Army] Division. The WR’s four first line territorial battalions, namely 1/4th Bn, 1/5th Bn, 1/6th Bn, and 1/7th Bn, are with 53rd (Welsh) [Territorial] Division, and have just been evacuated from Suvla Bay and shipped to Alexandria for service in Egypt [<=7th December].

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE REGIMENT
2nd Bn is in France with 4th Division. 1st and 3rd Bn are in France with 28th Division.

THE WELSH GUARDS REGIMENT
1st Bn [1st February<=17th August] is still with the Guards Division in France.

*************** END OF MONTHLY UPDATE, DECEMBER 1915 ********************
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