on the move. The 'stunt' is secret; the night pitch black; and excitement fills the air as we lead our horses to the river for water. We fill our water-bottles to the brim, as we are told we will not strike water again for at least 36 hours. On all sides troops and transport are moving quickly and quietly out on the black and silent desert.

"Straight out from the river we move, following no track or road, but keeping close up to those in front. About midnight it turns very cold and we endeavour to keep warm by running alongside our horses. Hour after hour we plod silently on into the darkness. Strict orders have been issued about smoking, talking, etc.; soon we get whispers of our approach to the enemy lines, and our blood begins to tingle with suppressed excitement. We wind in and out amongst hundreds of hillocks. They are only small, perhaps 100 to 150 feet high, but afford excellent cover for a secret column. About 3.30 a.m. the officer in charge of our column knows we have gone far enough, and decides to halt and bivouac for what is left of the night. Everyone is dead beat, so, after driving in a peg to tie our horses to, we lie down and sleep the sleep of the just, behind our faithful steeds. The tired horses are not restless, so we sleep on till exactly 5.30 a.m., when we are awakened to stand to, ready to move. 4 p.m. finds our position unchanged, but over the hill things are different. Dawn had brought the infantry out of their positions and, in conjunction with the artillery, they had given 'Johnnie' (the Turk) the surprise of his life.

"Then on we go across the scene of the recent heavy battle, where but a few hours ago the Turk was securely entrenched, apparently with no thought of an enemy within miles; now it is different. Lines of trenches and gun-pits are torn to pieces; wagons and guns are shattered, the occupants either in aimless retreat or being hastily taken prisoner. Stretcher-bearers are hard at work on every side; but we are past all this very soon, for time is short and we must keep up with the advanced line.

"A couple of hours' travelling finds us still among the hills, which are chiefly composed of limestone and fairly rugged. Water is very scarce, but, as the horses must have some or else we will have to retreat, the search for it is very keen. Approaching the river we find the cliffs very high and only one road leading down to it, so we take this and consider ourselves very fortunate. We are just nearing the water's edge, and the horses, who scent it in the darkness, starting to become restless, when suddenly our smug satisfaction is rudely shattered. From the opposite bank comes a deafening roar and a spurt of flame. Our horses scatter in all directions when the first couple of shells burst, and back we go at full speed out of range.

"But water we must have, and search parties go out in all directions in Fords, on horseback, and on foot. About midnight we come across some in a hollow in the rocks, but it is unfit for use. The horses are parched and drink their fill. We will have still further to conserve our supply. Next thing was to find our way back to the unit, no easy matter after eight hours looking for water. But the 'boggage' had been working hard and a dixie for 'char' was on the boil.

"Once again we stretch our weary limbs beneath the stars, but our dreams are short and sweet. 4.30 a.m. and four of us are taken off the station to join a flying column. Six Ford cars and a wireless set form
our outfit, and we are to be known as No. 39. About noon we catch up to the column. A couple of hundred Fords are lined up, with a machine-gun and a couple of riflemen in each. They have just captured a river barge with some 9.2 guns manned by German marines. The advance had been so rapid that the Germans were unable to get away, and were not even quick enough to sink their craft.

"No time is lost—the small but formidable column moves off. We are not more than 400 rifles strong (including part of the Queen's Regiment), but there is a machine gun in every car, and we are headed by three batteries of armoured cars (24 in all). These cars, huge six-cylinder Rolle-Royces, covered with quarter-inch armour plating and weighing 4 tons, carry a machine-gun mounted on a swivel in a turret. Capable of going into action at 50 miles an hour, they are irresistible unless disabled by a direct hit. The roads of course, have to be good, but leading them is a scout (nicknamed "jackal"), mounted on a powerful motor bike, picking out the road, and he naturally is the first man to draw fire when approaching enemy lines.

"It was a wonderful advance. Everything along the road showed evident signs of wild panic. Ammunition and equipment of every kind was scattered on all sides, antiquated Turkish transport seemed stationary. Load after load was overtaken, and one and all offered us everything they had, so long as they kept their lives. On one occasion we came across a wagon-load of Turks, who had tipped everything out to make room for themselves, and were making poor broken-down horses go for their lives. After disarming them we motioned them to turn around and go back. This they did, and the last we saw of them was that they were galloping back along the road, yelling out and waving to us, and laughing and joking like a lot of schoolboys. They seemed to make the horses go faster than when previously trying to get away! All seemed pleased at getting off so lightly, and they were happy in the realisation that, so far as they were concerned, the war was now over and privations at an end, for as prisoners their food would be luxurious as compared with their own meagre ration of black bread and dates.

"Many were the 'spare colonels' along the road. One could not blame them for collaring their officers' clothing. Their own uniforms were nothing but rags, and their feet tied up with bags for boots. We found one chap in a beautiful braided jacket and the red striped trousers of a general, but his cap and boots spoilt the picture—and his face, with a month's heavy growth of beard, completely settled it!

"Earlier in the day we had sent an urgent message to H.Q. for spare parts, and a special aeroplane was detailed to bring them. The airman did not know where to find us, but he flew on and on until he spotted us along the river at Fuhaimah, where we bivouacked after a 90 miles' advance.

"As soon as we stopped, the cars were formed up ready to dash out at a moment's notice. Everyone had orders to dig in on account of snipers, but we operators were on duty, so could not. Our work only started when the column stopped, messages coming in galore from H.Q., as well as others being sent out reporting the day's operations. We had the 'wind up' properly as we were writing by the light of a hurricane lamp while everyone else was below ground. 3 a.m. found the bulk of our messages through, and the engine almost red-hot with incessant running. Then for the third night in succession we endeavoured to sneak in an odd snooze between 3.30 a.m. and 5.30 a.m. 7 a.m. finds us on the move again just as the cavalry come up, but we soon leave them behind. Before long 'Johnny' looms in sight again and has to be quietened down, but he is still panic-stricken and offers little resistance. Horses, camels, and men are scattered in all directions. Fatally demoralized, without communications or hope of organised resistance, the Turks cannot realise we have advanced so far.

"It was a sight never to be forgotten when, after advancing sixty miles on the morning of this second day, we captured Anah, the Turkish H.Q. and base on the Euphrates. About midday, coming over a hill, we suddenly dashed into the town, taking everyone by surprise, and capturing the wireless station, post office, telegraph, and all intact, together with several thousand Turks. Here also were a couple of generals with their wives and families, all of whom we took in charge. Huge dumps of S.A.A. and shells were found, and a few days later, when evacuating the place, our troops blew up two of them comprising some 30,000 shells. So it seemed that the rumours of a great projected Turkish offensive on the Euphrates had after all been true.

"In the meantime, on trying to get into wireless communication, we found we had advanced beyond the radius of our sets, so with our six Fords we raced back 100 miles full tilt to Haditha. We had thus left our own column without means of communication, but the cavalry (with No. 3 station attached), whom we passed on the way back, were travelling fast, and would soon catch it up.

"At Haditha, which we had captured yesterday, a hill ended abruptly near the river, and at the base of the cliffs were large caves which the Turks had closed up and used as store-rooms for ammunition. Before evacuating the village they had set fire to them. We well remembered the spot, for as we were passing through the day before we had only missed being blown up by a few yards. We had not stopped to find out the reason—the dirt from the explosion, and the sight of the road we had just passed over going up with a deafening roar, was enough for us. Even now the caves are still smouldering and dangerous. We erect on top of cliffs away from the caves and work two hours on and four off, night and day, relaying operation messages. Around us soon spring up huge ration dumps—our camp has grown into a vast supply base for British troops."
RESCUE OF COLONEL TENNANT AND MAJOR HOBART.

Meanwhile where were the armoured cars? Next day (March 29th) they covered another 73 miles—but the reason for that advance is one whose narration we cannot leave in better hands than Candler’s.

"On the 29th we were in Anah, and the pursuit was continued by armoured cars 73 miles along the Aleppo road. The Turks were exhausted and demoralised, and in most cases surrendering freely. But the O.C. of the column had an object nearer at heart than rounding up of more prisoners. It was known that somewhere not very far ahead, carried along in the confusion of the retreat, were two British Staff officers. Lieut.-Colonel Tennant, Director of Aviation, and Major Hobart, who had made a forced landing in the enemy’s lines at Khan Baghdadi on the evening of the 25th, were prisoners in the hands of the Turks, who were making every effort to get them away. They were travelling at night on the 25th, and on the evening of the 26th they were at Haditha when news of the Turkish defeat reached the post. In the confusion that prevailed the guard over them was not relaxed. They were pushed off in an Arab chaise at a gallop, and travelling through the night reached Anah early in the morning. Here they stayed only two hours, and were sent on by camel with a Tartar guard. In the afternoon four of our aeroplanes passed over, flying low. . . . The next stage, Nahiyeh, was reached on the night of the 27th. . . . The order stood that they were to be sent through to Aleppo without delay, and they left by camel the next morning. Soon after noon our aeroplanes passed them again and turned back. They had almost given up hope of release when our armoured cars arrived on the scene. The road running between the hill and the river was full of corners, and the appearance of the cars was sudden and dramatic. They came up stealthily on top gear with very little noise. The first intimation of them was the machine gun fire they opened on the guard. Happily, the two Englishmen were separated by twenty-five yards from their escort at the moment, and as the Tartars dived for cover, Tennant and Hobart ran for the car, which kept up a hot barrage over them all the time. I met them at Khan Baghdadi the next morning, the happiest men in Mesopotamia."

So ended the great Euphrates advance—the force’s most spectacular achievement.

WAR DIARY EXTRACT.

As narratives of No. 4 and No. 10 are not available, the Squadron war-diary of the operation is quoted:

1918.

Mar. 25th.—No. 11 reached Baghdad. No. 8 closed at Sadiyeh and marched with 6th Cav. Bde. to Baqubah. No. 4 left Sahliyeh 10.15 p.m., erected in the field, 12.55 a.m., 27th, and worked with No. 10. No. 3 joined Andrews’ Column, 9 p.m., and moved direction Khan Baghdadi. Column heavily shelled by enemy at midnight.

Mar. 26th.—No. 10 moved with 11th Cav. Bde. from Sahliyeh, erected at a point approximately midway between there and Khan Baghdadi and communicated with No. 4, 15th Div.

No. 10 dismantled 2 p.m., moved on and erected 4 p.m., dismantled 5.15 p.m., and moved into camp at Alus at 8 p.m. Erected and opened communication. Camp was attacked at 11.15 p.m. and station had to stand to after dismantling. No. 3 erected 5.30 p.m.

Mar. 27th.—No. 4 transferred from 15th Div. to Brookings’ Column. An extra station, manned by party sent to relieve men of 3 and 4 for furlough, was formed from the spare set being carrier in timber wagon, and was attached to Hogg’s Column (Armoured Cars) known as 39 and carried in three vans.

No. 10 re-erected at 12.35 a.m., worked until 6 a.m., then dismantled and moved with 11th Cav. Bde. Erected 10.50 a.m. Dismantled 1.25 p.m., and travelled approximately 30 miles, reaching camp 10 p.m. In camp No. 5 erected. No. 4 dismantled 6.10 p.m. and rejoined 15th Div. H.Q.

No. 3 moved with Andrews’ Column towards Haditha, but was then transferred to 11th Cav. Bde. to work with No. 10. Joining up at 12.45 p.m. moved with Cav. Bde. at 2 p.m., marched until 11.15 p.m., and bivouacked and erected station. No. 39 reached Fuhaimah 6 p.m. with motor column and established communication with No. 4. At 6.28 station was unable to transmit owing to key of fly-wheel breaking. Another was made but it gave way at 9.9 p.m. Fault again rectified and station worked until 6.45 a.m., when it dismantled and moved with Hogg’s Column, reached Anah, then returned 12th Bde., Haditha.

Mar. 28th.—No. 39 at Haditha. No. 10 moved with 11th Cav. Bde. at 6.20 a.m. and erected 7.40 a.m. at point near Fuhaimah, dismantled and erected in position which enabled them to relay between No. 3, which had gone on with Bde. and No. 4 at Baghdad. Conditions bad.

No. 3 remained when Cav. Bde. moved at 6.20 a.m. Station dismantled 7.50 a.m. and followed Bde. Passed No. 10 erected, reached Anah 1.45 p.m., erected but unable to communicate direct with No. 4 at Div. H.Q. Traffic had therefore to be routed via 10, 39 and 5 at Samarra.

Mar. 29th.—No. 3 now in communication with No. 4. No. 39 remains at Haditha.

Mar. 30th.—No. 3 closed 7 a.m. and arrived Fuhaimah 4 p.m. No. 10 remained at Fuhaimah. No. 39 at Haditha.

Mar. 31st.—No. 3 moved 7.30 a.m., and bivouacked near Haditha at 4 p.m. Land line—station not erected.

No. 10 joined 11th Cav. Bde., which had returned from Anah, marched to Alus—bivouacked—station not erected.

No. 39 remains at Haditha.
KUFA

But in the glory of the operations on the Upper Euphrates we must not forget the humble toilers on its lower reaches. An N.Z. station (No. 10) had left on Nov. 31st for Kufa, where it remained on duty until Feb. 9th, its place being taken by another N.Z. Station (No. 11), which, in its turn, was relieved by a 2nd Squadron station on March 20th. What was happening at Kufa?

Kufa was the main garrison for the Lower Euphrates; it maintained our prestige, and guaranteed peaceful cultivation and the supply of grain through Hillah. More important, however, was the fact that it could keep an eye on the activities of Kerbela and Ndjde, two holy cities of the Shemites. The inhabitants of these cities were mainly well-disposed towards the British, yet there was a proportion of irreconcilables. There was a small scuffle near Kufa on 12th of January. Fines were paid and all seemed to be going satisfactorily when, on 21st March, the Political Officer was murdered. A strict blockade was enforced until April 13th, when the delinquents were surrendered.

Yet as I write these notes my mind is turning, not to Kufa in 1918, but rather to Kufa in the month of Moharram (October) A.D. 680. Most of the Squadron witnessed the terrible lamentations, the scourgings and self-chastisements with which the memory of this infamous Moharram is celebrated every year. Here then is the tale, direct from Muir's Caliphate:

"On the morning of the fatal 10th, Al-Hosein drew out his little band for battle. There was a parley; and again he offered to retire, or be led to the presence of the Caliph. Finding all in vain, he alighted from his camel; and surrounded by his kinsmen, who stood firm for his defence, resolved to sell life dear. There was a moment of stillness. At length, one shot an arrow from the Kufan side, and amid the cries of the women and little ones, the unequal fight began. Arrows flew thick, and did their deadly work. Al-Kasim, the nephew of Al-Hosein, ten years of age, betrothed to his daughter Fatima, was early struck, and died in his uncle's arms. One after another, the sons and brothers, nephews and cousins of Al-Hosein fell before the shafts of the enemy. Some took shelter behind the camp. The reeds were set on fire, and the flames spreading to the tents added new horror to the scene. For long none dared attack Al-Hosein, and it was hoped he might even yet surrender. At last, driven by thirst, he sought the river bank. The enemy closed up, and he was cut off from his people. Al-Hosein, struck by an arrow, fell to the ground, and the cavalry trampled on his corpse.

"Not one of the band escaped. Fighting bravely, they left of the enemy more than their own number dead upon the field. Two sons of Al-Hosein perished early in the day; and at its close there lay amongst the dead six of his brothers, sons of 'Ali; two sons of his brother Al-Hassan; and six others, descendants of Abu Talib, 'Ali's father. The camp was plundered; but no indignity was offered to the survivors, mostly women and children, who were carried, together with the ghastly load of seventy trunkless heads to 'Obeidallah's palace. A thrill of horror ran through the crowd when the gory head of the Prophet's grandson was cast at 'Obeidallah's feet. Hard hearts were melted. As the governor turned the head roughly over with his staff . . . an aged voice was heard to cry: 'Gently! It is the Prophet's grandson. By the Lord! I have seen these very lips kissed by the blessed mouth of Mohamad' . . .

"The ladies and children were honourably received into the royal household, and sent eventually, with every comfort and consideration, to their Medina home. This destination, meant in kindness, turned out badly for the Umeiyad house. At Medina, their return caused a wild outburst of grief and lamentation. Everything around intensified the catastrophe. The desert dwellings inhabited heretofore by the family and kinsmen of the Prophet, the widowed ladies, the orphaned little ones—all added pathos to the cruel tale. That tale, heard yearly by groups of weeping pilgrims at the lips of the women and children who survived to tell it—and coloured, as oft repeated, with fresh and growing horrors—spread all over the Empire. The tragic scene was repeated in every household, and bred pity for the lineage of 'Ali. It soon was seen that the zeal of 'Obeidallah to suppress the rebellion of Al-Hosein had overshoot the mark. The claim of 'Ali's line to rule, heretofore unknown, or treated only with indifference, now struck deep into the heart of multitudes; and a cloud of indignation began to gather, which ere long burst upon the Dynasty which had caused the sacrilegious massacre. The tragedy of Kerbela determined not only the fate of the Caliphate, but of the Mohammedan kingdoms long after the Caliphate had waned and disappeared. Who that in the East has seen the wild and passionate grief with which, at each recurring anniversary, the Muslims of every land spend the live-long night, beating their breasts and vociferating unceasingly the frantic cry—Hasan Hosein! Hasan Hosein—in wailing cadence, can fail to recognise the fatal weapon, sharp and double-edged which the Umeiyad dynasty had thus allowed to fall into the hands of bitter enemies."
R.A.F. aerial view of Hit. At the top can be seen British trenches and the famous bitumen wells; below, the town itself. During the occupation No. 3 Station found quarters in the large caravanserais to the left. Inset shows Australians visiting the bitumen wells. It was from these pits that Nebuchadnezzar drew pitch for use in building Babylon.

British Headquarters at Hit. These two buildings on the waterfront can also be seen in the aeroplane picture above.

General view of Anah, showing armoured car and cavalry lines. The portrait of the Turkish officer was found in the post office; on the back is written in Turkish: "I have been wounded and am in hospital. I have had my photograph taken and send it to you for a remembrance."
On the upper Euphrates the force of the current is sufficiently strong to turn these great water-wheels. Each wheel has small cups on its outer circumference, which fill with water and are thus lifted to the level of the irrigation channel at the top.

No. 3 Station on trek. The white mule was captured from the Turks and used for carrying packats (water tanks).

No. 3 Station at Sahiliyeh—an afternoon swim.

General view of Sahiliyeh camp.

At Sahiliyeh—somebody's birthday.
December, 1917: A group of Partisans and attached squadron operators.

December, 1917: "8SD:" The Partisan's wireless station on trek.

Winter, 1917-8. No. 6 Station camped amongst the snows of Surkhadisa. In the background can be seen the steep slopes of the valley.

The beautiful mountain town of Karind, with a foreground of astrakhan sheep with their felt-coated Kurdish shepherd.
Tuz-Kirkuk Operations

Troops, including one of N.Z. packs, moving up to the rendezvous.

The village of Tauq, near Tuz.

Personnel of the N.Z. packs (Nos. 8, 10 and 11 Stations).

May 7th: The British arrive in Kirkuk. In the background can be seen the old town, connected with the Turkish quarter by a long arched bridge. Photograph supplied by a member of the Cavalry Divisional Signal Squadron.
TUZ—TAUQ KHANA—FATHA—KIRKUK

With the danger on the Euphrates averted, General Marshall could now turn his attention once more to the foot-hills north of the Diala. Here his men, who had been moved from Mosul south-eastward through Kirkuk to Dali Abbas, with a branch eastward through Kifri to Kasr-i-Shirin, and, while this latter section remained in enemy hands, the Persian line was threatened—and growing British interests in Persia, under the energetic attention of the Dunsterforce, could tolerate no such threats. It was therefore decided to simulate a converging attack on Kifri, and at the same time to strike definitely at the more distant and more important objectives of Tuz and of Kirkuk itself.

III. Corps operation orders, which came into force on the 16th of April, placed a larger reliance on wireless than ever before—invoking every Anzac station, with the exception of those on the Euphrates and in Persia. To General Egerton’s usual command were added the brigades of the Cavalry Division, but these were organised for independent action. Preliminary arrangements were slightly delayed by rain, but by the 20th all the troops were in their appointed positions.

Advanced H.Q. of the corps was brought up to Umr Mandan with its station (No. 1, from Baghdad); the 13th Division under General Cayley, accompanied by No. 10 station, had arrived at its rendezvous, Dali Abbas; while a few miles to the east, at Longridge Hill, were the 6th Cavalry Brigade (General Holland-Pryce), with Nos. 8 and 11 packs for “stepping up,” as well as a mixed force centreing round the 38th Infantry Brigade (No. 12 station—recently withdrawn from Khaniqin). The 7th Cavalry Brigade, with No. 7 Station, was at its winter camp at Sadieh; four days later it moved out on a feint attack against the Turkish Adhaim force at Tauq Khana. Two other columns, though without wireless, were also to be engaged, one advancing from Mirjana, another demonstrating on the Upper Diala; but later, when Kifri was found to be abandoned, these joined up with the main attacking force.

On the 24th the movement began. By a night march the 6th Cavalry Brigade proceeded to Umr Mandan and bridged the Lesser Naft, the infantry following up behind (Nahirin Kupri). Qarah Tappeh and the Abu Ghuraib position were abandoned by the Turks, and it was not till the 27th, after long night marches over rough country, that contact with hostile forces was finally established. After a particularly arduous day the 6th Cavalry was brought up the enemy position at Kulawund, S.E. of Tuz, and by making a fine charge was able to do considerable damage before rejoining the main body, four miles to the south. This move, completely deceiving the enemy, induced him to remain in position and even to bring up fresh troops. Next day, while the infantry forced the position, our stations spent their time in bivouac near Kulawund, and here one of them had the honour of being machine-gunned by an enemy aeroplane—its far mast being well shattered by bullets.

On the 29th the entire British force moved out across a tributary of the Ak Su, all units crossing together—a cable wagon laying cable—mobile gear of every kind. The advance was pushed on to within six miles of Tuz, where the whole column came under fire. Shrapnel burst incessantly over the heads of No. 8 and 11 stations, and they lost two horses, but in a few minutes, to the great comfort of all concerned, one of our batteries had galloped up and put the enemy guns out of action. Meanwhile the infantry were advancing in great waves in extended order, with the cavalry far on the flank. It was one of the few instances during the war where a pitched battle was fought in the open. The heaviest share of the work fell to the 38th Brigade (No. 12 Station), who soon captured a number of enemy guns. Then, seeing their chance, the cavalry charged in a great crescent, their swords flashing in the sunlight. No wonder that by dawn next morning every uncaptured Turk had left Tuz miles behind him! The wireless stations did good work all through the historic day, and especially when land line communication failed late in the afternoon. At nightfall camp was pitched near Tuz—a village under a slope of low hills and practically the northernmost limit of the date-palm.

Next day the troops had a well-earned rest while the armoured cars pushed on towards Tauq, where they were in time to stop the Turks blowing up the big fourteen-arch bridge. In signal circles the joke of the day was the fact that the Turks had not isolated their old telegraph line to Tuz, and our operators were able to intercept all the messages between Tauq and Turkish H.Q. The whole South Kurdish area was now free of Turks and thus the task set the troops was complete.

Bridge near Tauq, which the Turks failed to destroy in entirety.
Signal Hill, Taqz.

It is regretted that, especially as three of the stations were N.Z. ones, fuller details of the wireless share in the capture of Tuz are not available. However, it seems an opportune moment to quote another couple of pages from the Squadron war-diary—the official record kept by Squadron Headquarters.

SQUADRON DIARY DURING TÚZ OPERATIONS.

1918.

April 25th.—Nos. 11 and 8 left Longridge at 10.30 a.m. and bivouacked 4 p.m.—travelling 16 miles. No. 11 erected and exchanged signals with No. 1.

No. 12 moved to Ain Lailah. No. 3 moved with Aitkin’s Column to Kubeisa (Arab strafe). Ground very rocky and sand bags had to be used in place of pegs. No cipher officer with force. Communication maintained with Sahiliyeh. Medical officer condemned water as unfit for human consumption and supplies had to be brought from Sahiliyeh in vans—2 gallons per day issued.

No. 10 moved with 40th Bde. through Caley’s Pass and bivouacked. No. 7 dismantled, marched with 7th Cav. Bde. 8 a.m., 23rd, bivouacked and erected Dogamleh A 80; dismantled 7.30 a.m. and moved with Bde. halted 12.30 p.m., erected and passed traffic. Bde. moved leaving station erected. Station dismantled 2 p.m. and rejoined Bde.; reached Satha 4.35, bivouacked and erected.

Left Satha 8.0 a.m., 25th, and reached Tauq Khana; erected but unable pass traffic owing strong atmospherics. Limber horse died heat stroke.

April 26th.—At Tauq Khana. Orders received at 2 p.m. to proceed with main body, but control station No. 2 at Baqubah ordered to remain erected for clear line traffic. Dismantled 5.5 p.m. and joined Bde. near foothills. Compelled close at 11 p.m. owing heavy storm. Land line communication now being established No. 3 station is not required to work.

Nos. 11 and 8 moved at 3 a.m. No. 8 erected 5 a.m. but closed without working. No. 11 erected 6 a.m., passed traffic with No. 1, closed 7 a.m., followed Bde. and bivouacked 9 a.m. Both stations moved at midnight in heavy storm. No. 10 moved 5 a.m. and marched until 9.30 p.m., when station erected and passed traffic with No. 1. Dismantled and marched until 9 a.m., 27th.

No. 1 moved with Advanced III. Corps from Dali Abbas at 9 a.m. and reached Ain Lailah 4 p.m., erected and established communication.

No. 12 left Ain Lailah 4.45 a.m., moved through the pass about 14 miles. Erected at Qarah Tappeh until 4.30 p.m. Dismantled 6 p.m., moved 8 p.m. with column until 4.30 a.m., 27th. Heavy rain fell, which hampered transport. Erected 6.10 a.m., 27th, with 38th Bde. and continued into camp 6.30 p.m.

No. 7 opened 1.40 a.m., a heavy storm having compelled to close previous night. Dismantled 4.45 p.m., moved on a mile and erected 6.45 p.m. and passed traffic.

April 26th.—Nos. 11 and 8, which had moved at midnight 26th, marched until 6.30 a.m., 27th, when No. 11 erected and passed traffic to No. 1.

April 27th.—No. 8 marched on with Bde.

No. 11 dismantled 7.30 a.m., and rejoined Bde. 9.15 a.m., when the column was shelled again but without damage to station. At 11 a.m. No. 11 marched with Bde. H.Q. to new position, and were shelled again. They moved on again, but returned to camp, erecting 6.45 and remaining erected all night.

No. 8 erected in vicinity with portion of Bde. during the day, erecting 8 a.m. to twelve noon, also 3 p.m. till 5.30 p.m., when they had to dismantle to reach camp before dark, the main body having retired, leaving only escort with station.

April 28th.—No. 10 erected 4 a.m. and worked till 7 a.m., dismantled and marched till 2.30 a.m., 28th; erected and established communication. Dismantled 5.21 p.m., and marched with column in direction Tuz until 11.30 p.m., bivouacked, erected and passed traffic.

No. 12 moved 4.30 a.m. and travelled until noon, erected and passed traffic to Column A. Dismantled at 9 p.m., and stood by ready to move.

No. 8 accompanied Bde. when it moved at 6 a.m.

No. 11 was ordered to remain erected until 7.15 a.m., and then follow on. They rejoined Bde. at 8 a.m. They were heavily shelled whilst watering at 4 p.m., but without result. Station was ordered out of range to erect. Communication was es-

Turkish decoration awarded to those who served on Gallipoli and at Kut-el-Amara.
established with No. 1 Report centre and Columns B1 and B2.
No. 8 was not called upon to erect during the day. They bivouacked at 8.30 p.m.
No. 7 was dismantled at 7.30 a.m. and returned to Taq Khana and established
communication.
No. 10 dismantled 9.45 a.m., and marched to Tuz Khurmati, reaching there 12.55
p.m., erected and exchanged signals with No. 1 at Umr Mandan.
No. 12 went up supply at 4 a.m. Enemy
shelled column for two hours after dawn.
A pack horse of No. 8 was wounded by
shrapnel and had to be destroyed. Station
was erected at 7 a.m. and established com-
communication with column B2 and Nos. 1
and 2.
No. 11 had one pack horse slightly
wounded. Station was erected at 9 a.m.
and dismantled 3 p.m.
April 29th. No. 11, 10 bivouacked at 5 p.m.
Tuz Khurmati. No. 10 erected and estab-
lished communication.
No. 12 moved at 1 a.m. and travelled till
daylight. 28th Bde. and No. 12 were
heavily shelled. One horse was wounded and
had to be evacuated. Moved to posi-
tion on river about one mile from Tuz.

ADVANCE TO KIRKUK

Meanwhile orders were issued by G.H.Q. for
pressure to be continued and for the advance to be
pursued to Kirkuk, but some days had to be occupied in
the readjustment of the supply situation and in
awaiting a favourable change in the weather. At
last, on May 9th, the 6th cavalry got away; the ride
to Taqz (and its tower) was over a barren waste.
Tazah, a long village with many gardens and on a
stream of its own, was reached at noon on the 6th;
then, in the afternoon, the great mound-city of Kirkuk
(famed for its wine) was in sight and we were getting
another taste of enemy fire. The brigade spread out
into extended order and managed to avoid many
casualties, while the Turks were seen to be in full re-
treat, but as the infantry had not yet arrived the
cavalry retired half-way to Tazah, where they camped
in the dark, and its station erected its masts in con-
fusion.

At 11 o'clock rain came down—and so did the
wireless masts, blundered into by wandering mules.
Early next morning the operator on duty managed,
despite the faintness of signals, to get down a long
message from G.H.Q. that was much appreciated by
the cavalry commander. Kirkuk was reached by noon,
and as our horses floundered desperately in the mud,
we were welcomed by a twenty-minute shower of
epidemic hailstones.

In the town, starvation was as terrible as every-
where in territory captured from the Turks.
Kirkuk is a large straggling place set amid lemon,
mulberry, and pomegranate trees. It is divided by the
river and a long arched bridge—one side the ancient
mound crown with houses, and on the other the
Turkish quarter and large barracks. But let us quote
again from Candler:

"The operations on the Kirkuk side carried us into
a new country, and I think most of us enjoyed our
weeks in Kurdistan. In spite of the long marches which
we were requested to undertake, it was a fine
affair. The southern part of the Kurdistan plateau is fertile
and well watered from the hills. It is a country of
rolling downs, good crops, and excellent pasture. The
elevation of the plateau is a thousand feet above the
sea. Low ridges intersect it, rising two or three
hundred feet above the plain, but these are far apart,
and it is a land of wide horizons. In the first week of
May snow was still lying on the hills to the east. The
whole plateau was vivid green, the flora that of an
English June in corn lands. I was with the Cavalry
all the time, and wherever we halted there were
stretches of clover, then in bloom, and wild oats and
barley, splendid grazing ground for our horses. A fea-
ture of the landscape was the greyish, leafy, hubarb-leaved
glossosperm with the red flower. The corn was in
ear, not yet ripe, though we stayed in Kirkuk long
enough to reap it."

On the 10th the advance was resumed. The cavalry
forced the river near the baggage and, after passing
through the sixth of the older section of the town,
struck out across a beautiful countryside where every
stream had its water-wheel and flour mill. Nine aban-
doned German motor lorries were found along the
road. The brigade was in touch with the enemy.
Within 5 miles of Altun Kupri the 66th Battery R.H.A.
(abandoned yards from Nos. 8 and 11) came
under heavy fire. Fortunately, however, the great
majority of the shells were duds. We thereupon
re-
tired twelve miles to camp, by which time our horses
had done a good fifty miles. Next day we were back
in Kirkuk.

In the Kirkuk stunt over 3,000 prisoners were taken
at the expense of only 236 casualties on our side. A
fortnight was occupied in working up and destroying war
material, in political measures, and in the evacuation
of prisoners and refugees, after which withdrawal be-
came necessary, as all supply columns were required for
the Persian road. The G.H.Q. was not aware of the
work done by the wireless stations during these
operations—and credit they certainly deserved, in view
of the long distances covered, the numerous night
marches, the bad weather which prevailed throughout,
and for continuous good work carried out under fire.
The remarks as to work under fire apply especially to
No. 8 and the two N.Z. Packs (11 and 12)—all of
whom had horses shot. Credit must also be given to
the "stepping-up" work of Nos. 8 and 11 with the
cavalry—either one of which was practically always
erected and handling traffic, day and night, throughout
the operations. Long distances were covered:
at one time No. 11 was in touch with No. 2 Wagon at
Baqubah, 110 miles away, two-thirds of which was
over hilly country. No. 2, being on the III Corps H.Q.,
was the terminus for most of the traffic during the
stunt.

As before, the 7th Cavalry Brigade assisted the
advance by a feint attack—this time many miles away,
against the Turkish position astride the Fatha Gorge,
where the Tigris issues from the Jebel Hamrin.
No. 1 Wagon had moved with Advanced III. Corps
to Umr Mandan, thence to Tuz and Taqz. After the
capture of Kirkuk, it returned to the III. Corps camp
at Baqubah, only to be ordered out on the moun-
tain road again in a fortnight's time to relieve the
New Zealanders of No. 10 at Kifri. No. 6 Pack and No.
Wagon were on the Persian road at this time,
and Nos. 3 and 4 Packs on routine work at
Sahbiyeh and Ramadi on the Euphrates. No. 5
Wagon, at Samarra, the British front line on the
Tigris, handled a traffic for No. 7 Pack with the
7th Cavalry Brigade, and was then linked up with the Tuz
force through No. 1 Wagon.

*An account of this movement appears in the contribu-
tions section, page 164.
THE WIRELESS TRAINING SCHOOL,
MOORE PARK, N.S.W.

An appropriate opportunity now presents itself to make a brief reference to the inauguration and development of the Wireless Training School, at the Engineer Depot, Moore Park, Sydney.

Until the middle of 1915, N.S.W. reinforcements for engineer, signal, and wireless units were sent to the Signal School at Kiama, and, after a purely general training, to the Engineer Depot in batches, according to prospective requirements, before they were due to embark. Here an attempt was made to specialise their training, but through lack of time and facilities, it was almost impossible to give them more than a cursory finishing touch. This state of affairs was, to say the least, most unsatisfactory, particularly with the operating side of the technical units. In 1915, another important weakness lay in the fact that the right type of man was not forthcoming in sufficient numbers, many trained telegraph and wireless operators being drafted to the infantry and other non-technical units without due regard to their specialised knowledge. Even when such men specially sought a transfer to the Signal School or to the Engineer Depot, or when those units made representations for them, the applications were in the majority of cases refused. Nevertheless, it must in fairness be stated that, owing to the large number of men required for general reinforcements, the authorities were forced to take all they could for the infantry. In many cases, too, technical men themselves did not wish to join technical units.

Eventually, however, the call for reinforcements became such a heavy drain on the resources of the Signal School that half-trained men, technically unfitted for service abroad, began to reach the Depot.

In consequence the Depot Commandant obtained sanction for the part-time services of a supervising officer to select men for the signal and wireless units, and to report on the qualifications of the material available. Captain Payne, an able and experienced Citizen Force officer, then associated with the firm known as Amalgamated Wireless, was chosen for the task, and visiting Moore Park one afternoon each week, he laid down a scheme of instruction to be carried out by the N.C.O.-in-charge, and allotted the personnel of reinforcements.

Although this undoubtedly represented an advance in the right direction, it was still an imperfect arrangement, and Payne, therefore, evolved the idea of a central Wireless Training School for the Commonwealth. He suggested that suitable men, chosen from the signal schools in each State, should be transferred to Moore Park for a period of six months, during which time they would undergo a training specially adapted to future requirements in the field, and, so that he could have the very best material for his purpose, he required the right to call and obtain any particular individual.

Fortunately these proposals were approved, and, under his command, the Wireless Training School grew rapidly, the standard of the trainees soon reaching a high level both from technical and general points of view.* In addition, a spirit of camaraderie and pride of unit were developed and fostered that augured well for the future. Henceforward the units in the field, were, generally speaking, certain of getting trained reinforcements, capable of taking their place in the day’s work without delay, and on that account the School must have been of particular interest to them. The School was also the birthplace of two complete units, the Cavalry Division Signal Squadron and the Light Motor Wireless Sections, the former being organised and taken to the front by Captain Payne himself, who lost his life within a few months of arriving in Mesopotamia.

The importance of the work of the School may be gauged from the fact that over 3,000 ranks passed through it during its two years of war-time existence. Of these, eight officers and four hundred and eighty-one men were sent to Mesopotamia; six officers and eleven hundred and twenty-five to Palestine (for the Australian Wireless Section, the N.S.W. Cable Section, the Anzac Signal Squadron, the A.M.D. Signal Squadron, and the Australian Airline Section); and three officers and approximately fourteen hundred men to the five divisional signal companies in France.

There is no doubt that the Engineer Depot will always find a warm spot in the hearts of the men who completed their training there, for, although the discipline was strict, the right spirit existed among the members of the School, with the result that all worked wholeheartedly and took a personal interest in its success.

*The training commenced with a thorough grounding in general signal work—buzzer, flags, lamps and helio and then progressed through theoretical lectures on wireless and internal combustion engines to actual field practice on standard pack sets. Where time permitted bivouacs were organised; parties of men were despatched on trek in different directions, keeping in touch with each other and with headquarters by helio and wireless. Some of these parties covered more than a hundred and fifty miles.

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THE 1st AUSTRALIAN CAVALRY DIVISIONAL SIGNAL SQUADRON

It will be remembered that, at the end of 1916, General Maude organized his cavalry brigades into a single division; but he was faced with a distinct shortage of technical troops. Accordingly, in mid-January the War Office asked the Australian and New Zealand Governments whether they would be willing jointly to supply a signal squadron and a cable section for service in Mesopotamia, together with the necessary reinforcements. New Zealand, however, was unable to assist, being already fully occupied in keeping up to full strength her units in France and Palestine; and thus a fortnight afterwards the British Government intimated that the cable section would be provided by Britain, but "War Office hopes that the Commonwealth Government may find it practicable to provide Cavalry Signal Squadron." The Australian authorities cabled that the personnel of a signal squadron would be raised without delay.

So it happened that a few weeks later a rumour caused a stir in the Wireless School at Moore Park (N.S. Wales), a new unit was to be formed "for special service," and would at an early date leave for parts unknown. The atmosphere was at once full of suspense and expectation, and humourists and the "furphy-mongers" naturally made the most of it. Among the operators at buzzer practice, with the mechanics clustered round the "engines," and even among "the gentlemen of independent means" peeling onions and scrubbing dixies, there was now but one topic of conversation.

The rumour was no longer a mystery by next morning's early parade. Though it was taken for granted that everyone in the school was to be included in the new unit, details as to its personnel were not made available—at any rate not until after the usual "marathon" round Centennial Park, when those who had fallen out of the run learned that they had also "fallen out" of the unit. These short-winded aspirants promptly retorted with subite remarks as to the repute of an organization which demanded, as a qualification for its members, the ability to run. In camp tests were immediately carried out in helio and buzzer-work, and in flag-wagging. Then on the 6th of March, 1917, a new marker appeared on the parade ground, a new call was issued, and a new squadron went about its duties, still, however, with an air of uncertainty. Again the more imaginative regaled their fellows with tales of the squadron's destination—its future movements varied at least twice a day—but these "furphies" had now to be especially well told for the troops to take any notice of them. An issue of light-weight uniforms and pith helmets promptly earned for the new unit the sobriquet—"The Tiger Hunters."

In order to have a thorough training the squadron went into bivouac first at Loftus and then at Newport, and from these points established communication with the Moore Park Depot by wireless, flags, helio, signal lamp (at night), and by motor-cycle despatch. Very soon the efficient grounding received at depot was amply demonstrated.

EMBARKATION.

As embarkation-time approached, many were the false alarms that cropped up: on one occasion, after the usual farewells, the unit marched down to Circular Quay, and did embark—for Manly! Eventually, however, in the chilly dawn of May 9th, it went aboard the "A15"—His Majesty's Australian Transport Port Sydney—which, after lying in Port Jackson all that day and night, steamed through the Heads next morning, her decks crowded with troops waving their last farewells to friends on shore and in launches.

Life on board was exactly the same as on a hundred other troopships—the same discomforts, the same "raider" scares, the same sports and games of "housey." Even submarine guards grew to be tame affairs. Between Sydney and Fremantle the weather conditions were extremely unpleasant—practically the whole way heavy seas were encountered, smashing the temporary buildings on deck, and for a week it was necessary to keep all troops below.

The voyage from Western Australia to Colombo, during which stage the Port Sydney and the remainder of the convoy was escorted by a Japanese cruiser, was uneventful. Here the Cavalry Divisional Signal Squadron disembarked on June 8th, and, after spending a few days in the capital, entrained for Talaimannar, on the north-west coast of Ceylon. The train was comfortably fitted, even to bunks, but the signallers were so taken up with the wonderful scenery in the moonlight that hardly a single man rested. "We stood at the windows enchanted," wrote one of them afterwards, "and watched it all—the magic jungle, the paddy-fields, silver-flowed ready for ploughing and planting, the fire-flies, one moment shooting like sparks from some fairy anvil, the next twinkling like tiny electric globes... their glow making discernible the leaves of the surrounding shrubs."

After crossing the Straits to Dhanushkodi, another train journey had to be undertaken, this time to Madras, whence, twenty-four hours later, it was continued to Bombay (reached on June 12th). For the space of a week Cooperage Camp, on the edge of the Maidan, became the squadron's official home, and during this time much had to be done in the way of preparation of the next move; the 19th saw it on board the S.S. Elephanta, bound for the Gulf. It was now mid-summer—the terrible summer of '17—and as the vessel came in sight of the entrance to the Shatt-al-Arab, where the colour of the water turns from green to khaki, the new-comers were greeted by the scorching "breath of the desert." On the 25th anchor was dropped at Basra, but it was past midnight before the squadron had settled down in its tents at Magil.
EARLY DAYS IN MESOPOTAMIA.

The threat of the shimal was soon fulfilled. Iraq does not welcome strangers; and in the moist heat, with the thermometer registering over 120 degrees and the humidity up to 80, the men began to go down with tropical complaints. On July 3rd, therefore, it was with no feelings of regret that the squadron marched down to the water-front and scrambled aboard barges which were soon lashed on either side of a big paddle-wheeler for the voyage upstream. At night the boats tied up to the bank, and many of the troops took the opportunity of having a dip before retiring to their blankets on deck, where, despite the constant attention of mosquitoes and sandflies, they were able to enjoy the coolness of the river air. Every day there was something new to see: the famous "Narrows," where for miles the barges rubbed along the banks and Arab women would come to sell their eggs—lonely marching-posts, distinguished only by a sentry's tower and a row of arc lights—Ezra's Tomb, with a shapenel mark across its blue tiles—Amara, a famous hospital depot in the early years of the war, Kut itself, and the ruins of its licorice factory—the great arch of Ctesiphon—and, most interesting of all, the meanderings of the river, which turned back on itself so many times that on one occasion mahshah masts and sails could be seen at every point, and the compass which gave the impression of being surrounded by ships on land. Advanced Base was reached on July 9th, and at noon the following day—a day of record heat even for Baghdad—the journey was continued by launch to the Horse-lines Camp of the Wireless Squadron; on the way the unit suffered its first real loss, Corporal Cocks dying from heat-stroke.

The squadron, which was now 40 per cent below strength, was "drawn" its horses and equipment, and marched up-river to the cavalry camp at Es Sulai, entering at last upon its real duties as a signal squadron on July 14th. Active service had thus begun in earnest, and every available moment was utilized in getting horses and gear ready for any work that might eventuate. The first opportunity, as a matter of fact, came rather unexpectedly on September 18th, a party being detailed to accompany the force that moved out to attack Ramadi. 

TEKRIT.

On October 23rd, the Headquarters of the Cavalry Division, complete with its Australian Signal Squadron, moved northwards to take part in the Tekrit operations. Saddling up each night by the faint light of a stinking moon, a moving forward only under cover of darkness, the Australian signallers were in high spirits. At last they were to taste the real thing. Daudiyeh, Sadiyeh, Beled, Istabulat (where the 7th Cavalry Brigade, which had been engaged in the capture of Mandali and of Kifil Robat, rejoined them), and Samarrah were reached in successive stages; at Samarrah, in order to avoid the risk of being observed by enemy patrols, the horses were picqueted in nullahs, and in the dry bed of the Azai: Canal.

In the middle of the night of November 1st/2nd the division moved out for the attack. There ensued an exciting ride through the pitch darkness, especially for those of the Australian despatch riders who were detailed for "jackal" duty with the light armoured-car battery that was operating with the division. "Jackaling" consisted of the despatch rider keeping thirty or forty yards ahead of the cars, and warning them, by means of a pre-arranged system of "hoots" on the horn, if he blundered into any trenches, "jackal" holes, barbed-wire entanglements, enemy picquets, or other obstacles lying ahead. Shortly after daylight, while the action developed nearer the river, divisional headquarters was established in the desert opposite Daur. Here were to be found the ration and ammunition columns, a couple of the wireless stations, and the signal squadron—all of which soon came under the attention of enemy aircraft, but fortunately little damage was done. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon a scuffle occurred near the same point with a body of Arab irregulars, who were, however, quickly routed by an tanks.

Shortly after nightfall headquarters moved to Daur Gully (from which the Turks had been driven during the day), and, after watering the horses, camp was pitched here for a few hours. It was at this bivouac that there occurred an incident which exhibited the divisional commander's sense of humour. At a late hour an Australian despatch rider, bringing an urgent message for the 14th Hussars, strode boldly into what he thought was the signal tent, grasped a sleeping figure by the hair, and bawled: "Wake up, Tommy, here's a billet-doux from your girl!" But it took him a few minutes to recover from his astonishment when an electric torch and a revolver were suddenly poked under his nose by none other than Tommy himself, who was, nevertheless, a good sport, and treated the affair as a joke, even going so far as to get up and direct the intruder to the signal office.

Moving again before daylight, the cavalry took up a position on the right bank of the Euphrates for the purpose of covering the infantry advance. During the day the Turks were forced to retire, so that by evening the mounted men were able to ride across to the canal and water their thirsty horses before pushing on farther. The plan of attack involved the cavalry in a flanking movement, such as had been carried out at Ramadie; but, even though (in spite of a shortage of water), the horsemen reached a point some distance to the north of Tekrit, the enemy was very alert, and with shellfire and aerial bombiges the next morning (November 5th), to hold them off while their retreating force got clear. In the meantime the infantry had entered the town, having, after hard fighting, forced the elaborate trench-system to the south. And so the operation came to an end, and Tekrit, with Caradoc, is "a picturesque old walled town, built on a bluff. The houses stand on the sheer edge of the cliff, which rises abruptly from the shingly bed of the river. Inland, the town is almost islanded by a nullah which surrounds it like a moat; the desert beyond is unrelieved by any patch of cultivation."

After a day's rest the cavalry returned to Sadiyeh, on the right bank of the Tigris, and here made their winter camp. The "Caradoc" Div. Signal Corps closed the operation practically scathless. It is true that on one occasion a despatch rider was hurred through the air by a shell which burst close by; and that, while divisional headquarters and its attendant units were sheltering in a depression with an ammunition column, a Turkish airman dropped a bomb into the middle of them—but in the first case the soft dust in which the shell exploded so lessened its effect that neither the man nor his machine was seriously damaged, and in the second the bomb proved to be a "dud."

CHAI KHANA.

Permanent camp-lines at Sadiyeh were hardly established, when the Cavalry Division was ordered out to Chai Khana, not with the idea of itself engaging in a definite assault, but in order to mask the infantry attack upon Kifri. On November 30th the mounted divisions, crossing the Tigris "tooter" bridge was completed, the River Adhaim northwards until they reached a point close to the village of Band-i-Adhaim. Less secrecy was observed during this march than previously. Moving by daylight the horsemen, after a strenuous ride over a 35-mile stretch of waterless desert, and near this village experienced a terrible duststorm, which sprang up suddenly like a mighty black
Arrived Akab on left bank of Tigris. 200 yards north of bridge. Communication established to BD via YIG. ZHI-YIG line. BX cable section laid cable.

9.12.17.—Akab.—9 a.m.: Office VA closed down; moving to Sadiyeh. 10.15.: Arrived Sadiyeh. VA-BD line disconnected. 1 p.m.: Worknig virbrator through BDG-ZCI-CCO. 3.15 p.m.: PIF through on vibrator. 1.30 p.m. PIF through on vibrator. Brigades did not arrive until these times. 2.20 p.m.: Through to BD via CCO on DC set.

10.12.17.—10 a.m. VA-BD line O.K.

IN CAMP AT SADIYEH.

The return journey was made in a much more leisurely fashion, and, although there were two or three night-marches, nothing of consequence occurred before reaching the permanent camp at Sadiyeh. Here the division soon settled down, and the more pleasant side of a soldier’s life was turned towards the troops for a while. Sport of every kind was encouraged. They stalked jackals and antelopes, fired volleys into the flocks of grey geese that flew overhead in “V” formation every evening, and, mounted on horses and motor-cycles, hunted hares and gazelle, and Arab sheikhs.

As regards hunting by motor-cycle, this was usually done with the revoler as the weapon of offence; but one bright “spark” hit on the idea of pursuing his quarry with a lance. Obtaining a lance from one of the Indians, he cut it down, made a rest on the foot-board of his motor-cycle for it, and sallied forth in great fettle. Unfortunately, however, when making a valiant attempt to stick a “dingal” the point dropped too low and found the ground, piling the inventive genius and his motor-cycle in a tangled heap. Needless to say, upon his turning up in camp with the cycle badly strained, orders were issued that in future motor-cycles must not, under any condition, be used for hunting purposes.

Football matches, horse races, jumping, tent-pegging and other military sports, were also held; and in the evening the Y.M.C.A. tent offered pictures, concerts and boxing matches.

It was in this camp that the squadron lost its O.C., Captain Payne. He had been taken to hospital just before the Chai Khana stunt, suffering from a malady which proved to be smallpox in a particularly virulent form, and he died on the 10th December. He was buried in the little cemetery out on the immemorial desert, a mound and a wooden cross marking his resting-place. Such was the sad death of a man of exceptional ability, at whose instigation and under whose control the A.I.F. Wireless School at Moore Park (N.S.W.) was formed and developed, and under whose command the Cavalry Divisional Signal Squadron was later organized, trained, and led to do its share in the Great War. The squadron also lost another of its members (Sapper Evans), who died from injuries received whilst handling a fractious horse.

DEATH OF GENERAL MAUDE.

Here, too, the news was received of the death of General Maude, and the division turned out to do honour to his memory. The sad and stirring parade will forever leave its impression on the minds of those who were present. “I have just come back from the war,” wrote a despatch rider, “from a church parade that will ever be memorable. The Division was formed up in one great square round a sandbagged platform, on which the I.Padre conducted the service. It was a solemn and impressive ceremony, the climax was reached when the massed trumpeters sounded the ‘Last Post’ and one and all sprang to the salute, the infantry presenting arms, the cavalry their flashing swords.

“During the service a curious incident occurred from which the imaginative and superstitious might draw a message of good omen. Everything was still and quiet;
the silence of the desert was broken only by the voice of the Padre. Then our ears caught a whirring sound—a sound increasing in pitch with each moment. It seemed to be that sound which was only too familiar to us—the whir of a falling aeroplane bomb. We looked up as one man to see—not an aeroplane after all, but a flight of little black and white plover whose swift wings bore them out of sight as swiftly as they had come.

The camp at Sadiye received more than ample attention from enemy flying men. They used to go south to Baghdad, and generally save a "pil" or two for the cavalry on the return journey. After a while their visits created little interest or concern, and the daily round of work and sport would go on without interruption. In fact, let someone be nervous enough to permit his attention to be attracted by a Fokker, and one would hear remarks like this: "Hey, Bill, watch the—ball—never seen an aeroplane before?" That's all right, but the last one went near the horse-lines—hope my ghora's all right." "Serves you right; why didn't you put a blanket over it so the cow couldn't pick out yours."

About this time the British airmen began to gain the ascendency in the air, the arrival of a number of "Spads" and Bristol Fighters enabling them to turn the tables on the Fokkers, which had possessed a decided advantage over the antiquated British machines in use up till then on this front. Some good air-fights were now witnessed, the British pilots allowing the Fokkers to pass before climbing rapidly to cut them off.

THE DIVISION DISBANDED.

On land, too, the New Year (1918) brought the Turks a serious reverse. With the loss of Khan Baghdadi, their last hopes of undertaking a serious offensive disappeared. Consequently British headquarters decided to disband the Cavalry Division Headquarters, and to employ the brigades as independent formations. So far as the troops were concerned, the chief celebration in connection with the disbandment centred around the farewell to General Jones, their well-liked and respected commander, upon his departure for Baghdad. The arrangement was that, after bidding farewell to the divisional "head", he should leave by car for the railway station. After the banquet, where ample opportunity was provided for farewell speeches and toasts, the General was informed of his "case" awaited him. However, on getting outside he found that he was to be given a traditional cavalry "send-off"—in a G.S. waggon, drawn by an eight-horse gun-team ridden by senior cavalry and artillery officers. Bearing around and the "chariot" was the guard of honour, consisting of all the officers and senior N.C.O.'s of the division.

The rank and file turned out in full force to see the procession, and to cheer its progress. Fun and banter were the rule, particularly among the Australians, who criticized the "seats" and inculcated attire of the officers and made cynical remarks about the harness chains, which had been burned till they shone like the sun overhead, and the gear. Speculation was rife as to which of the postillions would come off when the horses began to trot—but the troops were destined to disappointment, for those colonels and majors were horsesmen. After a few words of farewell to the "mob," who cheered him to the echo, the good old General played his part in the farewell. He climbed aboard, and, on a given signal, the team started off at the gallop. He must have experienced a rough ride, because away across the desert they tore—drivers, waggon, escort—one and all "flat-out." Ancient irrigation cuts were as nothing to flashing hooves and spinning wheels as the party wheeled into a great semicircle to the station.

This was not the last that the Australians and New Zealanders saw of General Jones. On the eve of the departure for France of the N.Z. Wireless

Tram ticket on the horse tramway to Kazimain, instituted in 1870 by Midhat Pasha. It makes the last seven miles of the pilgrim's journey a little easier.

Troop and the despatch riders of the "Cav. Div. Sigs." he rode to the Horse-lines camp at Baghdad, accompanied only by his groom, for the purpose of informally bidding them good-bye. It was such interest as this which made him so popular with the men under his command.

KIRKUK OPERATIONS.

The Sadiye camp now began to break up, unit after unit departing for other fields. The 7th was the last of the cavalry brigades to leave, and, when it left for Taqu Khana and Fatha, there remained only the divisional signal squadron and a hospital.

The despatch riders of the "Cav. Div. Sigs." were, however, employed in the Kirkuk operation, being divided into parties of four to maintain despatch communication between the various posts during the advance—four going with the leading troops to maintain communication with scouting parties. During the advance the riders were well sprinkled with the bullets of Kurdish sharpshooters, but their luck still held good. They had a particularly strenuous time, having to use all their bush lore to find the various units that were advancing so swiftly into unknown country.

A rather humorous incident occurred when two of the despatch riders arrested some hostile-looking "Kurds," removed the locks from their rifles, and knocked off the sights. No notice was taken of their vain protestations, but the Australians had little to say on discovering that their victims were in reality authorized native police.

The lines of communication maintained by the D.R.'s were everywhere extended to Kirkuk, and then for one day as far as Altun Kupri. What a change was this country from the desert! Here were running streams, and green fields fenced by stone walls, that seemed quite Scottish. But how distressing it was to behold such a country-side, which should have been prosperous, menaced by the horrors of starvation. The story of the terrible things seen on this "stunt" will never be written.

UNIT ABSORBED BY WIRELESS SQUADRON.

As soon as its cyclists returned from Kirkuk, the Divisional Signal Squadron left Sadiye for Baghdad. Here its members were taken on the strength of the Wireless Squadron, which was about to lose the N.Z. Troop and therefore in need of additional men to maintain the efficiency of its stations, at the time numbering the maximum in its history and far in excess of establishment. No work, however, could be found for the despatch riders, who were thereupon transferred to France, where they were allotted to four of the Australian divisions.

Thenceforth the work of the "Cav. Div. Sigs." mingled with that of the Wireless Squadron. Its men were distributed among half-a-dozen stations, and many of them had the good fortune to be "in at the death"—the great day when "Johnny" Turk marched out of Mosul town.
No. 7 Station's horses drinking at a water-hole.

The evidence! No. 7 Station erected but left behind by the cavalry rearguard. Sometimes an escort remained behind to look after the wireless—sometimes it did not.

No. 7 Station manages to find a few welcome pools of rain water in a nullah in the foothills.
The Squadron crossing the Tigris at Sadiyeh on its way to the Tekrit operations. The Cavalry had come up from Baghdad along the left bank of the river.

A bivouac near Samarra, sheltered by a dry canal from observation by the Turks. In the middle distance, beneath the blue and white signal flag, can be seen the motor-cycles of the "despatch-rider" section. Tekrit operations. November, 1917.

A heliograph station at work. Tekrit operations. November 1917.

Explosion caused by a Turkish aeroplane bomb, which fell near Cavalry Headquarters on the second day of the Tekrit operations.
WITH THE "CAV. DIV. SIGS"

Members of the squadron sheltering in a mullah during the Ramadan operations of September, 1917. Five minutes after this photograph was made half the transport animals in the background were killed by shrapnel.


A "throw-in" during a Rugby (Union) football match between Cavalry Officers and Australians, Sadiyeh, Winter 1917-8.

The late Captain Payne and some of the despatch riders, after the capture of Tikrit, November, 1917.

Despatch riders at Kirkuk. The men are fording the river on the morning of May 10th, 1918, when the advance was continued to within a short distance of Altun Kupri.
A group of workers at the Wireless Comforts Fund's rooms in Sydney. In addition, the wireless shared in consignments forwarded by the larger and better-known organisations. These shipments were the more appreciated on the Mesopotamian front by virtue of the impossibility of buying much in the way of food-stuffs locally.

Members of "D" Troop (L.M.W.S.) outside the YMCA hut at Lyqahia, on the Suez Canal. This unit, by accident or design, was embarked on a troopship bound for Egypt, where it remained for nearly a month before it was last set upon its rightful course. The troop re-embarked on the S.S. "Eastern" on February 14th, 1918, on which vessel were a large party of the Dunsterforce, at whose 'mystery' destination so many of the squadron eventually arrived also.

Lorry Wireless Set, mounted on a Daimler chassis. During the greater part of the campaign the Second Squadron (English) had a number of these on duty at various L. of C. points; afterwards several went to Persia to take over from the Squadron, while another was transferred to us for use at Shargat as control station during the latter part of the Mosul operations. In February it took up duty at Baqubah, where this photograph was made.
EARLY SUMMER — MESOPOTAMIA

The early summer began well. The Turks had been badly mauled both on the Euphrates and in the foothills, while on the Tigris they had wisely retired far out of harm's way. On the Persian road alone was there anything doing—and here were to be found Nos. 6, 9, and a whole host of extra stations, of whom we will have more to say shortly. On the plains all was quiet, and several parties were despatched on leave to India. Two new units had joined the squadron: D Troop—or the Light Motor Wireless Sections—which arrived from Australia late in March; and the 1st Australian Cavalry Divisional Signal Squadron, which had come down from Sadiyeh late in May, after the Cavalry Division had been split up into independent brigades. The absorption of these two units made it possible to man extra stations, and also to release the N.Z. Troop for transfer to France, a move for which the New Zealand Government had been pressing for some time. With the New Zealanders went the motor-cycle despatch riders of the divisional signallers.

CHANGE OF TITLE.

Our title now became the "1st Australian Wireless Signal Squadron".

COMMAND OF THE SQUADRON.

Late in April, Major Marr (who had been promoted Major as from 16th September, 1917) went down river on leave to Australia, leaving in temporary command Captain White. About a month later Captain Clarke returned to the unit from sick leave and took over as senior captain. Later, advice was received from Australia that Major Marr would not be returning to the unit. In addition the question of seniority had been decided, as a result of which Captain White was promoted Major and Commanding Officer.

DISPOSAL OF STATIONS.

June saw all stations, except those engaged in Persia, settled in summer quarters. No. 1 wagon was with the 40th Brigade at Kifri; No. 2 wagon at Baqubah (where, owing to the considered excellence of the site for wireless work, it remained as Control Station after the withdrawal of III. Corps H.Q.); No. 3 and No. 4 were still over on the Euphrates, and No. 5 at Samarra; No. 7 at the Cavalry Summer Camp, Chadari; No. 8 at Tuz; and No. 10 in reserve at Baghdad, whence the New Zealanders had taken it for the change-over to Australians. The New Zealand personnel of Nos. 9, 11 and 12 were also relieved about the same time. June witnessed, too, the organisation of two new motor pack-stations, a step made possible by the arrival of D Troop, thus completing the establishment of the squadron. These new stations consisted of packs especially adapted for Ford vans, and they were known as Nos. 13 and 14. The former was immediately despatched to join the 51st Infantry Brigade at Tkrit, the latter being kept in reserve.

No. 11 Station had now gone into camp with the 14th Division on the wide plains of Mirjana, but it was detached on the 7th of June for a political adventure to Sheikh Maidan and beyond, in the hills north of Khanikin. After three weeks at Maidan a reconnaissance in force was made by night to Darband-i-Khan, on which journey the station (the only white troops with the column) acted as rear-guard. Khanikin was reached on July 28th, but after two days the station was again on the move, this time with a column of Kurdish irregulars, with whom it marches to Sermil (the watershed of the Zagros range, a day's trek beyond Paitak), returning a month later to the 14th Division lines as before.

Thus, except in Persia, August and September passed uneventfully for the squadron, and the beneficial results of this rest were afterwards felt, especially by the cavalry stations, when the time came for the last operation of the campaign—the advance to Mosul—which turned out to be the most strenuous of the lot.
EVENTS IN PERSIA AND RUSSIA

Now for Persia; what had been happening up there in March, April, May and June? When we left them, Dunsterville's H.Q. was Hamadan, with the nearest British outpost in the rocky valley of Surkhidiza, where shivered a handful of Hants and No. 6 Station, their traffic being relayed through No. 9 wagon with the main regiment at Kasr-i-Shirin. In between at Kermanshah were the Russians under Baratov, together with Bicherakov's Partizanski, who had arrived back on January 11th. With them were their wireless station SF (No. 38) and its Australian staff (who also received some reinforcements on the 28th of the month).

But now the Russians decided to continue their retirement—and retire they did! The main body left on the 11th of March, followed on the 14th by the Generals and their staffs. For a week our men were the only British troops in Kermanshah. Then on the 21st arrived the vanguard of the main body of the Dunsterforce—twenty-five men, footsore with the ninety miles that lay between Paitak and the mountain town—and three days later they were joined by the first platoon of the Hampshire Regiment. One cannot help quoting the numbers, because they show how absurdly small was the British strength in Persia in these early days.

The Dunsterforce party, of course, continued to Hamadan, where their general has established his headquarters.

KERMANSHAH.

On March 27th four of the staff of old 8SD (which never erected again) left with a platoon for Hamadan to man another Russian wagon (No. 39) on behalf of H.Q. Dunsterforce. No. 9—the N.Z. Wagon—which had closed at Kasr-i-Shirin, struggled up Paitak and reached Surkhidiza on the 26th; its arrival released

*This was, of course, a different No. 39 to that operating with the armoured cars at Khan Baghdadi.

No. 6 Pack, who with a double platoon of Hants, followed up the northward road. As they were walking and leading pack horses, they found it strenuous work. After a terrible journey through the mud of the great Karind Valley, Karind was reached on the 27th, and on Easter Sunday, the 31st, with a fine collection of blistered feet, they struggled into Kermanshah. But here a reward awaited our men. Says one of the boys: "We got in at 12.30 and marched to a billet near the American Mission, where presently Mrs. Stead asked the ten of us to lunch. There were good things to eat and a dining table to sit round, a white tabbath and real serviettes—things most of us had not seen for two years."

As cities go in Asia, Kermanshah is one of the prettiest; its mud-brick houses, set upon a hillside amidst orchards and gardens, look out over the valley to the snow-capped heights of the Kuh-i-Paruh. But amongst the beauty stalked starvation and poverty, dread legacies from the Turks and Russians. In the bazaar the most interesting trade is that of the shoemaker. Lots of rags are torn in pieces of about 4 x 2 inches; each is folded lengthwise twice, thus making a piece of four thicknesses about 4 inches wide and 6 inches long. It is then beaten flat, and on to it four pieces of raw hide are threaded and drawn very tight. The uppers are of thin canvas and the whole makes a very serviceable shoe. In the neighbouring villages carpets are made by groups of children under the direction of a forewoman, who has the pattern entirely memorised and simply gives instructions. Each party makes but one pattern, the details of which are handed down from generation to generation.

At the beginning the wireless men found good billets, living by themselves in the servants' quarter of the British Legation (which had been burnt by the Turks). They got strange things to eat: queer vegetables, paneet (or cream cheese), honey (full of dead bees), and three-foot strips of nan-i-churatch—the famous pebble
April, 1918: Turkish guns captured on the Khan Baghdadi operations, also prisoners, being paraded through the streets. The squadron provided six-horse teams for the occasion, and the photograph shows that contributed by the New Zealand Troop.

June, 1918: The New Zealand Troop marches out for the Divisional Signal Company in France. Illustration shows the last parade at the Horselines.

Summer, 1918: No. 7 Station at Cavalry Summer Headquarters, Chaldari.

November, 1918: Squadron general service wagons drawing horse rations near North Gate, Baghdad.
NO. 8 — TUZ AND SULEIMANIYAH

Countryside near Tuz Khurmatu, showing tilted stratification of rocks — weird scenery that stretches, to a greater or lesser extent, all the way from Ain Nukhailah to Karshi-Shirin.

No. 8 erected at Tuz. Summer 1918, after the N.Z. Station had been relieved.

At Suleimaniyah. Typical Kurds.

At Suleimaniyah. No. 8's Christmas dinner. Features were venison and native wine donated by the Sheikh of the valley. The round articles are chupatties.
bread of Kermanshah, reported to be second to none in Asia. Among social engagements the Sunday evenings at the Steads held pride of place. But their pleasant quarters had soon to be vacated, since for military reasons it was decided that all British troops in the town must be housed under the same roof. So the station moved and took up quarters in Dikusha, an old building that had been the hospital when the Russians occupied the town. This place was almost as big as a caravanserai—large enough to house all the horses, and to take both masts of the wireless station on its roof. The wireless men slept in what had been the typhus ward. The folly of housing troops in such a building was pointed out to the authorities by the Steads, but without avail, and several lives were lost through the dread disease. This caused the removal of all the troops to a hill just outside the town, where they were put under canvas.

After a terrific struggle with the mountain roads, the first motor-transport arrived on April 7th. It was a sign of the times—things in Persia were on the mend. By now Egerton had occupied Kirkuk and given added security—the roads were drying up, and pioneers had been working on the passes. At last, too, it was possible to send forward troops in somewhat greater numbers—a process that was continued throughout the summer. There was no doubt that they were needed, for the retirement of the Russians had left a handful of the Dunsterforce as the sole barrier between the Turks in Tabriz and the frontier. Moreover, should any possibility open up to allow of the Dunsterforce continuing its original mission, troops would be required farther on.

To cope with this increased activity a permanent wagon-set was installed in a special billet in the consulate grounds at Kermanshah. This station was No. 17 and staffed by the remnants of the operators who had been attached to the Partizanski, plus some reinforcements. A few operators from No. 6 were retained in reserve, but the gear from that station was sent back to Tashk-i-garreh, there to await its transport (from Rus), and a fresh staff of operators (who arrived late in June). Meanwhile in their billet the men of No. 17 were having a taste of the worries which AA Station had experienced—mosquitoes by night and sandflies by day, and almost continuous visits from thieves.

DUNSTERFORCE MOVES TO KASVIN

May and June saw the Dunsterforce on the move. With the arrival of 50 officers and 150 N.C.O.’s, by the middle of May, the concentration of the unit at Hamadan had been completed. An advance-guard was then pushed on to Kasvin, followed on June 2nd by H.Q. General Dunsterville’s four months in Persia had by no means been idle; by bold intrigue he had gained probably more than he could have done by armed force. Several matters were now culminating, and the move to Kasvin was undoubtedly the right one. Bicherkov was there, as were certain Russian agents who were willing to help any in the Bukhara direction (to which Dunsterville’s thoughts were turning now that Tiflis was out of the question). In addition, affairs had to be brought to a head with the Jangalis, a pro-German tribe holding the mountain passes between Kasvin and the Caspian (and incidentally three valuable British prisoners, who were eventually released after six months of terrible hardships). Yet at the same time every advance meant weakness, and the leaving behind on duty of many N.C.O.’s and officers whom he would have liked to keep with him.

About this time two detachments were sent to watch the roads that lead westward from Persia towards Armenia: Sarne’s party (accompanied by No. 53 station of the Second Squadron) to Bijar, and Wagauffe’s (with No. 53) to Zingan. Early in the summer, too, the transfer of the New Zealand Troop to a new front being decided upon, the relief of No. 9 Station personnel became necessary. Accordingly a party left rail head at Rus on June 14th, and travelled by lorry along the new white road that stretched to Patak like the artery of an empire—a vivid demonstration of British activity in Persia. Kermanshah was reached on June 18th, and the New Zealand staff left the next morning.

WITH No. 9 WAGON TO HAMADAN.

Four days later No. 9 Station commenced the trek to Hamadan, where No. 18 (previously No. 39) Russian wagon was awaiting relief. From Kermanshah the road runs north-eastwards past the great rock Bistun, whereon is graven the famous bas-relief of Darius the King, and then by the opal green waters of the Gama Siah to the poplars and walnuts of Sahnah—now starvation-stricken like the rest of the Persian road. From here it climbs heavily to the summit of the Tangi-Lulan pass, falling swiftly to Kangevah, erstwhile Temple of Diana, but now famous only for its atrocious cobbles. To Amdidah is another day’s march, through the dust of an interminable plain, between that village and Hamadan the Alwan range must be crossed by a pass rising 7600 feet above sea-level, though the road constructed by the Russians is a good one.

In Hamadan No. 9 handled traffic for the Line Commandant (General Byron) and on July 4th took over duty from No. 18. It was found that all but one of the operators from that station had moved on to Kasvin to open No. 19—British traffic on a Russian cabinet set. Tales of Dunsterforce enterprise entertained No. 9 daily. As we know, British troops in Persia were
STATION MOVEMENTS — PERSIA AND RUSSIA

January
Kermanshah.
(5and en route)
1 Partizanski
Leave Tellbarah —
arrive Kizil Robat
1st, Khanukin 2nd,
Ker—i—Shirin 3rd,
Mahidasht 10th, Kem-
manshah 11th.
13 No. 6 at
Kasri—Shirin
27 No. 6 at Surkhadiza
29 Dunsterville
reaches Surkhadiza

Hamadan, Kasvin
Enzeli and Baku

February
3 Dunsterville arrives
at Kermanshah
7 Dunsterville arrives
15 Dunsterville arrives
17 Dunsterville arrives
16 Leaves for Kasvin
25 Dunsterville returns
from Kasvin to
Hamadan
22 Leaves for Enzeli
returns from Enzeli

March
10 Partizanski Stn.
handed back to Rus-
sians, who leave fol-
lowing day, except
H.Q.
14 Baratov and
Bicherakov leave
21 Arrival second
party of Dunsterville
24 Arrival first
platoon Hants
27 Operators leave
for Hamadan
31 Arrival of No. 6
with second party
Hants (from Surk-
handiza)
31 Arrival of opera-
tors from Kerman-
shah, with first party
Hants

April
15 No. 6 Station trans-
ferred to Dilkusha
1 No. 39 opens
(British operators on
Russian wagon)
14 Arrival first party
of Hussars

May
9 No. 6 leaves Dil-
kusha (account
reduction)
18 No. 9 wagon ar-
rives and takes over
from No. 6 20th
28 Dismantled lorry-
set arrives from
Paitak
31 Wagstaff and party
leave for Zingan (via
Bijar), arriving 31st

June
No. 6 returns to
Tak—i—garreh
Permanent wagon
opens on 9th, as No.
38 later changed to
No. 17
22 No. 9 leaves for
Hamadan
25 No. 6 arrives
29 No. 9 arrives and
relieves No. 18
1 Dunsterville leaves
Hamadan
2 Dunsterville
reaches Kasvin
13 Staff from No. 39
(except one) leave for
Kasvin. Later No.
39 known as No. 18
14 Staff arrives at
Kasvin and opens up
Russian cabinet (No.
19)

July
1 No. 6 leaves for
Senneh

August
27 No. 17 relieved by
No. 41 (2nd Wire-
less)
? No. 6 on Sakkiz
reconnaissance
24 No. 9 relieved by
No. 29 (2nd Wire-
less)
3 No. 19 relieved by
2nd Wireless
4 3 operators and a
mechanic leave Kasvin
5 Arrive Enzeli
14 Embark s.s.
"Afrika"
16 Arrive Baku
(Dunsterforce
Occupation)
23 Leave Baku by boat
25 Arrive Kazian
30 Leave Kazian by boat
31 Arrive Lenkoran

September
14 No. 9 leaves for
Zingan (Sweet’s Col.)

October
28 No. 9 returns
Kermanshah
14 No. 9 returns
Hamadan

November
21 No. 9 reaches
Baghdad
22 No. 6 returns from
Senneh; remains
Hamadan till Jan. 15th
(when disbanded)

Enzeli party did not
return Baghdad till
February 25th, 1919
Looking out across a Kermanshah courtyard to the Kara Su Valley and the giant bulk of Kuh-i-Paruh, over 10,000 feet high.

No. 9 Station (N.Z.) returning from a visit to the carvings at Tak-i-Bustan.

No. 9 Station (Australian relief) entertained by Mrs. Stead at afternoon tea in her garden.

At Tak-i-Bustan (the garden of the arches). Though the smaller arch dates from the fourth century, the most beautiful bas-reliefs are contained in the larger. They depict King Chosroes (Khusrv) mounted on his great war charger and hunting deer and boar. Amongst many names scratched in the caves, we notice, modestly in a corner, the name, “H. C. RAWLINSON, 1844.”
No. 9 wagon approaching the great rock Bisitun which rises over two thousand feet sheer above the plain. It is famous as the site of the trilingual inscription of Darius, from an examination of which Rawlinson (in 1849) laid the foundations of our present knowledge of cuneiform writing.

June 29th, No. 9 wagon arrives at the outskirts of Hamadan. The range in the background (which culminates in Mt. Elwend, 11,000 ft.) had been crossed on the previous day by the Asadabad pass (7,600 ft.).

Wodehouse’s column, to which No. 6 pack was attached, crossing the ranges near Senneh (July, 1918).

Snow in Midsummer. A patch still remaining on the top of a pass crossed by Wodehouse’s column and No. 6 station (July, 1918).
Minstrels, near Bisitun, Spring 1918. In the background members of the 3rd party (also a few Russians) can be seen pitching camp.

(Photograph lent by Capt. F. E. Williams.)

General Dunsterville. (Photograph lent by War Office Cinematograph Committee.) Irregulars (Jelu tribesmen). Imagine the task of turning such men into soldiery willing and able to face the Turk.

(Photograph lent by Capt. E. W. Latchford, M.C.)

Mark time! An Australian member of Dunsterforce drilling tribal lancers. Though many of them were accustomed to wearing a uniform, drilling and carrying arms, they proved poor soldiers.

(Photograph lent by War Office Cinematograph Committee.)
Armenians retiring from the line; in the background can be seen one of the many forests of derricks that surround the oil city.

British troops withdrawing to a fresh position. The scene is near Baladjari Station.

Townspeople “fleeing from the wrath to come,” during the last few days before the city fell to the Turks.
No. 9 Wagon passing through the village of Kangeuh. The hillside on the left is littered with pieces of broken columns, while in a courtyard several majestic pillars are to be seen built into a mud wall—this is all that remains of a famous temple, dating from the great days of Persia.

remarkably few, and their safety had probably only been ensured by the Persian habit of talking rather than acting and of exaggeration rather than truth. Thus a dozen Fords became an immense fleet of "Armoureds" and a handful of N.C.O.'s became an army—all of which "intelligence" duly reached the Persian Ministry at Teheran, and the Turkish Commander at Senneh just one hundred miles away. But relief works and soup kitchens won the people of Hamadan from their natural attitude of suspicion to one of enthusiasm, even if they did not exactly meet with the approval of the food hoarders. Supplies became easier with the garnering of the harvests and that problem was disposed of. Another story was that of the frustrated aims of the local anti-British Democratic Committee, which planned at no less than murdering the entire garrison, but which awoke one morning to find itself arrested en masse by a numerically inferior force and well on the way to an unsympathetic Baghdad. As regards the amenities of life, we owed a debt to Miss Murray, of the American Mission, and Mrs. Funk, of the school.

**EXCITEMENT ON THE CASPIAN ROAD.**

Meanwhile in Kasvin, Bicherakov was pressing to get back to the Caspian, and it was only with the greatest reluctance that he remained till the beginning of June, by which time sufficient troops had come from Mesopotamia in vans to ensure the safety of the road. By June 11th he was before the entrenched position of the Jangalis at Manzil Bridge. The chief of this tribe was Mirza Kuchik Khan, a militant idealist with strong views on the subject of "Persia for the Persians," and in this narrow gorge he had several thousand men well-armed with rifles and machine-guns, thoroughly determined to fight to the end a good old Persian battle-of-looks. But for this kind of warfare Bicherakov was quite the wrong sort of man. Walking up to the commander of the nearest piquet he demanded the reason for their threatening attitude. To this the commander replied: "We are here to defend this post with the last drop of our blood." "Drops of blood! Rubbish! Get out of it at once," shouted Bicherakov, waving his crooked stick at them. His fierce gestures so alarmed the Jangalis that they turned and fled as one man. A short artillery bombardment completed the famous battle of Manzil Bridge, an almost impregnable position taken without resistance, and the road to Enzeli was open once more. The embarkation of the Russians commenced on July 1st. Bicherakov, having been offered the command of the Red Army of the Caucasus, accepted it as the only way of getting a footing in Russia.

During July Stations 6, 9, 17 and 19 remained working as before, the last-mentioned having a particularly busy time, as the land-lines to Minneh (No. 11, 2nd Wireless Pack) and Enzeli (Russian Radio) were down, and all traffic had to be routed via wireless. It was a busy month, too, for the Dunsterforce—raising Persian levies; taking over posts in the Jangali country from the Russians (which culminated in serious hand to hand fighting in the streets of Resht); getting supplies of petrol (ingeniously obtained from the Bolsheviks of Enzeli in return for motor cars—an indispensable ar
article in exchange for one purely luxurious!); bringing up troops, ammunition, and naval guns from Baghdad; and financing purchases. The actual currency of Persia was limited. By the time Dunsterville had drained the Bank of Persia to meet his requirements he had to get the same krans back into the vaults again ready to meet his next draft; this and many similar incidents occurred that sound more like Haji Baba (of Isphahan) than real warfare. Nearly everything is done on a basis of "talk" in Persia, and any one who comes along prepared to act will sooner or later get his own way.

THE DISASTER OF URMIEH.

Then early in August, on top of it all, came the disaster of Urmieh. This town and district were in the hands of a strong Armenian force with whom we had already been in touch by aeroplane and with whom we hoped to link up along the Bijar-Takkan Tepe road, and furnish with arms and ammunition. Their patriot, Archbishop Aga Petros, with a company of fighting men, broke through the Turks south of Lake Urmieh, and got in touch with Colonel Bridges at Sain Kalesh. But there was some delay in the meeting, and back in Urmieh rumours spread that they had been slaughtered, and that safety lay only in flight to the British lines. But this was all wrong; the rumours had been set on foot by certain refugees, who had no personal interest in Urmieh and wished only to get as far away from the Turks as possible. So the whole population, with all its cattle and belongings, took flight and came flying down the road to Bijar in appalling confusion, with the Turks and Kurds on its heels, massacring and plundering the unfortunate refugees (who, by the way, did not hesitate to "take it out" of any innocent Persian villages by the wayside). As soon as they came in contact with our troops, the latter formed a rear-guard, and the remainder of the population, probably some 50,000, were rescued and sent down to Baghdad, where they were encamped in a vast refugee camp at Baqubah under the care of British and American relief authorities.

EVENTS IN RUSSIA.

News from Russia was not very encouraging. Bicherakov had disembarked some distance from Baku and hastened to the defence of the bridge over the Kura River, which was holding up the Turkish advance from Tiflis. But he soon found that he could not count for a second on the Red Army, which frequently gave ground without firing a shot, and left posts of duty to conduct political meetings!

There was nothing to be done but to retire on Baku. The populace were warned to prepare lines of defence—an opportunity which they entirely neglected. On one occasion the Turks were within 3000 yards of the town and no troops opposing them. But, at this moment, one of those miracles occurred which seemed frequently to intervene and defer the actual fall of Baku. A rumour went through the Turkish ranks that their rear was threatened by Cossacks; at which, in their hour of victory, they turned and ran—hotly pursued by the Armenian troops, who went back to their drinking shops boasting that they had saved the town!

By this time Bicherakov had realised the impossibility of his position. Neither he nor anyone else could command the loyalty of the Red troops; at any moment they might abandon him to the enemy. He therefore decided to draw off to the north, but, although he saved himself and abandoned the town, the latter (by a second miracle) did not fall into enemy hands. His departure was a bitter disappointment to the British, who were now landing.

BRITISH ARRIVE AT BAKU.

Yes—Dunsterville and a handful of British were in Baku! By sheer impudence he had managed to settle Persian affairs; deal severely with the Jangalis; get petrol out of the Bolsheviks; gain charge of the concession port of Enzeli (together with the Russian radio there, which was manned as No. 50 Station by the staff of No. 19 from Kasvin), and dispose of the well-remembered Soviet committee. The latter was caught in treacherous communication with Kuchik Khan and, as its existence had long since become an anachronism, it made an unregretted, unhonoured and unsung departure down the Baghdad road. Dunsterville had also managed to wrench control of the three best ships on the Caspian Sea (a most essential step in case of a hurried evacuation). After the departure of Bicherakov and his force, the Baku Soviet had been overthrown by a committee (?) of dictators, who had lost no time in inviting the British to help them in saving the town from the Turks surrounding it.

Accordingly on August 10th Dunsterville moved his headquarters and all available troops of the 39th Infantry Brigade on board the "President Kruger" (ominous name!), and with a "red" crew, run by a "red" committee, set sail, on the 16th, arriving in the oil city after an eighteen hours' run. Two operators and a mechanic from No. 50 Station also went forward and worked the Baku Radio during the first part of the occupation; afterwards they were transferred south to Lenkoran, a rich Russian colony in the province of Mugan, from which the British were receiving supplies, where a pack set (No. 47) was handled on behalf of the British mission.

The defence of Baku proved a heart-breaking affair. The inhabitants were overrun by various committees, who cared more for their own importance than for the safety of their city. So far from taking new heart at the arrival of the British they lost what little zeal they formerly possessed, and left all the work to the new arrivals. They even expressed disappointment that the British were present in so few numbers, and were not universal providers up the coast, 1400 miles away! Still the best was made of the situation—defences were strengthened, discipline stiffened, machine gun sites improved. In fact, had there been time, perhaps something might have been done. But it was now too late; on several occasions the town had been saved merely by fresh "miracles"—usually by the Turks attacking the only points manned by British troops. Soon it was realised that no power on earth could save Baku the instant the Turks decided to push home their attack. On September 4th an intimation of the intention of the British to evacuate the city was given to the committee, but even that produced only fresh communications. A day or two later an Arab deserter brought Dunsterville news that a great attack was scheduled for the 14th. Now or never was the moment—everything was arranged for one last stand—but it was useless! Up till 4 p.m. a massing of troops would have saved the day—but even that proved too much to hope for. Evacuation was definitely ordered.
Refugees from Urmiah bivouacked at Kermanshah, August, 1918.

With Sweet's column to Zingan—the instrument limber of No. 9 wagon climbing the pass between Kala Jukh and Hissar, September, 1918.

No. 9 wagon station on the trucks at Hinaidi, the morning of its arrival from Ruz railhead, November 21st. In the two years it had covered nearly a thousand miles.
No. 2 Wagon handled G.H.Q. traffic and acted as general control station during the whole of 1918 and January of 1919 (when it was destroyed by fire and replaced by No. 15 Lorry Set). It was connected with S.H.Q. by an old Turkish land-line, which avoided any interference with the interception work in Baghdad.

Here we see the drivers of No. 2 disporting themselves in the cool waters of the Diala.

Cookhouse at No. 2, showing kerosene tins and boxes put to good use.

Eleven o'clock refreshments.

Astonishing effect of the arrival of a case of shirts and mosquito nets from "Comforts" (1919).
Embarkation was completed late at night, in face of enemy fire and the wrath of the committees. After dodging shore batteries, guard-ships, mutinous and revolutionary crews, and the intricacies of the harbour, all vessels arrived safely at Enzeli.

The final scene of the drama, writes General Dunsterville, was the arrival of a deputation of the revolutionary sailors of the "Kursk," who presented a written petition in the following terms:

"We, the committee and crew of the s.s. 'Kursk,' have witnessed with intense admiration the heroic conduct of your brave British sailors in the defence of Baku. We have seen them suffering wounds and death bravely in defence of our town which our own people were too feeble to defend.

"It is wonderful to us that these fine fellows, from that distant island in the North Sea, should have come all this way to the Caspian and have given us their lives there in the cause of honor and glory.

"We are so much impressed by their bearing and valour and by the whole episode of British endeavours to save Baku from the Turks that we wish to be at once taken over as a body and granted British nationality."

The great adventure was over. In the evacuation only nine sick were left behind and that through force of circumstances. It is satisfactorily to note that these men afterwards got away to safety.

**THE LENKORAN PARTY.**

Meanwhile the Lenkoran party was also having an exciting time. At Lenkoran there were some friendly Russians and a strong local committee willing to help the British and send supplies to Baku. On arrival our men had gone ashore only to find that the wireless station—a civilian one—was controlled by Reds, but eventually they joined the military station in Prisheh, three miles farther on. Prisheh was a farming centre and Caucasian village where the people favoured us. The bazaars were run by Tartars, but as usual there was little to eat (though the rye bread was very good), and it was not always safe to drink the water from the wells, owing to many of them having been poisoned. Food cost 50 roubles a day, and even then it was only possible to get two meals, and tea without sugar.

One day the Russians at Lenkoran, having no faith in their own mechanics, sent to Prisheh for the Australian mechanic. At Lenkoran the place was found in an uproar, but the fixing up of the station was only a matter of an hour or so. By this time news had come through that Baku had fallen into the hands of the Turks. Consequently things looked very black, as the peasants began to doubt the ability of the "English" to keep the Turk in check. On the return journey he was furnished with a bodyguard of Russian soldiers, and had a very wild ride inland to Prisheh, where the situation was now almost as serious. If something didn't happen soon there would be no hope for the Britishers. On the 26th the O.C., Major Hunt, decided to escape from Russia at the first chance, and get back by horse to Persia, the party buying its way as far as possible, and then taking the risk. Next day the position became a little easier, as the Russians, under the supervision of Major Hunt, defeated a strong party of raiding Tartars.

Finally on October 18th, during a storm, they saw their opportunity and left Prisheh by a motor lorry which was stolen from a Russian transport unit. During the run the road was so slippery that on numerous occasions the lorry skidded off into the ditches below, but whenever this happened all put their shoulders to the wheel and succeeded in extricating it, for safety depended on time—and Enzeli Radio was reached at last. The station here continued to remain in Austrian hands up to within a few weeks of the embarkation of the squadron for Russia, when it was found more convenient to control this district from Constantinople.

**EVENTS IN PERSIA.**

Meanwhile it had been determined that all Australians were to be withdrawn from Persia. Accordingly, on August 24th, No. 9 was relieved by No. 29 Daimler Lorry (2nd Wireless Squadron), and three days later No. 17 at Kermanshah was staffed with a new personnel and became known as No. 41.

Early in September the Turks, seeing the Dunsterforce well engaged in the Bakewar adventure, began to develop their long-threatened thrust upon the Persian road. At this time the highway through Zingan to Kasvin and Teheran was held only by a small party of the Dunsterforce and a few levies, and in a few days these outposts were driven back from the Shibly Pass, near Tabriz, to Jamalabad. In order to strengthen this line a company of 1/2nd Gurkhas and a machinegun section (known as "Sweet's Column") were hurriedly despatched from Hamadan to Zingan by the direct route northwards. To this column was attached No. 9 Wagon, which had an exciting twelve days getting its heavy gear over high mountain passes crossed only by donkey tracks. The station was erected nightly, in case any further developments had taken place in the situation, but with their own line cut behind them at Damascus, the Turks made no further advance.

On September 29th No. 9 began the long 600-mile trek from Zingan to Baghdad, which was reached on November 21st after forty-one days. (This wagon had by now rolled on its own wheels from Bserah to Zimean, and back to Run railroad—practically 1300 miles, and it was reported that the station sweeper had walked the whole way, carrying three hurricane lamps.)

No. 6 Station closed at Senneh on November 16th and reached Hamadan on the 22nd, where it remained in reserve under orders of the 2nd Wireless Squadron. Two months later it was disbanded, and the staff returned to Baghdad on the 1st of February, 1919.
THE BIRTH OF THE FORCE

The Dunsterforce was formed in order to bar Germany’s way to India, which has always been an important strategical point aimed at by the enemies of England. Napoleon clearly saw that a blow there would gain immense results, and, as a prelude, conquered Egypt, which country would serve as a jumping-off ground for operations against India. This policy was frustrated by Sir Sydney Smith at Acre. The Germans had embodied the idea in their general strategical programme in the event of a war with Britain, and as a beginning, commenced laying the Berlin-Baghdad line, with its terminus at the head of the Persian Gulf, a point within striking distance of India.

On the entry of Turkey into the Great War, our counter-move against this plan was Townshend’s expedition, which met a dismal fate; but our position and prestige were re-established when General Maude captured Baghdad and made his line some eighty miles north of that city. This secured the southern approach to India. The Russians held the Eastern frontier from the Black Sea in the north to the British right flank in the south. This front was held by a continuous line in the Caucasus, and farther south by a line of posts, where touch with the British was maintained by mounted patrols. Thus the Eastern approach to India was secured, and India protected; but with the Revolution, and the breaking up of the Russian forces on the Eastern front, the way to India was open, via the overland routes leading from Turkey through Persia and Afghanistan.

Such was the position in the late summer of 1917, a time of vital importance to both sides. On the enemy side a move on India would coincide with the contemplated German offensive of 1918 in France. If successful, it would force the British to send large forces of troops to the East to save India. To the British, who knew of the storm threatening on the Western front, the despatch of troops from France at this critical time might be fatal. Every man who could be mustered would be needed. All that could be contemplated was to hold with small forces the passes and routes leading from Turkey to India. But our only way of reaching Persia and the Caucasus, where those passes lay, was via Mesopotamia and across the highlands of Persia, a most difficult job through lack of roads and transport.

The War Office plan was to buy all warlike stores and equipment from the departing Russians, and to despatch to Persia a selected number of officers and N.C.O.’s to raise an army on the spot from among the various races of the Near East. The utmost secrecy was to be observed, and the men selected were neither told where they were to go, nor any other details. They consisted of approximately 350 officers and N.C.O.’s, selected from France, Salonica, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and German East Africa; the Australian quota was 18 officers and 20 sergeants. The leader of the expedition was General Dunsterville, the original “Stalky” of Kipling’s Stalky and Co.

This “force” assembled at Baghdad during the middle of February, 1918. Much time was devoted to the study of the Russian and Persian languages, machine-gun drill, infantry training, sword drill, revolver practise and transport duties. As the Persian passes are snow-bound in winter, the force was kept in hand, but the leading parties were to make a dash immediately an opportunity presented itself. Dunsterville, who had arrived in Mesopotamia towards the end of the winter, had already moved on and established his headquarters at Hamadan, in Persia.

Unfortunately, the troops were mixed, and then divided into groups. On looking back, it is considered by those who took part that, had the troops retained their national integrity as Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans and Imperial troops, and been used as independent units on the various missions, greater results would have been obtained. Dunsterville lost the advantage of the great keenness which might have been engendered by national pride, an incentive for each party to outdo the others.

[*Note.—Commanders of Australian divisions in France were each asked to nominate four officers “who are prepared to take part in what may possibly be a hazardous enterprise, requiring initiative, resource, and courage, and power of dealing with and managing men. It is essential that only really good men, constitutionally strong, as well as of determined character should be selected.” They must be volunteers, and could not be informed as to the nature of their prospective service.—Editor.]
The first party left Baghdad on the night of 17th April, 1918. This was the beginning of a 600 mile trek, by foot, across Persia. In this party were Captains Hooper, Scott-Olsen, Williams, and Savage, of the A.I.F. Unfortunately we cannot trace the names of the sergeants in this and the other parties, as no record was kept beyond the individual diaries of the several members. The force was to subside on the country, and, during the next nine months, great privations were endured through lack of food, due to a terrible famine then ravishing Persia. The parties marching adopted the formation laid down for mountain warfare, with strong guards for the convoy of mules which carried the paraphernalia of the party. The marches were forced ones, over extremely mountainous country, and could only be endured by highly trained men; and when sickness broke out among the troops, any man who was not absolutely fit soon succumbed to the privations and quickly died. The Australians proved to be a particularly hardy people. The second party to move forward to Persia consisted of about 80 officers and 150 N.C.O.'s. Of the officers, 64 marched on foot, including 13 Australians. Only 14 completed the march (without a rest or mount); and of these 10 were Australians.

The inhabitants, chiefly Mohammedans, were at first not at all friendly, and treachery on the part of both Kurds and Persians was fairly common. The Persians were found to be in a pitiable plight. They had been invaded twice by Russians and twice by Turks. The villages had been sacked and the crops burned, the Russians, so the inhabitants said, treating them worse than the Turks. The people of the working class wandered about, almost naked, living only on the grass and roots of the field, the woman carrying a child. The men looked after themselves, and abandoned their women to whatever fate might overtake them.

The British troops were at first viewed with suspicion; but they began to feed the people, for whom they also found work—and, when the Dunsterforce eventually left the country, the Persians were working under the supervision of Indian soldiers, apparently happy, prosperous to a certain extent, well-disposed towards the British, and glad of their intervention.

On joining up with Dunsterville at Hamadan, some 30 of the first party (including the Australians above-mentioned) were ordered to push through to the Caspian Sea and endeavour, if possible, to go by sea to Baku and rally the Armenians of that city to our cause. Unfortunately Kuchik Khan, a native chief, who had been bought over by the Germans, barred the way from Kasvin to the Caspian. Dunsterville then determined to hold Kasvin, on the main Baghdad-Caspian Sea road, as his right flank, and the passes on the three routes leading from Turkey to India, which crossed the main highway, as advanced posts. A troop of Hussars was accordingly despatched to Kasvin, and the first party of Dunsterforce was ordered north to Zinjan, and thence south-west to Bajir, a city which commanded the central route. The other parties moving up from Mesopotamia were in turn side-tracked, one to Senna, commanding the left route, and another to Zinjan, commanding the right route. Thus the three routes from Turkey to India were held by parties of the force, who maintained contact with headquarters, and with each other, by wireless.

The situation remained unchanged for some time. Dunsterville was for the time being frustrated in his plan of moving on to Baku, capturing the oil fields, and then moving west to Tiflis, an important city in the heart of the Caucasus. The enemy had by now information as to our occupation of Persia, but the first round had been won by Dunsterville. We definitely held Persia and the highways to India. Fortunately for our plans, Persian exaggeration magnified the force into divisions; in fact, Ludendorff, in his War Memores, writes of our operations as those of "large British forces operating in Persia."

The enemy soon got busy to meet our threat by moving one German and two Turkish divisions to the Caucasus. Dunsterville realised that he must still maintain the offensive but could do nothing of importance until he had enrolled Persian or Kurdish levies. Meanwhile parties of the 4th Hants Regiment (about a company) and the 1/2nd Gurkha Regiment (about a weak company) had been captured from the M.E.F. and these, together with a few of the Dunsterforce and odd Russian detachments, forming "Bicharakov's Brigade," were pushed through by car towards the Caspian. Kuchik Khan was attacked and defeated, his tribesmen refusing to face the British; his surrender was sought and was taken over as an ally (paid of course) by Dunsterville, who thereupon occupied Enzeli, the South Caspian seaport.

The way now appeared open to Baku, on the Caspian, and Bicharakov and his Cossacks went on thither. To make clear the next moves it is necessary to follow the fortunes of the Bijar and Baku parties separately.

**The Bijar Party.**

The Bijar party comprised about 30 officers and N.C.O.'s, under Major Starnes, D.S.O., a New Zealander, who proved to be an excellent leader. The Australians in it were Captains Hooper, M.C., Scott-Olsen (later awarded the M.C.), Williams (a Rhodes Scholar from South Australia), and Savage, M.C. (afterwards awarded the D.S.O.), and Wallace, Smith, Murphy, D.C.M. (later awarded a bar to his D.C.M.), Carson and Millar.

On arrival at Bijar, Starnes pitched camp on the outskirts of the town. The party was at first viewed with suspicion and expected trouble. To make matters worse, the Kurds were carrying on their customary raids in this particular district. Their chieftain, a Siridar who resided in Bijar, practically had the Persian Governor at his mercy. The Kurds treated the Persians with contempt, and the unfortunate Persians were so terror-stricken that they gathered their harvest by moonlight, fearing to leave their womenfolk unprotected during the day. Experience soon proved that the Persians were useless as soldiers. The Kurds, however, were of a different calibre and, if enlisted on our side, would be valuable for operations against the Turkish posts to the north. Whether they would be loyal was unknown, but the odds were against them.

Negotiations were therefore opened to enlist the sympathy of the temporal and spiritual leaders of these wild tribesmen. Money, for bribing the leading men, of course played a large part. The outcome was a distinct willingness on the part of the leaders to accept bribes, and then, when led by two or three of the party on some expedition, to sell us to the enemy or murder us as conveniently as possible. At Bijar the
position soon became one of stalemate. Work, however, was booming—famine relief, road making, map making, and the training of a Persian police force.

This state of affairs lasted for some six weeks, when there trickled through the news that a large body of Armenians and Assyrians were besieged in the city of Urmieh, on the shores of Lake Urmieh, to the north. The information was passed to Dunsterville, who eventually persuaded the G.O.C., Mesopotamian Force, to send an airman to carry out a reconnaissance. The airman reported that 100,000 Christians were actually besieged at Urmieh. Their fighting force was approximately 15,000 badly organised irregulars. They also controlled the lake with gunboats, which had been left by the Russians when they retreated after the Revolution.

DUNSTERVILLE’S NEXT MOVE.

This news caused a sudden development of Dunsterville’s plan and opened for him a new chance. It must be remembered that the general disposition of our troops then was:

- Headquarters and the main party at Hamadan.
- Right flank party (some 30 Dunsterforce, 230 British troops, a detachment of General Bicharakov’s Cossacks), at Enzeli on the Caspian side.
- Right forward post (about 30)—Zinjan.
- Centre forward post (about 30)—Bijar.
- Left forward post (about 30)—Senna.
- Other small detachments at Resht and Kermanshah on the left flank.

The enemy dispositions were, so far as we knew:

- Baku Area: 1 German and two weak Turkish divisions.
- Urmieh Area: 1 strong or possibly two weak Turkish divisions.

The situation demanded bold and rapid strategical moves. The operations would be certain of a nature which one would expect to appeal to “Stalky,” who never once flinched from the ordeals to which he and his force were committed. Dunsterville, as we knew him, was a man of 50 years of age, 6 ft. in height, strong, tough looking, and rather stern, though this was somewhat relieved by a twinkle in his eyes. He was pleasant to speak to, and had a wealth of anecdote acquired during service in many countries. He spoke a number of languages, including French, Russian, Hindustani, and Chinese.

As usual, he was to the occasion. His plan was to make his main attack on the Germans and Turks in the Baku area. Here he expected Armenian and Russian co-operation. If successful he could penetrate to Tiflis and other important cities and rail-junctions in the Caucasus. The most important objective was naturally the control of the oil wells at Baku, which was to be the base for subsequent operations. He realised, however, that a diversion was necessary to draw some of the enemy forces from Baku, and thus make it easier for us to attain the main objective in that area.

The Urmieh situation lent itself to such an enterprise. A demonstration here had every chance of leading the enemy to believe that our route to the Caucasus was via Tabriz, the Persian railway of the Caucasian railway system. A thrust here would also threaten the enemy’s lines of communication to Baku. Accordingly a party was ordered to proceed to Urmieh.

THE URMIEH DIVERSION.

Capt. Savidge was detailed from the Bijar party to carry out this diversion. His force consisted of five other officers and 17 sergeants. The Russian members were Capt. Scott-Olsen, Sergeants B. F. Murphy, C. T. Wallace and H. J. Smith; and his orders were to proceed to Sain Kaleh, there meet a force of Armenians, and thence move to Urmieh and immediately take over the Christian army and the gunboats on the lake. The civil administration of the Christian population was also to be taken over, a special political officer being attached to the force for this work.

It was essential that an offensive should be launched from Urmieh at the earliest possible moment. To facilitate this, Lewis guns, small arm ammunition, and money, were sent by the party. The party and camel convoy would be too large to be safely escorted by the party through the wild tribal districts of the north, and a troop of cavalry was accordingly ordered to escort it to Sain Kaleh.

The party left Bijar on July 19th and arrived at Sain Kaleh on the 23rd. There was no news of the Armenians, who were due on the 24th. The party waited until the 26th, when the cavalry commander stated that, unless a move was made at once, he would lose his horses, as no more fodder could be obtained. The force then fell back to Takkam Tepe, midway between Sain Kaleh and Bijar. The tribe in this district, the Afshahs, were a very fine type, and the chieftain appeared friendly. Savidge therefore decided to remain and endeavour to enlist a force of Afshahs, his break through to Urmieh should the Armenians be unable to do so. Half the cavalry remained until this force could be raised.

DISASTER.

On August 1st news arrived that the Armenians were moving south. Next morning Savidge moved north, and that evening met the Christians. The following day the combined force started for Urmieh. On arrival at Sain Kaleh the enterprise was suddenly faced with disaster. From the direction of Urmieh there began to pour in upon it an endless crowd of panic-stricken refugees. This break-away had been caused by the departure of the Assyrian leader, Aga Petros, with the Assyrian force which was to meet Savidge and return with him to Urmieh. Aga Petros had commanded at Urmieh three classes of Christians: the Armenians from Lake Van district; the Jelus from the mountains between Van and Urmieh; and the Assyrians from the Urmieh district. Only the Assyrians had any home interest in Urmieh; and, therefore, no sooner did news spread that Aga Petros had led a force of Assyrians through the southern Turkish lines than the Armenians and Jelus deserted the front to seek safety with the British farther south. The Turks soon discovered that there was no opposition on their front and immediately moved on to the city. Dr. Shedd and other American missionaries did their utmost to rally the Armenians, but without success.

For three days the road from Urmieh to Sain Kaleh was thronged with refugees, hard pressed by Turks and Kurds. Savidge, with Scott-Olsen, Capt. Nicol (of the New Zealand forces), and six sergeants, moved out to establish a rear-guard. A force of 100 Christians was promised by Petros to join this party, but so great was the panic that, except for one chieflain, this force could not be collected. For forty-eight hours Savidge was in touch with, and for eight hours fighting, a known force.
of 250 Turkish and 250 Kurdish cavalry, reinforced by at least half as many tribesmen. Fortunately, the party had three Lewis guns and the Turks had no machine guns. Captain Nicol was killed, three horses shot down, and all the mules with rations and reserve ammunition were lost; but the enemy were beaten off by machine-gun fire, and the party returned.

The refugees returned when provisions were supplied, and by reaching Biajer on the 17th of August. The horrors of their plight are beyond description, and the hardships endured by Savige’s party can be judged from the fact that, within 24 hours of reaching Biajer, every member of it but one had collapsed. Fighting was frequent, every man had fever, some were delirious, and little rest could be obtained. Savige was down with fever and beriberi, and soon sent out of the country. Many of the others died as a result of strain and privations. Not more than four were ever again fit for duty.

BAKU.

It remains to describe the efforts of the Dunsterforce at Baku. The Bolsheviks in that city were bitterly hostile to the British and not unfavourably disposed towards the Turks. But the Armenians, who hated the Turks, threw out the Bolsheviks (who sailed for Astrakhan with the guns and ammunition they could seize) and appealed to the British to assist them. When it became known that affairs in this important centre were coming to a head, and that the place was in danger of falling into the hands of the Turks, Dunsterville decided to send thither some specialists who were required for the artillery. Accordingly a party consisting of six officers (including Capt. Lord, A.I.F.) and about 20 N.C.O.’s, under the command of Captain Campbell, R.F.A., was pushed through to Kasvin, where it joined an intelligence party containing some of the Russians who had joined the Dunsterforce in London. This move, from Hamadan to Kasvin on horseback, took nine days, the distance being 150 miles. At Kasvin the party reported to Colonel Keyworth, second in command of the Dunsterforce (and afterwards commander of the troops in Baku).

An appeal being received from the Mensheviks at Baku, Keyworth pushed on from Kasvin with a party comprising Colonel Stokes (liaison officer with Bichera-kov’s force), six junior officers, and about the same number of N.C.O.’s. The majority of the N.C.O.’s who had reached Kasvin with the artillery party were left there owing to a shortage of petrol for transport. Upon arrival of Colonel Keyworth’s party at the Caspian port of Enzeli, about 2nd August, information was received that Baku had either fallen or was about to fall, and consequently it was doubtful whether the party should go on or remain at Enzeli. The situation, however, presently appeared more hopeful. General Dunsterville, though warning the Armenians that his force was weak, and that they must defend themselves, ordered Keyworth to send Colonel Stokes and party, with a bodyguard of 50 men from the Hants Regiment, to Baku. The force left on the 3rd by one of the trade steamers—a vessel of about 3000 tons—plying between Enzeli and Baku, and arrived at the latter place on the afternoon of the 4th. It was met by the British Consul, who a few days previously had run down to Enzeli to report, and by representatives of the Russian and Armenian staffs.

The situation was discussed with these representatives, and found to be serious, it soon becoming clear that all discipline had gone from the Russo-Armenian troops. The Turks had attacked a few days before, driven in the Russo-Armenian force, and were now holding the outskirts of town. During this attack, Bichera-kov’s force, which had been fighting in the lines before Baku, was cut off; it then proceeded to Durbet, about 150 miles to the north, where it continued to operate during the time the British were in Baku.

As a result of the discussion it was decided to disembark and take up quarters in one of the hotels. While this was being carried out, the British colony at Baku left the harbour for Enzeli. The British in Enzeli received a warm welcome from thousands of people who were lining the streets. The officers were quartered in the Hotel Europe, and the men in the Hotel Metropole.

Upon disembarkation, the Russians wanted Colonel Stokes to become Commandant-in-Chief, but he thought he could be of more use by acting as intelligence officer, leaving the Russo-Armenian staff to command their own troops under his supervision. Much confusion existed owing to there being several staffs, but Stokes did his best to co-ordinate their efforts. The infantry was found to be about 6000 in number, divided into 22 battalions, holding a line of 21,000 yards, un wired, several miles from the city. The troops were governed by officers and by committees, but obeyed neither. The Turks held a line about 2000 yards beyond, and were possibly 10,000 strong.

During the night of August 4th Colonel Stokes consulted the different staffs and decided that the Turks were to be pushed back, but next morning the position was worse. The troops were making no attempt to fight, and during the night Colonel Stokes had telegraphed for reinforcements to Colonel Keyworth (who commanded the Dunsterforce party in Baku, but temporarily retained his appointment). The British in Enzeli of the seriousness of the situation, Colonel Stokes went out to the line on the morning of the 5th and, with the aid of an interpreter, addressed many groups of the different troops. The men complained that they had no leader and that they did not know what to do; but eventually they decided to go out and push the Turks back, being accompanied by their womenfolk, who carried rations, and sometimes rifles, and spurred on the men.

So successful was Colonel Stokes’ speech that, on the left or southern portion of our line, which was in danger at the time, the Turks were pushed back three miles to the ridge overlooking the Baku-Tiflis railway.

It was now found that neither the eight British officers, who had been attached as “assistant commanders” to local battalions and brigades, nor the N.C.O.’s, could effect much by leading the Russo-Armenian troops, and that the British would have to do the fighting themselves. Reinforcements were therefore asked for to strengthen the party, and, on the evening of the 9th, about 150 officers and men of the Staffordshire Regiment, a few more Dunsterforce officers and N.C.O.’s, an armoured car machine-gun company, a couple of armoured cars, and several Ford cars arrived by steamer. The reinforcements were very welcome, and were quartered in the Hotel Metropole. The party also brought food supplies to supplement the stores in Baku, which had become short through the Turks cutting the Baku-Tiflis railway. Later food became very scarce, the British troops being able to get only a little black bread, sugar, tea, and a limited supply of meat. Owing to German and Austrian propaganda in Baku it was not So that lorry drivers would not get entirely lost, Dun sterforce named the principal streets of Hamadan. There was also to be seen “Canada Avenue”, “New Zealand Street”, “Poor Bitez Street”, etc. Note the phonetic transcription into Persian.
possible to draw on what few supplies were there, as the enemy element would have made capital of this to the detriment of the Allied cause. On August 6th some of the new reinforcements were sent to the left flank to strengthen the Armenians holding the line. The remainder were held in reserve to be available to reinforce threatened parts.

During the next few days parties of Staffords, Gloucesters, and Warwicks, arrived, as well as some more Dunsterforce officers and N.C.O.'s. The former were sent out the line to hold defended posts, and the Dunsterforce officers and N.C.O.'s detailed to supervise the work of the various Russo-Armenian staffs, battalions, and batteries.

From the 6th to the 17th of August the whole front was quiet and the morale of the Russo-Armenian troops improved. The Turks were reported to be short of food. The Tartars sent in envoys to say that they were ready to fight the Turks, providing the British would promise to supply them with food and arms. The Armenians, who had, some time previously, attacked them, treating them badly, and wantonly damaging captured villages, etc. British envoys were sent out to the Tartars but were captured by the Turks in a Tartar village. Eventually the Tartars assisted the Turks against the British.

On the 17th the attack by about 1000 Russo-Armenian troops, assisted by about 100 British, was planned to take place on the right flank. It proved to be a farce. The Russo-Armenian troops pretended to attack all the morning without advancing a yard, and then said it was the turn of the British troops to attack, at the same time retreating, although there was no great opposition, and leaving the British with both flanks in the air. Later the Russo-Armenians started firing over the heads of the British to support them, but their shots frequently fell short among the troops.

On reaching Baku it had been found that the Russian- Armenians had about six batteries in action, the most efficient one being commanded by the Bolshevik Petrov, but on the whole the guns were not efficient. In addition to these batteries there were others guns up to 6in. howitzer in the arsenal at Baku, but no personnel available to work them. The Dunsterforce artillery personnel were organized under Captain Gwatkins, R.F.A., and sent out to command the batteries. They found their task very difficult. One of the Australian officers (Capt. Lord) had two N.C.O.'s to assist him. The Russian guns were strange, and the British personnel had to learn by experience. It speaks well for their enthusiasm and energy that within a few days the British officers had the guns firing with greater accuracy than the Russians had thought possible. The main difficulty was that of language, and the English N.C.O.'s Captain Lord proved of little assistance, being too slow in learning the common Russian terms or words of command, and not appreciating the character of the men under their command. They were, therefore, chiefly used for general work around the battery position, such as care of stores and guns, and building shelters for the men.

The batteries came under Russian groups but received few orders from the group commander, doing most of their shooting at observed targets. The situation was thus one in which the battery commander had to act according to his own discretion. For example, on the 26th of August one battery which was firing almost due west had to be turned to engage infantry advancing from the southwest. Each battery was commanded in this way, and the opinion of the Dunsterforce officers was that, if they had remained in Baku long enough to get a good working knowledge of the language, they would have been able to make something of the Russo- Armenians as artillerymen.

From the 17th to the 26th the situation was again quiet. On the 18th August General Dunsterville arrived in Baku to ascertain the situation. Knowing the seriousness of the position and the value of the Baku oil wells, he decided that the British troops should remain in Baku and try and hold it. Another attack was planned on the right flank, and the necessary preparations were being made when, on the morning of the 26th, the Turks in force attacked the Russo-Armenian troops on that flank. The Armenian artillery for a time replied, but gradually the Armenians ran, and left parties of the 9th Staffords holding an exposed position known as "Dirty Vulcan. The Staffords were forced, through casualties, to withdraw, fighting excellently, formed another line 400 yards back. Later, about 1000 Turks again attacked still farther to the right, advancing across the open. Upon seeing them advance, the Russo-Armenian troops immediately fell. A party of three officers and 90 men of the Staffords was rushed from Dkeia village to hold a strong point—Binagadi Hill—and generally to "buck up" the Russo-Armenian troops; but, on reaching the hill, they found that the Dunsterforce officer in command of the Armenian "Iron Battalion" had been wounded, and all his Armenian troops gone, except some 30 or 40, held back by a Dunsterforce N.C.O., who was killed later in the day. The Staffords immediately moved up and opened rifle and machine-gun fire. By this time the Turks were within 100 yards of the hill. A battery opened on them from right, and the firing, together with the rifle and machine-gun fire, broke up the attack, which approached only within 200 yards. The hill was held by the British throughout the day and night.

The 27th was quiet, but on the 28th and 29th the Turks again attacked and drove the Russo-Armenian forces one and a half miles back on the right flank. On the 1st of September a Staffords battery was launched and, as before, the Russo-Armenians put up a poor fight, with the result that the Turks advanced farther into Baku, though such heavy casualties were inflicted upon them that they were afterwards quiet for fourteen days. At the end of August Dunsterville could see no hope of holding out with such weak-kneed troops as the Armenians, and decided to withdraw the British. He communicated this decision to the Russians and preparations for embarkation were begun, but, as the Turks attacked again that day, the British troops were forced to remain.

From 2nd to 14th September the situation remained quiet and the food supplies improved. Through spies it became known that the Turks had decided to attack the left flank about the 14th, and, the exact point and time of attack being known, preparations were made to meet it. The enemy duly attacked on the 14th, and, meeting with little resistance from the Armenians, pushed them in. Bicherakov's force had been recalled to Baku, but unfortunately only its advance-guard reached Baku that day. British troops, however, were moved to the left flank to counter-attack, and in the fighting which followed the Staffords and Warwicks suffered heavy casualties. On the right flank the Worcesters near Baladjarie village were deserted by the Armenians and almost surrounded. One Armenian-Russian unit near Baladjarie station also held its ground. But it was evident that Baku was doomed.

In the meantime Armenians, without consulting the British commander, had opened negotiations for surrender, and in the evening affairs were found to have come to such a pass that the British troops must be withdrawn. They left Baku at 8:30 p.m. on the 14th September. Notice of the withdrawal had reached all officers except Major Sutter, who, with a sergeant, was left behind. All equipment which could not be removed was either blown up or burned, and the transports, eluding the guardship at the entrance to the harbour, returned safely to Enzelk station and the sergeant escaped with refugees to Krasnovodsk, and eventually rejoined the British.
KALAT SHERGAT AND MOSUL

By October, the effect of Allenby’s victories had been felt in Iraq. Several threats, chief amongst them that against the Persian road, were no longer to be feared. It seemed, therefore, to be the moment to take the offensive against the Turkish Tigris front.

For nearly eighteen months the Turks had been holding a position of great natural strength ahdre, the Fatha Gorge (where the Tigris pierces two formidable ranges of hills); moreover, their western flank was protected by a waterless desert. The prospect did not look very promising; in fact, General Marshall would have preferred to attack along the Kurdistani road (through Kirkuk). Out there, however, the front line was far from railhead, and transport was short owing to the demands of the Persian adventure. He had, therefore, to content himself with making a demonstration of strength in these foot-hills. Accordingly, General Lewin (with the 13th Division) moved from his summer camp at Tel to Tog (capturing the important German bridge there) and thence to Kirkuk. Eventually (October 26th) he drove a superior force across the River Zab, and occupied Altun Kupri. No. 8 station provided communications for this force during its week’s strenuous advance, and earned special commendation. Traffic was routed through No. 1 wagon at Kifri and No. 2 at Baqubah.

Meanwhile, events on the Tigris had moved more slowly, but swiftly. For a month all arms had been busy preparing. Dumps were established at railhead; wells were developed and canvas tanks filled at the pass Ain Nukhaih in the Jebel Hamrin, through which the cavalry brigades were to pass on their way to the Zab (No. 13 station went with the 55th Infantry Brigade detailed for this preparatory work). All sources of transport were drawn upon to provide a maximum mobility, and an armoured-car column was made self-contained for several days.

The map indicates the general plan of the campaign. On the west the Armoured Car Brigade was to proceed to El Hadhr, and establish a base there for raiding the Mosul road, cutting telegraph lines, etc. With them went No. 13 station—the motor station that had already been in the field at Tekrit; the equipment consisted of a pack set established in Ford vans. On the same bank was the 17th Division, which was to bear the brunt of a frontal attack.

On the eastern bank the 18th Division (No. 24 Station of the 2nd Squadron attached) was under orders to advance northwards in support of the 7th Cavalry Brigade (accompanied by No. 7 Wireless Station). These formations opened the offensive, and their movements in face of heavy artillery fire were so decisive as to cause the Turks to abandon their strong position astride the Fatha Gorge.

At the same time a special mission—and, incidentally, an arduous and exciting one—was allotted to Cassells and his 11th Cavalry Brigade (No. 10 station attached), which concentrated at Ain Nukhaih Springs on the 23rd. On the following day they moved northwards over 45 miles of waterless desert, and struck the lesser Zab River 20 miles above the Tigris at a deep ford at Uthmaniyyah. The Turks were holding the ford in some strength, but the crossing was forced with surprisingly few casualties. Almost simultaneously, in the face of considerable opposition and heavy shell-fire—in which the wireless station shared—the 7th Cavalry Brigade and the leading infantry brigade of 18th Division succeeded in capturing another crossing of the Zab—at the point where it flows into the Tigris. Cassells had by now managed to get a considerable part of his force across the river, and was able to despatch a party downstream on the far bank. As a result of these operations, the Turks vacated the eastern bank of the Tigris.

But on the right bank matters progressed more slowly. There the 17th Division was keeping in touch with the enemy, but with great difficulty, as its path lay over deep ravines and precipitous slopes. All transport had to be converted to packs; the difficulties in bringing up artillery were immense; and both heat and lack of water proved severe trials. Nevertheless, the division worked steadily forward, and captured Humr, site of the Turkish bridgehead, at the point of the bayonet.

Now came the great moment of the two “special mission” parties—the armoured cars and Cassells’ cavalry. The former advanced from their base at El Hadhr and, after one or two raids, cut the telegraph lines to Mosul, thus isolating the Turkish force. Cassells struck across the desert on another 40-mile march, seeking a reported ford between Gausus and Hadraniyeh. This movement was successfully masked by the 7th Cavalry Brigade advancing up the left bank and so attracting the attention of the Turks. At nightfall, however, the 7th had to retire to Fatha bridgehead to fill up with supplies. The ford was discovered at 3.30 P.M., but entailed the crossing of three channels of the river—one of which was flowing five feet deep, and with a strong current. By the next
morning (27th) the leading regiments had taken up a strong position blocking the road to Mosul. Later in the day Cassells was in touch with the armoured-car column, and, with the double object of assisting the advancing infantry and of concealing his own weakness, commenced to advance on Shergat.

By noon on the 28th the right-bank troops were at Shergat and had driven the Turks from their trenches. But the Turks did not follow up their victory. Men and animals were completely exhausted, the heat was intense, and water was almost non-existent. Late in the afternoon the leading battalions of the 18th Division, after a forced march of 33 miles, began to catch up. During the night the Turks were able to concentrate and make heavy attacks on these troops blocking their homeward road. But the effort was made too late, for Cassells had now been reinforced by the rest of the infantry and by the 7th Cavalry Brigade.

Dawn on the 29th broke on an undefeated and stubborn enemy lying between Cassells' command and the 17th Division. All troops had been marching and fighting for four days, with but little rest and extreme shortage of water and rations. Yet it was imperative for the corps commander to call upon them for renewed exertions. The cavalry had their hands full—they had to deal with enemy reinforcements brought down on them from Mosul and all round. It was, in the main body, to break through. As before, the brunt of the attack was borne by the 17th Division, which responded magnificently.

FINAL DEFEAT OF THE TURKES.

The night of the 29th disclosed to the Turks their hopeless position. Gripped as in a vice, their men packed in ravines and raked by artillery across the river, and with all communication to Mosul cut off—there was but one thing left. Daylight saw white flags fluttering everywhere along the line.

This was the last battle fought by a Turkish army in the war, and it was contested by the stubborn defender of Kut-el-Amara. As on many previous occasions a large share in the hardships had again fallen to the lot of the squadron stations—30 and 40 mile marches without water (and with little bully and biscuit) became commonplace, and so did frequent erections and dismantlings when the men were thoroughly exhausted. The wireless pack horses with their heavy burdens kept to the front on every occasion. One G.O.C. was not exasperating when he said, "The wireless was marvellous."

Immediately after the surrender, the more mobile troops were organised into a single column under General Cassells, Nos. 7, 10, 13 and 14 Stations accompanying it. Turkish troops were rounded up all the way to the oil wells at Quayyarah (where the column was glad to take Turkish bread and onions as rations). No halt was called till Hammam Ali, 12 miles south of Mosul, was reached on November 1st. Here the Turkish commander met the British and requested their return to Quayyarah. But General Marshall had reason to fear for the safety of the large Armenian population, and so ordered the cavalry to move on to Mosul. It was Hammam Ali that news of the Armistice was received.

The experiences of the wireless stations in this last great push were so varied that we cannot do less than give the stories of the four which had the most active share in the work.

WITH No. 13 STATION AND THE LIGHT ARMoured CARS.

The motor-van stations were a serviceable combination of the useful pack-station and the equally useful Ford van. No. 13, the first of them to be established, spent the summer in camp with the 51st Brigade at Tekrit. On October 18th it was ordered out to the Ain Nukhalah pass in the Jebel Hamrin, through which the cavalry brigades were soon to pass. Camp was situated in a defile amidst a weird succession of ridges (some of over a thousand feet) so caused by a tilting of the strata. Water was available at some nearby springs; the 9th Cavalry Brigade had watered during the Fatha stunt in the previous May), but it was exceedingly alkaline and unfit for drinking purposes. British organisation thereupon took a hand, and it was decided to erect lines of canvas tanks at this important strategic point, and to keep them filled with water by means of large convoys of Ford vans plying to and from the Tigris. Four bombs were dropped on the camp by an enemy aeroplane—there were several casualties among the British troops, but the wireless squadron had, by a matter of some twenty feet, yet another wonderful escape to its credit.

"After four days, No. 13 was relieved by a second squadron station (No. 24), and went back to Tekrit, passing on its way the advancing troops of the 7th Cavalry Brigade, and in an impression of the 7th Cavalry Brigade, and in the main body, to break through. As before, the brunt of the attack was borne by the 17th Division, which responded magnificently.

"Next day the advance was taken, after very heavy going over deep nullahs, for which rank crossings had to be formed, to within three miles south-west of Shergat. At the approach of the Jebel we struck an Arab irregular patrol, which galloped off over the skyline. From the summit of the ridge the scene was one of peace and quiet, with thousands of sheep grazing, and not a hint of warfare. But the armoured went on and shelled the supply-dump and transport-lines of the astonished Turks, who, nevertheless, soon had a couple of field-guns on the job, and the cars had a hot time before getting out of a nullah. Enemy fire was still following them when they rejoined us. No. 13 made three attempts to erect but on each occasion was forced to retire. Then the 13th, when we did succeed in getting the mast up, without drawing fire, we could not raise No. 5, the corps station. However, a visit from a couple of air force 'planes cheered us up. At nightfall we were at Tul-ul-Baqq, but could not clear our traffic until daylight, when the screening effect disappeared. Incidentally we passed an uneasy night in full expectation of an enemy raid.

"On the 26th we dismantled the station and retired back to the wadi (Kantara) for water. After this we advanced to a point about five miles west of Shergat (about 10 miles north of where we were yesterday). There we worked traffic with Nos. 3 and 10 (the latter with 11th Cavalry Brigade). The cars were out raking as before, and managed to force the telegraph line to Mosul, thus cutting off the Shergat force from headquarters. But by now the 11th Cavalry Brigade, by a wonderful flanking movement, was astride the Turkish lines to the north of us. During the afternoon and evening the station was left alone with a derelict armoured car. An enemy patrol was sighted, but fortunately it did not come closer.

"On the 27th we advanced a few miles, and then withdrew to Tul-ul-Baqq. At night the cars came racing back. The British advancing from the south had arrived before the Shergat position and joined battle with the enemy. The armoured had gone straight into the scrap, the column
commander's car receiving a direct shell-hit in the radiator, with the result that the crew, despite a lively barrage put up by the guns of the cavalry, were taken prisoner. This left us without a leader, but Colonel Leachman (the famous British political agent) turned up with orders for us to join the cavalry, which we did, by a wide circuit. We found the cavalry commander rather pessimistic as to the future and doubting whether he could really hold the Turks if they chose to attack in any strength. So we set off again, but quickly found our route barred by a party of new arrivals from Mosul. Doubling round the nullah we came to a possible crossing, but it was only just possible, and the whole of the transport had to be man-handled across, hastened by two 5.9 shells, which landed within 100 yards. A similar anxious delay occurred at a second nullah; then we got well away, and after a long run arrived back at Tul-ul-Baqq, our old home on the summit of the Jebel. Station passed traffic all night to the accommodation of the gun-fire of the cavalry and infantry.

"Two days were passed in relaying traffic. Then came Turkish Armistice Day, when we went across the battlefield to give the cavalry a hand with their traffic. Next day the foremost troops were made up into a single column with Nos. 7, 14, and 10 stations. Each morning during the advance to Mosul our motor station was able to remain behind and clear up traffic, and then catch up with the column. "No. 13 was the first station to erect in Mosul—but we were also the first to admit that the cavalry stations had experienced a harder time during the preceding week."

**WITH No. 14 AND THE 17TH DIVISION.**

"No. 14, the second of the motor pack stations which had been formed in June, was warned to be ready to move out from Baghdad early in October. About three weeks later we were with I. Corps H.Q. at Baiji, awaiting orders. "At last, on the 27th, a message came through that we were to join Colonel Coningham, of the Highland Light Infantry, who was in command of the leading troops of the 17th Division. We arrived at his bivouac on the same night, but did not erect. The H.L.I. had recently suffered heavy casualties in an attempt to silence some Turkish machine gun posts. "By next morning reinforcements and supplies had come to the station, in which No. 14 joined, was continued. Transport of every description (including artillery drawn by caterpillar tractors), crowded the few tracks northward over the nullahs and hills of the Jebel, and we had a fine tussle to gain the right of way. Our next halt was just to the south of the battlefield of Kalat Shergat, where we stood by awaiting the result of the action. By this time, however, the cavalry stations were having difficulty in passing their traffic, and orders were sent for us to return to Bialaj to relay messages. But we had not been long there when word came of line communication with this post was established. Our next orders took us northward again to a point near Gaunus ferry, where we joined Fanshaw's Column, which was following behind the cavalry on the Mosul road. "Quayarah was reached on the 2nd, Shura on the 3rd and Mosul on the 4th."

**WITH No. 7 STATION AND THE SEVENTH CAVALRY.**

"Though Cassels' Cavalry Brigade left Baghdad first, we came straight through and, passing them at Samarrah (El Ajik), was first away from the Tigris. Transport was coming, and we did not know where we were going, but did not mind that. Camp life is dull after stunting, and it was good to be off again. "Dusk on October 21st, and the division was on the move—as stirring a sight as ever. Then bright moonlight bathed the plain, and we trekked light-heartedly towards the Jebel Hamrin. "Tuesday, 22nd, 3 a.m., at Ain Nukhaliah. We bivouacked till dawn; then watered up at long lines of canvas tanks. We had vivid recollections of the local water five months before, and were grateful that army organisation had been able to bring us good water so far from the river. We left Ain Nukhaliah in the morning and covered 16 miles to another set of tanks which it had taken a tiny spring for five or so to fill; then came another night march, and by dawn we were opposite Fatha, ready for action. But 'Johnny' had tricked us by abandoning his position, so next day we continued our advance, and at a point five miles south of the Lesser Zab our artillery at last came in touch with him. "We had quite a view of the proceedings, but the Turks soon replied with shrapnel and our station was ordered to retire, and, after watering our horses at the Tigris, to stand by. So off we went to the river by ourselves and, after watering the horses, dismounted to fill our water-bottles and bargages—then bang! A gun on the other side had opened up on us. The first shell came over our heads; the second burst in the water in front of us and gave us a shower-bath. Taken by surprise, the horses reared and plunged and three of the pack animals cleared out up the cliff. Away we went up the steep banks, and then scattered after the runaway packs. By this time it was dark, and we lost sight of one another. However, one by one we caught the horses and made our way downstream to the brigade camp, each fresh arrival bringing in the news with ironical cheers. We then settled down safely and erected station—after disentangling the aerial wires from the fretlocks of a Lancer patrol! "Next day, the 25th, we moved off at 7 o'clock and erected five miles out; then followed up the brigade and erected again in the Zab river-bed. Off once more after Headquarters—more enemy fire—then crossed the Zab and camped on the southern side. But within an hour we had to dismantle on account of shell-fire; we also had a hot time fording the river. Ordinary and iron rations alike having run out, we had a splendid tea of emergency ration (that chocolate concoction in the little tin which every man carried). The horses, however, were much more tired than the men.

"Saturday, the 26th—crossed Zab again and accompanied brigade on reconnoissances. Traveled about sixteen miles without encountering the enemy, so returned to our camp at the river. Late at night the ration garrisons arrived, and just in time, too, for both men and horses were almost exhausted. "On Sunday at 3 a.m. we moved back to Fatha for rations. By this time our horses were in a bad way—so one of the lads "puckerooded" a V Battery horse and, saddling up quickly, moved off with us. After an hour or so a torch was seen to flash its light for a moment on the rump of this animal, and a voice ordered the rider to dismount—V Battery had discovered the lost horse! We arrived opposite Fatha at 10.30 a.m., and men and horses enjoyed a good swim in the river. Drawing three days' ordinary rations, also emergency rations, we saddled in haste at 10 p.m. and set off at 12.30 for the Zab, which we crossed, and then, after a half-hour's rest, went on through the rest of the day to the Tigris—a terrible forced march of 50 miles. The column lost nearly a quarter of its strength on the way through exhaustion, but this could not be helped, for we were racing to relieve Cassels' force, which was hemmed in between two strong bodies of Turks. Owing to the depth of the water our station was unable to cross the stream, so we were ordered to camp this side with No. 10, and a signal station was left on the Mosul brigade headquarters. In a few hours our stragglers came up, while just before sundown thousands of Turks were seen marching on the other side of the river, and we felt completely cut off.
“Next morning (29th) at dawn No. 10 station departed, and a few minutes later we were surprised by V Battery running its guns up alongside us and opening fire. Up went our head line, and, as the horses began to rear and plunge, we wasted no time in saddling up and getting away. But long before that shrapnel was bursting all around us—it was really a miracle that no one was hit. We managed to find a friendly nullah, and some time later we received orders to go downstream a couple of miles and there cross in pontoons. This we did, but a strenuous task it was for horses and men, for the river was nearly a quarter of a mile wide, and nearly exhausted the animals. After a spell we proceeded to headquarters, arriving just in time to witness the whole brigade charging the Turkish position. We did not erect because of enemy fire, and after a short advance stood by with packs on all night. At 6 a.m. the packs were still on; at 9.30 the Turks surrendered, and almost immediately we left with the brigade northward. We did 30 miles in fast time, finishing up with the charge of the 16th Lancers on the Quayyarah position. We were then issued with a handful of captured bayonets for each horse, and a Turkish biscuit and some onions for ourselves—and we slept well on them!“Thursday, 31st—all day at Quayyarah. At night the river was up, and we had some British food. Next day we were off again, but twenty miles out an aeroplane dropped a message, on the receipt of which we camped for the night—and, having commandeered a telegraph pole, had a good fire for our bagage. In Nov. And we advanced slowly to within a few miles of Mosul.”

WITH NO. 1 STATION AND CASSELS.

“No. 10 finally got away from Tekrit at a quarter to three in the middle of the morning of October 23rd. The moon had set and it was pitch dark. An Arab guide led the brigade over the featureless plain. We walked all night—trotted all the morning—a thirty-mile march. At noon we were watering our horses at the canvas tanks at Ain Nukhaiah. Only small fires, and these in the bottom of nullahs, were allowed in this camp.

“Off again at 2 a.m. on the 24th, reaching Sadayrah on the Zab, where we had a brush with the Turks. Some shell-fire drove us out of a nullah, where we had taken cover. Managed to get to camp at 8 p.m., but operators worked till two in the morning getting into contact with all day at this bivouac (while the brigade forced a crossing, and also sent a party down-stream to attack the 7th) getting plenty of traffic for No. 5 and No. 1 (Kifri). Dismantled at dawn and forced the river at Uthmaniyah—here a swift running stream about five feet deep, quite impassable anywhere but at the ford; ferried instruments across in a pontoon. Re-saddled and did a forty-mile march by noon, trotting most of the way.

“By now we were within three miles of the Tigris. A patrol went forward with an interpreter and found that there was a ford about eight miles farther on near Gauus. We covered the distance in quick time, and soon the engineers had a road cut down the steep dabs, so that most of the brigade and the whole of the artillery crossed at once, taking up a position across the enemy’s line of communications. We had achieved the impossible, covered 130 miles, mostly walking the day—a flanking movement that the Turks could hardly have imagined to be possible.

“Early next morning we were ready to move, but orders came through that the water was too deep for us. We managed to get the slowest mule of the horses, after some argument with the Arabs who owned it, and as we ourselves had no rations, tried boiling some of the heads for food. Fighting was continuous across the river and the brigade seemed to be hard pressed, but a message addressed to G.H.Q. (for us to transfer to station code) came through from General Cassells that he would hold on at all costs. We found out later that the usual army codes had been captured, together with the officer commanding the armoured. No rations all day!

“October 28th proved to be an anxious day for General Cassells. In order both to conceal his weakness and to bluff up the advancing Turks, he had to maintain continuous activity. To add to his troubles his rear was menacing by large reinforcements of Turks from Mosul (2,500 men, with artillery). He was asked to surrender three times! Meanwhile things were not too healthy on our side of the river—enemy troops were massing just opposite. All our men were standing by in readiness, when we saw, far off across the desert, the dust of the advancing 7th. They were, however, just in time, for our artillerymen were on the last of their ammunition. The 7th crossed at once, and, boldly attacking, dislodged the Turks from the river-bank, whence they had been threatening both Cassells and us.

“In the middle of the night of the 29th, we were aroused and told to pack ready for the ferry—a few miles to the south. After getting our transport and gear across all right we went back to the ford to swim our horses—but the ford by this time had become a very hot spot. A fine artillery duel was in progress right over our old camping ground. We thought how lucky we were to have been given the tip to move at midnight! Had to return to the ferry and swim the horses behind the pontoons. But the river was wide at this point, and the horses soon tired. Others would not swim at all, so all we could do was to keep their heads above water and drag them across. A few trips like this, and we ourselves were thoroughly exhausted. However, we got them over, and moved inland a few miles, erecting camp about 2 p.m. But in the din of battle we could hear very few signals! Engine trouble into the bargain, too!

“The Turks were now having a terrible time. From the north the Royal Horse Artillery attacked to the cavalry detachments delivered salvo after salvo; to the south the 17th Division attacked with grim determination. There was but one thing to do. At dawn the whole force surrendered—and then rushed in thousands to the river, where they drank like wild things. The 11th Brigade had done its job of keeping them from the river only too well. Rations at nightfall—a sheep and four handfuls of coarse flour amongst the lot of us.

“At two o’clock on the 31st we joined a combined column marching northwards, and reached Quayyarah, 14 miles distant. Here we managed at last to get enough to eat, even though it were only home-made chappatties of Turkish flour. We also got some green-stuff for our poor horses. Next day pushed on to Hammam Ali. The country became hilly; oil seepage was everywhere on the ground, and a strong smell of crude oil in the air. Souvenired some Turkish bank notes, also some pumpkins from an Arab village. Our first sight of Mosul was from the highest point of the hills, and its white marble buildings looked good to us in the early morning sunlight. The brigade camped at night here near the town, but later we had to hurry up and erect near H.Q., which occupied the German Consulate.”

OTHER STATIONS.

Several other stations must be mentioned in regard to the Mosul operations. At I. Corps H.Q., No. 5 wagon was on duty as control station. Its equipment, however, failed to stand up to the heavy traffic, and a new control station (No. 15)—a lorry set, manned by the men of No. 4 from Ramadi—was sent up from Baghdad to Baiji and Sherqat to take over the work. No. 3 pack over at Hit also filled the breach on several occasions.
7th Cavalry Brigade advancing through the dust at Tekrit. No. 7 Station erected.

Water tanks erected at Ain Nukhailah and filled with fresh water, ready for the cavalry brigades on their way to the Zab river.

Near the Fathah position, which after the Turkish retirement became the site of the British advanced supply depots.

No. 10 Station erected on the left bank of the Tigris near Guanus. Cassell's brigade had meanwhile crossed the ford and was established across the Turkish lines of communication.
No. 7 at the Gauus crossing, preparing to ferry its gear across the Tigris.

No. 10 at Gauus—station equipment ready for ferrying.

No. 10 at Gauus—swimming the horses across the Tigris.

No. 14 at Shergat, with the troops advancing to Mosul. The mounds in the distance are artificial and are part of the ruins of the ancient Assyrian city of Ashur.
LIGHT MOTOR WIRELESS STATIONS

Ford vans with pack set equipment connected up ready for transmitting. No. 14, Horselines, Summer, 1918.

One of our vans aboard the Arab ferry at Tekrit. This ancient hill-city is to be seen in the background.

On the Shergat offensive—a road being cut across a nullah for the armoureds. Within an hour of this photograph being taken, the cars were having their first brush with the Turks.

No. 13 Station erected with the L.A.M.B.

At Shergat: The meeting between the cars and the cavalry.
Looking southwards over Kalat Shergat, the ruins of the ancient city of Assur. The man is standing upon all that remains of the temple tower beneath which Xenophon and his ten thousand rested during their famous march to the sea.

Remains of Assyrian pavement, Kalat Shergat.

No. 7 Station lines at Mosul—negotiations with a washerwoman.
S.B.A. (afterwards No. 16), the German Telefunken wagon set repaired in 36 hours by members of No. 13 and 14 Stations.

Courtyard of the billet at Mosul, showing Nos. 13 and 14 Stations vans.

No. 7 Station at Ilyas, photographed with the patriarch and two monks of the monastery.

No. 14 Station erected at Tel Asfar, Dec. 1918.
Looking across the Khauser River to the ruins of the great Assyrian city of Nineveh.

A restoration of Sennacherib's palace, Nineveh, as depicted by Ferguson, an artist who accompanied one of Layard's expeditions. The palace was built of mud bricks, faced with sculptures; after its destruction by the Medes (in the seventh century B.C.), the mud bricks disintegrated to form the mound shown above, which completely enveloped the stonework.

Nabi Eunice (Jonah's Tomb).—A Royal Air Force view of the Shrine which has effectively prevented Assyriologists from digging in this part of the mounds of Nineveh.
At Magil, the Squadron's last parade beneath the palms—one of its few parades as a complete unit (though even now D Troop was missing).

At Bombay, the "mutiny" beside the train to Deolali.

At Deolali—white bungalows and a green countryside, both of which were novelties to Mesopotamians.

Deolali—at the Squadron football meeting.
THE SQUADRON'S HOMECOMING

Across India: A wayside railway station between Deolali and Calcutta.

At Howrah Docks, Calcutta, where the Squadron embarked on the "Janus" for return to Australia.

Sports on board the "Janus."

On the left: our first sight of Australia. On the right: Almost at Sydney—the cliffs between Bondi and South Head.
The excavations at Kouyunjik as they appeared seventy years ago. Layard is shown superintending the removal of one of the great winged bulls.

During November No. 1 wagon, still at Kifri, handled traffic for No. 8 during that station’s advance to Altun Kupri, and, later, during its five weeks’ stay at Suleimaniyah. Nos. 11 and 12 packs were attached as stand-by stations, in case of land-line failure, to III. Corps H.Q., at Hambis, and 13th Division at Dali Abbas respectively. No. 2 wagon was still at Baqubah, taking traffic for G.H.Q., and acting as control station. No. 6 pack and No. 9 wagon were in Persia.

OUR ARRIVAL AT MOSUL.

Our first few days in Mosul savoured rather of comic opera. Nos. 10, 11, 13 and 14 Stations arrived with portions of the column at various times during November 3rd, and the British flag was soon floating over the Consulate, saluted by a salvo of a hundred and one guns fired by the Turks. Soon the streets were full of aimlessly-wandering Turks and Britihers, inspecting each other with suspicious, curious, and friendly eyes. In the square the Turkish band played “God Save the King,” while we went shopping and bought souvenirs, cigarettes, pumpkins and chappatties, and our horses ate their headropes and blankets in their hunger.

Despite the provisions of the Turkish armistice, the Turks showed no inclination to leave, saying they would have to await instructions from Istanbul. But as their big wireless station had been out of action ever since the German mechanics cleared out, these orders seemed likely to be long in arriving. (Incidentally, most of those same Germans had a bad time on the desert road to Nisbin, where certain Arab gentlemen with long memories awaited them.) A few days were spent in mutual fencing, of which the chief interest to the squadron lay in its efforts to gain control of the Turkish wireless station. We managed to visit it on the 5th and found it a magnificent piece of apparatus, every detail (including a complete set of spare parts) worked out with typical German thoroughness. It was 1½ h.v. set of Telefunken type—mounted on three wagons. The telescopic mast was in ten-foot sections, and carried an umbrella aerial of twenty wires. When on the move it was drawn by bullocks, but it now rested in a big bomb-proof concrete cellar prepared by the Germans.

Next day, two or three of our men from the motor stations had a go at the set, and despite the intricacies of an unknown circuit they had discovered the fault within 36 hours. The Turks were delighted, and wanted to get in touch with Constantinople right away. But this did not suit G.H.Q., and orders were issued that another fault (and as many more as were necessary) was to develop in the set. Meanwhile the personnel of the motor van stations secured good quarters in a nearby farmhouse.

After further diplomacy, the station was formally handed over on November 8th, and by the 10th the last of the Turks were on their way to Nisbin railhead. All Mesopotamia’s ears pricked up when the first wireless message went out into space—“Go it, Anzac, all’s well!” In a couple of shifts we were in touch with the Palestine force through the station at Homs—the first direct linking up of the two armies.

During this period, Nos. 7 and 10 stations spent a rather hungry week in the cavalry lines, on the river flats south of the city. Then on the 12th No. 7 was despatched with a patrol of the 13th Lancers to Ilyas, to keep an eye on the Turks withdrawing from the Altun Kupri line. At Ilyas they camped at the fort-like and ancient monastery of Mar Behnam—a medieval structure (1306), apparently modelled on the lines of an even earlier one. The more modern part was excellently carved, with pride of place given to representations of St. George. But No. 7’s chief memory lingered round the shortage of firewood, and how the deficiency was repaired with Turkish telegraph posts imported under the eyes of the colonel.

Sixteen interesting days were spent at the monastery, before returning to Mosul on the 29th, and leaving for Baghdad on January 16th.

No. 10 was withdrawn from Mosul to Abu Sif after four days, and on November 16th set off for Baghdad, which was reached after thirteen easy stages.
No. 14 AT TEL AFAR.

On November 4th No. 14 station accompanied the 32nd Lancers to Tel Afar, on a mission undertaken both for political reasons and for the purpose of arranging for supplies. They drove for 20 miles along the road to Aleppo. No homesteads were in sight, yet there was cultivation in plenty. On approaching Tel Afar, however, they met hundreds of mounted men, on horse and the inevitable donkey, riding out to the holdings for the day’s work. Here and there was led an animal with a plough or harrow lashed to its back.

Tel Afar was once a town of considerable importance, and is mentioned by the early Arab geographers. It lies at the foot of a mound crowned by a castle, and is partly surrounded by gardens, while in all directions stretch the ruins of villages dating from Assyrian days. The old fortress is built into the hillside facing the desert, the whole cliff being tunnelled out. A hundred years ago Tel Afar was an independent chiefdom, but the inhabitants dealt so hardly with passing caravans, and indulged in so many raids into Mosul territory, that the Turks made several attempts to capture it. Eventually, despite vigorous opposition, they succeeded, and, after plundering the town, put two-thirds of the people to the sword by way of a warning. To this day the inhabitants appreciate the strategic value of their town, and so the farmers prefer to live in it and go out in the morning to their fields, and it was they whom we encountered on our arrival.

The people of Tel Afar are of Turcoman descent and seemed superior to the Mosulites in every way. They were curious, too, for the men of our wireless section were the first white troops of the British side to come to the place. Many of the people knew French, but it was difficult to explain to them that Australians were not exactly English. Wherever they went they were shown the utmost respect; groups of men sitting would rise deferentially at their approach. Maybe the “Allamans” (as they called the Germans) taught them the trick, but it seemed sincere enough.

SOME NOTES ON MOSUL.

Having dealt with the last of the station movements round Mosul, we must spare time for a word about the town itself. Although at so short a distance from Baghdad, no greater difference between the two can be imagined. Baghdad is Arab, Mosul a town of the foot-hill peoples; the former is of wood and brick, the latter of stone and coarse marble. A city has been on the spot since the earliest times, and just across the river, at the junction of the Tigris and the Khauser, is Kouyunjik, site of ancient Nineveh, the great and beautiful Assyrian city built by Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.).

To look at the hills lying against the river, one would not suspect that they were artificial. Yet more than seventy years ago to these mounds came the great Layard, who garnered for the British Museum a dream collection of vast monuments and sculptures, and, at a later date, more marvellous still, the whole of Assurbanipal’s library of contemporary literature and documents. Even to this day the monuments show the scroll marks of the firebrands of the Medes when they laid waste the city twenty-five centuries ago. On a corner of the mounds is perched one of Jonah’s three duly authenticated tombs. Antiquarians are not very interested in Jonah, but the fact that Assyrian treasures lie buried beneath the sacred precints rakens in their minds.

Modern Mosul, on the right bank of the river, is distinguished by some twelfth century mosques, monasteries, and minarets; of the minarets, the most famous is a leaning one, said to have bowed in reverence to the boy Mahomet when he passed by with a caravan, and to have been unable quite to recover itself. Wood beams are at premium in Mosul; consequently the inhabitants have developed characteristic doming for their roofs. In the bazaars there is little of interest to be seen. At first we all rushed the curios—Turkish watches, swords, decorations, and belt buckles, murderous Kurdish knives, Constantinople fancy-work and German aspirin, and these were soon bought up. The chief industries seemed to us to be iron and copper work, repair shops for footwear, harness, tools, etc., and, apparently most important of all, the taking in of each other’s washing! On any fine day hundreds of dhobi-women were to be seen on the shingle of the river bank, and, as soap is dear and of poor quality, they beat out the dirt with small wooden paddles.

When we arrived the population of Mosul was about 40,000—mainly Armenians, Persians, Kurds, Syrians, and a few Turkish officials. Its wartime history had been the terrible yet customary one of Turkish oppression, of starvation, of the cornering of foodstuffs by those in official positions, ill-treatment of refugees, petty blackmail and persecution by the dervishes and the like. A favorite method of dealing with Armenian refugees was on some excuse or other to make up large parties for supposed transfer to another city, but they seldom arrived at their destination. The starvation, like that on the Persian road, can hardly be described; or can the behaviour of the soldiery towards the local Christian families; or even the miserable plight of the average Turkish conscript. Between the Turks and the Germans a kind of non-co-operation existed during the last years of the war; in fact, the Germans helped their allies only when it suited them. We believe that many of our lads owe their lives to the dud ammunition that was worked off on the Turks by the unscrupulous German contractors. Since the Armistice the Turks have made desperate diplomatic attempts to regain control of the Mosul district, but it is to be hoped that he will never succeed.

As with Baghdad, Mosul entered on a newer and happier chapter of its history when the British took charge—but that is another story.
DEMOBILISATION
(S.H.Q., A., B., and C. Troops.)

Christmas, 1918, saw the end of the troubles of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force—at least so far as those troubles were due to Johnny Turk. And what troubles there had been! The vicissitudes of the force had scarcely been equalled elsewhere. Its history was made up of the most curious contrasts, so much so that we must quote some of them here.

In 1914 Fao Fort, at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab, was captured by a landing party from a cruiser. In 1918 the total strength of the force, including labor corps, was nearly half-a-million (420,000).

On the Tigris, British arms suffered the great disaster of Kut-el-Amara—yet the waters of the Euphrates witnessed the crowning victory of Khan Baghdadi, when five thousand men and two hundred officers were made prisoners in a single day.

Contrasts everywhere: mud and dust: nights below zero, and days with temperatures of 130 degrees; railway engines steaming past Nebuchadnezzar's Citadel; telephones on the same shelves as prayer rugs. Medical scandals—at a later date, fifty soda-water factories, and ice works in abundance. In 1918 no equipment, no lines of communication—in 1918 two thousand vessels on the rivers, and departments and workshops dealing with every conceivable military and civil activity.

We can always be proud of our association with such a force. The resource and efficiency of our men were relied upon on occasions without number; the squadron was inclined to believe, perhaps with good foundation, that if there was an Anzac station attached, Generals went out on prolonged desert stints with an easy mind as to their communications. Three army commanders relied day and night on the Squadron; two Australian stations made it their business to see that every enemy radio message found its way to "T" Branch. The reliance on the Squadron appeared to be complete, and the Squadron accepted that reliance as their right by doing more than was expected of them. They made no excuses (although it is easy to make excuses for wireless even in these days); whether there was static or fading, whether the signals were so faint that the operator's pencil drowned them, the traffic went through just the same. Australian and New Zealander joined up in the force's darkest hour, and stuck to their jobs till the sun shone once more.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

On every side we saw Tommies and Indians wending their homeward ways. Well and good—an army of fighting men was no longer needed in the field. But wireless stations were a different matter. The staff had grown to like them—so much so that at armistice-time there were about fifty somewhere or other. Ninety per cent. of the mobile ones were Australian-manned, and they could not be released without leaving the army of occupation entirely without dependable mobile stations.

Australia was adamant. Something must be done. A bright (1) idea—"D" Troop had only been in the country for eleven months—many of them were unmarried—there were enough single men to man four stations. Very well, Headquarters and three troops of the squadron could be released if this troop were left behind for emergencies (which did, as it turned out, most certainly emerge!). So it was agreed. Station after station returned to the Horse-lines Camp (which became uncomfortably crowded with horses, and mud—dier than ever). The last came in early in February, then a few stragglers from Persia, some of whom were even too late to go down river with the Squadron. The conduct of affairs was transferred to "D" Troop as from February 1st.

It took some time to hand in all the gear and horses, and some more time to get organised for the trip home. The parades which occurred during this time were at once the first and last held by the Squadron as a complete unit, for members had never been together before in any considerable strength; even now "D" Troop was absent. Then at last we went off (feeling ever so strange) to camp at Advanced Base Depot.

Our marching out strength was 9 officers and 257 other ranks.

Behind us, in every branch of the Force, we left good friends, but none whose names will be recalled longer than those of Lieutenants Nichols and Childs, the officers in charge of signal stores at Basra and Baghdad respectively. Without their generous assistance and ready co-operation, it would have been impossible for the wireless squadron to have fulfilled the constant demands made upon it, or to have furnished so many stations beyond the normal establishment.

By February 20th we were on board the "Northbrook" at Basra. To our ranks had been added a party of Pack Troop men who had been released earlier, but who had the misfortune only to get so far on their voyage home. We reached Bombay on March 5th, our minds full of glorious visions—leaves, flowers, real food, tablecloths, and other things we had not seen for years. Imagine our feelings when we were immediately ordered to entrain (with exceedingly poor accommodation) for Deolali—an up-country station. There was a small "mutiny" which lasted for some hours and considerably disconcerted various parties—then we ungraciously yielded.

On the 18th we left Deolali for Calcutta, and embarked on the s.s. "Janus" at that port on the 22nd. Singapore was reached on March 29th. Eleven days later we caught our first glimpse of Australian soil. Gum trees—how strange they looked. And how hard to part with those with whom we had lived and laughed and worked for so long.
THE AUSTRALIAN NURSES IN INDIA
1916–1919

It is not realised in Australia that during the last half of the war the military hospitals of India were mainly staffed by Australian nurses. They tended British troops of the Indian garrison and the Mesopotamian force; they for the first time brought the deprivations of civilization to large numbers of wounded Turks; they staffed hospital ships running to Suez, Basra, East Africa, and even Vladivostok; and they ran a hospital at Bushire in southern Persia. Four of them—A. O’Grady, K. M. Power, L. G. Moreton, and E. Clare—lost their lives on service in India.

They were sent in answer to an appeal from the Indian Government, which was in serious difficulty for the following reasons. The early months of 1916 found the Indian hospitals, and still more the medical service in Mesopotamia, inadequately prepared to receive the great flood of sick and wounded then beginning to pour back from the Mesopotamian front. So slight was the accommodation for them in Mesopotamia that, to obtain treatment, the most serious cases had not only to come the long journey down the Tigris to Basra (at the head of the Persian Gulf), but, in very great numbers, were brought down the Persian Gulf—a voyage of dreadful heat and suffering—right to Bombay. The Bombay Presidency Hospital, which had previously been organised in India for service abroad, was recalled from Egypt and established in the splendid new offices of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, close to the docks in Bombay—where it became known as the Victoria War Hospital, and received the worst cases direct from the hospital ships: but the nurses from this and other hospitals in India were urgently required to staff new hospitals in Mesopotamia, so that the worst cases might in future, if possible, be retained there.

THE FIRST FIFTY.

At that time more than 100 Australian nurses in Egypt were disengaged in consequence of the movement of the Australian infantry divisions to France. Learning the need of India for trained nurses, the Cairo staff on 23rd May, 1916, telegraphed to the Commonwealth Government asking whether it might send fifty nurses to India upon the clearance of the month’s engagement. On the recommendation of Surgeon-General Fetherston, the Government at once cabled to India offering to send these nurses immediately at Australia’s expense. No mention, however, was made in this cable of the six months’ limitation. The Indian Government replied gratefully accepting this offer, and fifty nurses under Miss Emily Hoadley, lately senior sister of No. 3 Australian General Hospital, were at once despatched from Egypt.

These nurses anticipated that, like those of the Bombay Presidency Hospital, they would serve as a complete staff. On arrival, however, they were sent in threes and fours to “station hospitals” at Lahore, Calcutta, Mooltan, Naoshera, Sialkot, and numerous small military stations throughout the whole of India. The work was not in most cases true war-nursing, but home service, largely on “the plains,” and under the conditions of Indian midsummer. The patients at this time included many heat-strokes, some with temperatures running to 110 degrees.

Letters presently reached Australia to say that the health of some of the sisters, who had previously served in Egypt, was breaking down; there was also difficulty in some places in living on the pay. It was decided that after six months this batch of nurses should be sent to England. Some of them had originally reached Egypt at midsummer in thick woolen frocks with long silk capes and tiny grey velvet bonnets. They eventually arrived in England amid the snow of mid-winter in Panama hats!

Meanwhile General Fetherston, on hearing of the great need of India, had written to the D.M.S. there saying that plenty of nurses were available in Australia, and, if asked for, would be gladly sent. This letter crossed a request from the British Government that 100 nurses might, if possible, be sent to India and Malta, these to enter the Imperial service. No sooner had this been agreed to than the Indian Government’s cabled reply came to hand (on 7th August, 1916) glad to ask for fifty additional trained nurses to be sent to Bombay as soon as possible, and fifty to follow a month later. The duplicate arrangement with England was accordingly cancelled by the Commonwealth, which proposed to send the 100 nurses to India as members of the Australian Imperial Force, paid for by Australia.

FIRST BATCH FROM AUSTRALIA.

A call was made on nurses serving in military hospitals in Australia—most of whom had for months been anxiously awaiting a chance of service at the front. The first fifty volunteers from Australia sailed on the 22nd of August, 1916, under Matron G. E. Davis, a woman of great capacity who had previously served in No. 3 Australian General Hospital at Lemnos, and who henceforth became principal matron of the A.A.N.S. in India; the second fifty in the following month, under Sisters B. Lowrey and T. J. Dunne; and numerous successive batches until no less than 700 had reached India. Those in the first batches were given some kind of assurance that, as the climate of India was severe, they would not be kept there for more than six months, but would then be sent on to England or France. To serve in France or Mesopotamia was, throughout, their keen desire. But the great needs of the soldiers in India proved too exacting. Most of the nurses served in India until the Armistice, when a number were transferred to Australian hospitals in England. The ship which had brought the first fifty from Australia was the Mooltan, which also carried 270
members of the wireless squadron. After a wild passage through the Bight, they transshipped at Colombo, where the Australian hospital ship Karoola was in port, also full of Australian sisters for Egypt; spent a delightful day, in spite of the monsoon, at Kandy; and saw the lights of Bompay on the night of 12th September, 1916. In drenching rain next day they disembarked. The staff sent them at once to three hospitals—Colaba War Hospital, Cumbernaul Hospital, and the Taj Mahal Hotel, then used as a hospital. In what looked like a board room at the Taj Mahal, Miss Dunwoodie, the Lady Superintendent, Q.A.I.M.N.S. (Queen Alexandra Imperial Medical Nursing Service) for Bombay, explained a perplexing maze of rules and regulations. Later in the day suppressed excitement became apparent in the hotel. Cholera was then rampant, several medical men and sisters having succumbed, including two Australians from Egypt, Misses O’Grady and Power. It now became known that another case had occurred at the hotel, and the place was to be at once vacated.

Just at this juncture the British nurses of the Victoria War Hospital, Mesopotamia, and Miss Davis was appointed matron with a staff of Australian nurses. The British matron was too ill to give any information even to the new matron; eighteen of the British service nurses left next day for Mesopotamia, and the remainder the following week. The hospital was left in the hands of forty newly-arrived Australians (not one of whom could speak a word of Hindustani, or knew the duties of the numerous native servants, who for their part could not speak English) and ten other nurses, mostly Eurasians, and only part of them trained.

"WITH A KNIFE, SPOON AND FORK!"

The military hospitals were, roughly speaking, of two kinds—the old station hospitals, usually of 100 or 150 beds, maintained by the Indian Government at its cantonments; and the big war-hospitals (sometimes expanded from station hospitals), at which the casualties from the front were treated. The station hospitals were often in very hot districts, and the traditional economy of the Indian Government had resulted in their being very poorly equipped. "I sometimes think that the Government expects me to operate with a knife, spoon, and fork," said one much-worried medical officer. But the kindness of the British officials and other residents was always up for many discomforts. The war-hospitals were mostly well equipped, and any requisites within reason could be obtained from the authorities or from the Red Cross.

In October, 1916, two batches, each of twenty-five nurses, under Sisters Lowrey and Dunne respectively, reached Bombay. At least one of the subsequent batches of fifty arrived in Bombay without the Australian principal matron there having been warned that it was coming, and she was consequently much perplexed to know what to do with it. Its nurses, expecting for quarters for the night at the Victoria War Hospital, hit upon a ward just evacuated by Turkish prisoners, and, according to some, it proved the most uncomfortable night they had ever spent!

"MOST INTERESTING—CHOLERA, DYSENTERY AND PLAGUE."

The A.A.N.S. nurses threw themselves wholeheartedly into their work from both patriotic and keen professional motives, as would be expected of Australian sisters. "During the latter part," wrote one, "the work was most interesting, there being so many cases of tropical diseases, including cholera, dysentery, and plague." There are many similar notes in the records. In a good many hospitals the conditions were peculiar. For example, "males (writes a sister) were very prevalent; many Russell’s vipers, kraits, and cobras were killed—some in the sisters’ rooms. One sister at the Deccan War Hospital, Poona, was bitten, but recovered."

The hours of work were from 7.30 a.m. to 8 p.m., with three hours off every other day; alternate days—7.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Leave of thirty days a year was eventually given, and the memories of their tours to some of the historic sights of India, such as the Taj Mahal at Agra, as well as to the Himalayan stations, Mussoorie, Darjeeling, Simla, and elsewhere, are some of the happiest memories of these trying days on service. Where Australian nurses were well known, the price of purchases from the "box-wallahs" sometimes went up, the natives having the quite erroneous notion—"Australian sisters plenty money!" Journeys were made easier by the unceasing courtesy of British officers and residents who (as one nurse records) seemed to make it their business to assist and attend to the comfort of any white woman in India. Twenty Australian nurses married there.

STAFFED BY AUSTRALIANS.

Eventually the following hospitals were provided with trained nursing staffs consisting entirely of Australians, generally assisted in the case of the larger hospitals by a much smaller number of "untrained" or "temporary" nurses, the Indian equivalent of the V.A.D.’s, of England.

Bombay:—Victoria War Hospital, 600 beds—Matron G. E. Davis (Principal Matron, A.A.N.S. in India).

Deolali:—34th Welsh General Hospital, 2000-3000 beds—(1917) Matron Alma Bennett.

Poona:—Deccan War Hospital, 1200 beds—Matron A. Dowseley.

Bangalore:—Station Hospital, 800 beds—Matron Matron A. Dowseley.

Belgaum:—Station Hospital, 100 beds.

Delhi:—Station Hospital, 170 beds—Sister Constance Mary.

Bushire (Southern Persia):—Station Hospital, 150 beds—Sister Mary Stewart.

Ahmadnagar:—Station Hospital, 100 beds—Sister Cecil Gordon.

Maymyo (Burma):—Station Hospital, 100 beds—Sister Agnes Ferguson.

Bagh:—Malaria Research Hospital, 100 beds—Sister May Farrell.

Nask:—Officers’ Hospital, 60 beds—Sister Molloy.

PARTLY STAFFED BY AUSTRALIANS.

There were Australian nurses also at the following among other places—Bombay (Gerard Freeman Thomas Hospital and Colaba War Hospital, 600 beds), Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Meerut, Sialkot; also during the earlier frontier wars—at Tank on the Baluchistan frontier (Sister E. G. Browne), and Dera Ghazi Khan; and during the Afghan War, 1919—Rawalpindi, Gharial, and Khudzana. The following hospital ships were staffed for longer or shorter periods by Australian nurses—Vareeia (Sister Minnie Walshe),
Ellora (Matron Annie Roberts), Vita (Sister E. G. Browne), Egypt (Sister Elizabeth Horne), Herefordshire (Sister Alma Bennett, Sister Gertrude Moberly), Delta (Sister E. Horne), Sicilia, Madras (Sister L. E. Fletcher).

All hospitals in India began to diminish in 1919, when the troops were transferred to Peshawar and Kohat on the second outbreak of war with Afghanistan. A number of Australian nurses then waiting for return home were at once placed on the strength of the North-West Frontier Force—where they served with distinction. This record is concluded at the end of this narrative.

The experiences of the Australian nursing staff at some of the hospitals were as follows.

**VICTORIA WAR HOSPITAL, BOMBAY.**

This was in a new building, just completed for the G.I.P. Railway audit offices. It had four stories, splendidly airy, with 200 beds on each of the three lower floors and sisters' quarters on the fourth. The ward work was performed by natives of different castes, and, as the Australian nurses, on taking over, knew nothing of the castes or of the language, and had to communicate entirely by signs, many mistakes were made at first.

This hospital, being within five minutes of the docks, received the most serious cases. A week after the Australian nurses arrived there poured in 300 British prisoners of war, who had been kept by the Turks in Bagdad and released after the fall of Kut in exchange for able-bodied Turkish prisoners held by the British. The British wounded had been fed on biscuits that looked like pollard. The greater number had dysentery, beriberi, and septic wounds; they had taken three months to come from Bagdad, and were in a state of starvation. The Australian nurses' hearts were melted and they gave them too much to eat and drink, but within a few hours discovered their mistake. The released prisoners did well, and all except two were eventually saved.

Things then fell quiet, and numbers became low before Christmas, 1916, when heavy fighting filled up the hospital again with surgical cases, eighty arriving on Christmas Day. The nurses had decorated the wards in true Australian style, to the wonderment of Bombay, where Christmas is not celebrated. By March, 1917, the British patients were again falling in numbers, but now came such a flood of wounded Turks that this hospital and a good part of No. 34 Welsh General Hospital at Deolali were given over for their treatment.

**LIKE FEEDING-TIME AT THE ZOO.**

These Turks had, in the first place, received practically no treatment until they reached British hands. They were originally captured on a Red Crescent "hospital boat" on the Tigris (the Firefly, captured from the British earlier in the war). They had been found in an appalling condition. All the Turkish doctors and orderlies scuttled away from her before her capture, removing all instruments and dressings—if any ever existed. The patients had not been washed since leaving the battlefield (or, probably, long before), and their dressings had never been renewed. On arrival in Bombay they were so universally septic and filthy that only one thing was to be done—to put all except the very worst cases at once into an antiseptic bath. They were scared, and wailed dismally whenever the nurses attempted to do their dressings. "The noise (one sister described it) resembled that of feeding time at the Zoo." The explanation probably was that their own doctors handled them roughly, and even cruelly. One old Turk about 60 gave a demonstration of the difference between an English and a Turkish medical officer. Eking out his representation with a few words of broken Hindustani, Arabic, and English, he showed first the English medicino, tenderly feeling a broken femur—and then the Turkish doctor grabbing the limb, and, when the patient howled with pain, giving him a blow over the head.

"**WIFE OF A CAPTAIN.**"

The Turkish officers, some of whom could speak French, were amused at the sisters' badges of rank. They concluded that the matron must be the wife of a captain; the sisters—wives of lieutenants; and the staff nurses—wives of second lieutenants.

The nursing of these Turks was the best experience the Australian sisters had. So septic were the wounds that on one floor of 240 beds there were 60 amputations. The death rate was high. The Turks preferred to die rather than lose a limb, for they believed that an imperfect man could not enter Paradise. Where, however, by so refusing, a man seemed to be throwing away a good chance of life, the English doctors brought the senior Turkish officer down to the operating theatre to advise the patient to have the limb cut off. On being shown the wound—possibly in order to get away from the sight of it—he advised (or perhaps ordered) the patient to have the limb cut off. Anyway the lives of some of the Turks were thus saved; but the Australian nurses were surprised to find many of them dying from sheer absence of the will to live. They made up their minds to die, and die they did.

The Turkish patients greatly relished their food, although they soon abandoned the attempt to eat with knives and forks. They ate cleanly with their hands. There was much difficulty in breaking them of the habit of hiding bits of food under their pillows and bed-clothes.

While these Turks were there the English R.A.M.C. orderlies did most of the ordinary ward work, "slogging in" harder than ever they had done for white patients, in order to save the sisters. The night orderlies refused to go to their dining room for supper because it would mean leaving the sisters alone in the wards. The Turks were easy to manage; but more than one broke a crutch over a fellow countryman's head through a quarrel at cards.

**HEAT-STROKES.**

From March to July, 1917, there were never less than 500 Turks at this hospital. Then they were sent to Deolali, and the Victoria Hospital was being prepared for native troops, when there arrived a flood of British cases with heat-stroke—nearly 1,000 per week for three months; and they were pouring into all the other Bombay hospitals also. All were very anemic, most had heart trouble, and many developed severe epilepsy, which was often relieved by a lumbar puncture. One patient had a temperature of 109, and when ice-sponging and packs were tried he only came down to 106 and stayed there for three days. He got well, but was a very long time about it. The heat of the Gulf often caused prickly heat, which became septic and developed into boils; many patients were literally covered with them. All heat-strokes were eventually sent for three months to the hills.

By October, 1917, German prisoners from East Africa were arriving. British, German, and Turks were all well disciplined, and not once was any sister subjected to the least disrespect. "I have the greatest admiration for the endurance of the British Tommy," wrote one sister (Sister Alma Bennett), "and the orderlies, with rare exceptions, were invaluable." The hospital closed on the 8th of August, 1918.

**CUMBALLA WAR HOSPITAL.**

This hospital was beautifully sited on Malabar Hill, by the shores of Bombay harbour. It had 600 beds,
and the patients were British soldiers. The staff was for a time a mixed one of English and Australian nurses under a British matron, but it was shortly afterwards decided that the Australian sisters should where possible serve under Australian matrons.

**COLABA WAR HOSPITAL.**

Twenty minutes' drive from Bombay city. The hospital consisted of old bungalows, which at first appeared very unsuitable, but afterwards proved comfortable enough. The staff was a mixed one, including regular "Anglo-Indian" nurses (Q.A.I.M.N.S.) and "temporary" nurses, with R.A.M.C. orders; but the greater part of the nursing staff consisted of Australian sisters under an English matron, Miss Knapp, "whom we all adored," as one of the Australian sisters afterwards wrote. "I have never met her equal for organising power," records another. Consequently, in spite of the steamy heat and inevitable loss of energy, the nurses were happy—"like one happy family," as another Australian girl states. The Australian sisters quickly gathered enough Hindustani to manage the native servants. The hospital was soon in order; it had the sea on three sides of it, and the officers' wards were beautifully furnished, as were also those for the sick sisters. The patients were mainly from the British garrison of India. In the later part of the service there, patients brought in with "malaria" were found to be really suffering from cholera, smallpox, and plague. "So our experience was very varied," comments an Australian sister (Miss Larkan).

**GERRARD FREEMAN THOMAS HOSPITAL.**

This was in a fine building, constructed for a school of science. The hospital was founded by Lady Willingdon, wife of the Governor of Bombay, and was named after their son, who was killed in the retreat from Mons. Lady Willingdon had supervised the furnishing, which was finely done. Here twelve of the staff of fifty nurses were Australian. There were no R.A.M.C. orderlies, but Indian ward-boys. The cases (1,000 beds) were British, including some Australian wireless boys from Mesopotamia, and many Lancashire, Welsh, and Scottish troops who had served in Gallipoli and who sailed the nurses with fine tales of exploit of the Australian troops there. In September and October, 1918, influenza became very severe in Bombay, the deaths totalling 700 a day. At night the glare from the cremation grounds resembled that of a city in flames.

**No. 34 WELSH HOSPITAL, DEOLALI**

The British officer in charge of this hospital was good enough to state afterwards that it was his Australian nursing staff which had won him his C.B.E. This most generous tribute was probably not literally true; but the staff was a fine one, and Deolali was remembered by many nurses as the scene of numerous experiences of great interest. The patients included British "Tommies," French Algerians, Mauritius Labour Corps, and Turks. The cases included even leprosy, and one typical case of hydrophobia.

The hospital was in open country in what is known as a "second-class hill station," four hours' journey (160 miles) from Bombay, having been opened in June, 1916, by this Welsh unit under a fine commander, Colonel A. W. Sheen, R.A.M.C. (Territorial Force). A year later the British nurses were ordered to Mesopotamia, and Madame Bridier took up fifty Australian nurses from Bombay to replace them, leaving word for Sister Alma Bennett, who was just then finishing a journey on a hospital ship from the Persian Gulf, to come up as soon as she landed and take the position of matron. It was then the middle of the monsoon, and the country was drenched with rain. The hospital was an old barracks of enormous extent, consisting of forty-six bungalows, the greater number built of stone, but others of galvanised iron recently constructed in the spaces between the stone ones. The whole was one and a half miles long by three-quarters of a mile wide, a huge area for the matron to cover on inspection duty. Eventually the Red Cross Society provided her with a car.

This hospital received those cases—both "walking" and "lying"—which were in fit condition to travel so far from Bombay (including all of Baghdad, many wounded Turks). A large proportion required treatment of joints and massage, and fortunately there was available Sister A. Scott, who had a massage diploma, a comparatively rare thing with Australian trained nurses. Malaria was very prevalent at Deolali. Consequently all mosquito-nets over the patients' beds had to be tucked in by 6 o'clock each evening. The order was very strict, no excuse being accepted if it was broken. The general precautions were good, and not one of the nursing staff of this hospital contracted malaria there.

The patients at No. 34 increased so heavily that in September no less than 2,188 were in hospital. To cope with these Colonel Sheen, after consulting with the matron, divided the hospital into two, a "convalescent division," in which the patients were grouped, 98 in a bungalow or its attachments under one N.C.O. of the R.A.M.C.; and a "nursing division," on which the nurses concentrated their attention.

Hardly had this been done when, first, a few cases of small-pox and, three weeks later, a severe outbreak of plague broke out in the "nursing division." The outbreak of plague was a most serious matter, as among white troops such an occurrence is very rare. It was afterwards attributed to the tree rats—pretty and friendly little fellows which, it was found, the patients had been petting. The plague cases were fatal. Orders were given for the whole "nursing division" (1,600 patients) to be at once cleared to the new buildings, a mile distant, just completed for No. 44 British General Hospital, or to No. 6 Camp, a quarter of a mile farther still. The sisters were taken thither in motor ambulances daily for three weeks while the old hospital was being disinfected and painted. By the end of November the patients had been re-transferred and the original hospital was working as before.

"**OUR DAY.**"

It was during the following months that there was held throughout India "Our Day," for raising funds for the troops in Mesopotamia—the force in which India was especially interested. Officers and men raised money by organising sports and football matches; the nurses by making in their spare hours cakes, lollies, and other things for sale. At Deolali the Australian nurses and their "temporary" colleagues arranged a kiosk in the sports ground, where they sold sweets; compiled and sold a magazine (profit 400 rupees); raffled two "real Australian gold sovereigns" (Rs. 280); and handed over Rs. 1300 to the fund.

That year, as things were now running smoothly, the nursing staff concentrated upon making Christmas Day a memorable one for the patients. There were now 59 Australian nurses and 15 "temporary" Indian nurses in the hospital. The enjoyment of the patients was complete; and, when it was all over, 85 nurses sat down to their own Christmas dinner. "I felt a glow of pride," wrote the matron afterwards, "as I looked round on all those bright eager faces—they had proved so staunch and loyal in many busy, anxious days and nights."

On the 2nd of January, 1918, the Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford, visited the hospital, and, as he knew Australia well, the nurses obtained the right of entertaining him at tea, and treated him like an old friend.
THE "FLU."

The work remained heavy, as the best of the R.A.M.C. orderlies were now gradually being withdrawn to Mesopotamia. In July, 1918, there began to come in cases of what was then diagnosed as "Bombay fever," but was apparently the mild "Spanish" influenza epidemic which preceded the described outbreak of September. About September some of the orderlies at No. 44 B.G.H., sleeping in overcrowded quarters, began to sicken, and were brought into No. 34 and placed in the malaria wards. Their disease was not at first recognized, and quickly spread. The doctors began to catch it, and at last it spread to the nurses. As they began to go down the work fell more heavily on the remainder, and in their tired condition they quickly sickened. On October 17th one of them died from pneumonia following influenza. The weather was then at its hottest, dust and flies abounding. But electric fans helped to mitigate the heat; the "Tommites" put up a splendid fight for life, and the death roll was comparatively low, although of acute cases not many recovered. Inhalation, when introduced, proved a protection to the staff, fewer orderlies fell ill, and, among those who did, the chest cases were rarer.

The worst of this epidemic was thought to be over when, in a batch of eighty patients newly-arrived from Bombay, two died the first night from cholera, and others by the morning were sinking. The matron telegraphed for help, and three additional sisters were sent up from Colaba Hospital (where the same thing had occurred the previous night). A tremendous effort ensued to save the patients with pot-permanganate, by mouth, saline administered in every form, stimulants hypodermically given, and nourishment, resulting in improvement, only to be followed—in every case except one—by sudden collapse.

Towards the end of the war sisters began to be sent to England in batches, replaced by others newly arrived from Australia. On November 24 Miss Scott became matron in place of Miss Bennett, whose chance of English service had come.

No. 44 BRITISH GENERAL HOSPITAL, DEOLALI.

This was opened towards the end of 1917, the medical staff coming from Rawalpindi and the nurses being Australians, with Matron A. E. Dowsley in charge. The hospital was admitted as well as semi-convalescent patients from Mesopotamia, those from the local camps and from the chemist-staff of a neighbouring acetic acid factory. In July, 1918, it became an isolation hospital. The plague epidemic struck heavily at its staff, and eight months after its opening it was closed, the Australian matron then taking charge at Bangalore.

OFFICERS' HOSPITAL, NASIK.

A small hospital, seven miles from Deolali. There were only three nurses on the staff, and one of them (Sister E. A. Burke) described the life as "more like being at home than anything I experienced on service." The bungalows were fitted with electricity in 1918, but the night sister still kept beside her a hurricane lamp as a precaution against snakes, which were not infrequently met in this and other hospitals.

DECCAN WAR HOSPITAL, POONA.

This lay in the beautiful highland district of the Western Ghats, 140 miles from Bombay, had only eighty beds when, in December, 1916, an Australian matron (Miss T. J. Dunne) and six sisters were sent thither. A large increase, however, soon occurred, beds being rapidly erected and the hospital being, within three months, smoothly expanded to 1,200 beds—the Australian nurses at the same time increasing to fifty.

The patients, who flooded in from Mesopotamia, consisted at first largely of wounded; but, as the hospitals nearer the actual front became more numerous and better equipped, the nature of the cases reaching Poona gradually changed, medical cases predominating. The service in this hospital was described by two of the Australian nurses (Sisters Derrer and Mary Keating) as "very varied—a wonderful experience," including dysentery, plague, and cholera. An outbreak of cholera occurred in the Poona camps, and all cases were sent to this hospital. By inoculation and isolation the outbreak was kept down to about sixty cases, but work in the hospital was severe, the rule in cholera cases being that the patients must continuously have the attention of a medical officer, nurse, and orderly.

KING GEORGE'S WAR HOSPITAL, POONA.

This hospital, of 600 beds, had a staff of Australian sisters, at first under an English matron. One of the Australian sisters, Miss Ethel Butler, who had originally come from Australia as a temporary matron, was assistant matron until late in 1918, when she sailed to England in charge of fifty sisters.

TRIMULGHERY HOSPITAL, SECUNDERABAD.

This was in Hyderabad, the Indian state possessing the largest native army. The Nizam maintains there also a division of British troops as a precaution against native risings. The native troops were largely fighting in East Africa, where they contracted a very serious form of malaria; on their return to their native districts they spread this malaria everywhere, the British troops in that state suffering heavily. From 1916 Miss E. Hoadley of the A.I.F., with a staff of Australian nurses, was matron of this hospital, which then contained 500 beds. In 1918 she was succeeded by Miss Gertrude Mobberly, and the hospital was shortly afterwards increased to 1,200 beds. Its buildings had previously been a barracks of the 7th Hussars, and were seven miles from Secunderabad and four from Trimulgherry. From the sisters' quarters to the wards was a mile, and they were carried to and from work in small carts drawn by the little native bullock. The hospital was closed on the 7th of September, 1918.

STATION HOSPITALS.

Bangalore. A large station hospital nearby two days and nights by train from Bombay. It followed that Mesopotamian patients were only transferred thither from the Bombay hospitals when almost ready for convalescent depots. The place was also a large military station. Early in 1918, when it was taken over by Australian nurses from Indian regular sisters of the Q.A.I.M.N.S., it was a station hospital of 150 beds. During that year, however, the hospital was greatly increased, Miss Dowley being the matron. Influenza was very severe, and at one time no less than 58 per cent of the staff was off duty, some of its members being dangerously ill. This left nineteen nurses to carry on all duties, day and night. Nearly all the medical officers were down, and each of the wards, averaging eighty patients, was in charge of two (or in unfortunate cases two), with two nursing orderlies. The matron had to exercise much care in seeing that the seriously-ill patients were evenly distributed through the wards so as to avoid severely overworking some of the staff. Throughout the hospital was impoverished by shortage of equipment—a condition prevailing all over southern India.
Belgaum—a plateau station in Mysore with a good climate and pleasant conditions. The full staff comprised four Australian sisters, whose lot was made easier by the kindness of the residents and the existence of a very nice united service club.

"THE CLEANEST IN THIRTY YEARS."

Maymyo—a station hospital in Burma. The matron-in-chief for India (of the Q.A.I.M.N.S.) said Sister Agnes Ferguson, the Australian in charge, the compliment of saying that she did not think it was possible to keep a hospital as clean as she had been thirty years in the service in India and had never seen any hospital so well kept as this station hospital then was.

THE FRONTIER WARS.

Rawalpindi. When fighting occurred in Waziristan, No. 18 British General Hospital opened at Rawalpindi, the second largest military station in India, 1,400 miles from Bombay. Five Australian nurses were sent there. The severely wounded, however, were kept at Tank, and Dera Ismail Khan on the frontier. After three months, in June, 1917, No. 18 at Rawalpindi closed down. In November of that year Australian nurses were sent again to Rawalpindi station hospital, which was then receiving mainly malaria cases, but afterwards smallpox. In June, 1918, the heat became intense, ranging from 116 to 124 degrees in the coolest part of the hospital, and a run of heat-stroke cases occurred. The local troops were largely garrison regiments—old soldiers of the Gordon Highlanders and the Somerset Light Infantry; and the Gordons especially suffered. Many were afterwards mentally affected, but all cases were as soon as possible sent to Murree, where it was cooler, and, in the climate of the hills, regained their normal sanity. During the height of this trouble some of the native ward-boys went sick from sheer fright.

Murree. This station hospital, in the hills twenty miles from Rawalpindi, was for a time staffed with Australian nurses. The place was badly equipped, but, as one nurse (Sister Lardi) afterwards wrote, "one relief was the way in which the R.A.M.C. orderlies worked."

THE LAST PLACE GOD MADE.

Tank, on the Baluchistan frontier. "Here (wrote Matron Davis), where no woman had ever been sent before—the last place God ever made—six of the A.A.N.S. worked in the most appalling heat one could imagine." The hospital was built of mud, with low walls and openings for windows, and only the crudest kind of equipment. The country was so rough that the wounded were brought in some form of litters on camels, and were in an upright position. They came thus nearly 100 miles, having been given hard rations for twenty-four hours—bally beef and biscuits, with their waterbottles filled; and they came in always in a state of exhaustion. The sisters at Tank had a picket of twelve Gurkhas always round their bungalow; and the General commanding called personally to extol the praises of our nurses, and stressed that it had made a great difference to the sick and wounded to have them there—if the womenfolk could stick it out, so could they. Sister G. Brown was in charge here, with Sister Vera Steele, and Staff-nurses McAllister, Elsie Jack, Dora Furness, and Emily Rogers.

Dera Ghazi Khan. The conditions here were similar to those at Tank, but not quite so severe. Australia sent thither three sisters—E. Horne, Beryl Tucker, and A. Farmer. The latter, E. Horne, who went there in March, 1918, "rose to 118 and 120 degrees in the shade, but we enjoyed the work."

A COMPENSATION IN 1919.

In May, 1919, when the last of the hospitals in which Australian nurses had served had been closed down, the Afghan War again broke out, and many of the nurses, who were waiting to embark, had to be transferred to Rawalpindi, Ghauri, and Khuldana. All the population except the military was forced to leave Peshawar and Kohat, officers' wives and families being sent away to the hills. "Although we did not get home as soon as we expected," wrote Matron Davis afterwards, "the six months spent at these hospitals, situated in the beautiful Himalaya Mountains, were not arduous at all, and I think all the nurses derived great benefit from the glorious climate after the suffering of some of us had endured for three years in Bombay. We were housed in comfortable bungalows planted in beautiful mountain forests, where the pine-trees grew in abundance, many of them with the wild rose of China climbing over them. We were 7,000 feet above sea-level, and to wake in the early morning and drink in the champagne-like air perfumed with the scent of these roses will outlive the memories of our least pleasant days elsewhere in India. Miss Lily Campbell was in charge at Khuldana and I at Ghauri. It was a mile from my bungalow to the officers' hospital (100 beds), and in that mile we climbed another 1,000 feet. Fortunately the sisters for the doctors' hospital were accommodated in bungalows at the end of the hospital compound." Once again, when General Burtchall came from the Western Front as D.M.S., the Australian-staffed hospitals were commended: on his inspection in 1919 they were the only ones picked out for special credit.

IN SOUTHERN PERSIA.

At Bushire on the Persian Gulf was the only hospital near the Mesopotamian front staffed by Australian nurses. Here Sister Lily Stewart was in charge, with Sisters Wellard, Waterstrom, Purcell, and Parnell. The hospital had about thirty beds for officers and 100 for other ranks. From Bushire a railway ran about 100 miles into Persia, and most of the troops were doing outpost duty along this line.

HOSPITAL SHIPS—130 IN THE SHADE!

A number of these, working from India to the Persian Gulf (Basra), Suez, East Africa, and even Hong Kong and Vladivostok, were at various times staffed by Australian sisters. The service was often prolonged in several ships. Sister Horne, for example, in September, 1917, left Bombay in the Vita with four nurses and twenty-five orderlies for Basra. After a return voyage (very busy with heat-stroke cases) in this beautifully-fitted ship, she sailed in October in the Sicilia, bringing back 400 sick or wounded men from Mesopotamia. In December she sailed in the Delta for Suez with a staff of five Australian nurses, three Indian trained nurses, and sixty orderlies; on the return voyage an Indian labour corps from France was carried—good patients, but the dirtiest with whom she ever had to deal. She next sailed in the Delta to German East Africa, bringing back as patients German prisoners of war and sick or wounded Indian troops. The work in the Persian Gulf was carried on under conditions of intense heat. Sister Scanlan, a Western Australian who volunteered at the beginning of the war and served in the Q.A.I.M.N.S., records that she had many trips to the Gulf with a shade temperature of 124 to 130 degrees on board. On one trip the hospital ship Dongola ran out of coal and had to zig-zag to provide patients and crew with fresh air. These conditions were terribly severe on patients with heat-stroke. One (Sister Scanlan records) had a temperature of 113 degrees for three days; this case ended fatally.
Sister Larkan records that, on a voyage from Basra with 500 heat-stroke cases in the hospital ship Takida in 1917, the heat in the shade on deck was 120 degrees, and so trying were the conditions in the engine room that the engineers went down with heat-stroke and it took seven days instead of five to get clear of the gulf. In the midst of it a signal was received from another ship, and the Takida had to stop and take on board one of the ship's engineers very seriously ill with heat-stroke. "The matron was a Briton," wrote Sister Larkan. "She took the worst cases on deck, worked till midnight, slept in her clothes, and was up again at 3 a.m. helping the night sister to sponge. Temperatures of these patients ran to 110 degrees, as high as the thermometer would register. The native Indians often refused to get well; the British 'Tommies' fought splendidly for life, but many of these were afterwards mentally affected. To give a notion of the varied nature of the work, the records of the two following voyages may be cited.

In May, 1917, Sister Alma Bennett was sent to take charge of the hospital ship Herefordshire working between Mesopotamia and Bombay. The ship had 500 beds and a nursing staff of six—two sister and two staff-nurses of the Australian service and three Indian "temporary" nurses. It was in the monsoon and the voyage was stormy, but the nurses on the voyage up the gulf prepared their stock of dressings and got ready for the patients as well as they could. On May 15th they reached the entrance to the Tigiris (Shatt-al-Arab), and, as the ship could not cross the bar, waited for the smaller hospital ship Erinupa, which was bringing the patients down the river. Two days later, at 8 a.m., she came alongside with 260 Indian and 240 British patients, who were quietly transferred, and at 3 p.m. the ship sailed. The heat was intense and the Indian troops seemed to suffer more than the British, calling perpetually for pani (water). Iced lime drinks were in constant demand, but with Indian troops the situation was always complicated by the fact that by their religion their food must be prepared by their own people. Each night dozens of patients from the lower decks were carried up into the fresh air, especially when, through rough weather, the ports holes had to be closed. At the end of each voyage the Indian troops were sent ashore in clean white cotton suits and turbans.

Miss Moberly was afterwards in charge of the Herefordshire.

In 1918 volunteers were called for to staff a hospital ship for Vladivostok, and Sister Fletcher, who for two years had worked at the Deccan War Hospital, was chosen to go in charge, with four friends on her staff. At the last moment three of the staff were stricken down with influenza, and their places were filled by others. They sailed on 28th September in a transport, the Dilwara, for Hong Kong. This ship carried 300 troops among whom influenza soon became rife, the nurses volunteering to look after them. The sick-accommodation was of course utterly inadequate, and there were practically no medical stores, but from the Queen Alexandra sewing-base at Colombo the nurses managed to get pyjamas for their patients, of whom fifty were eventually landed at Singapore.

At Hong Kong the nurses landed to await their hospital ship, the Madras, and, as the hopes were very dear, the authorities had very kindly arranged to board them at the hospital. Here they volunteered to work in order to give the local sisters some leave. So much was their work appreciated—and so well did they like the place—that the D.M.S. at Hong Kong cabled to Australia and England for leave to retain two; but, before it came, the Madras had arrived and they had sailed in her.

The Madras was sent first to Vancouver, and the voyage across the Pacific proved a stormy one. On arrival at Vancouver, one sister was married, reducing the staff to four. The Madras sailed again on 15th January, 1919, with twenty Canadian officers for service in Siberia, and a Russian surgeon-general. She sailed from the north coast of Japan in midwinter to coal, and reached Vladivostok in bitter weather with the thermometer thirteen degrees below zero; an ice-breaking ship went round the harbour to prevent freezing-in.

Here the Canadians hoped to obtain the ship to send some of their troops to Canada, but she was required by the British for taking home wounded in the Middlesex Regiment. The nursing staff was increased, an American sister and two American nurses took charge of the Czechs, accompanying them on their voyage and actually to Prague, and the Australian sisters going on with the British troops to England.

"HORSEFERRY ROAD TO BOMBAY"

It is not generally known in Australia that, besides the extensive headquarters of the A.I.F. at Horseferry-road, London, and the smaller A.I.F. H.Q. in Cairo, there had to be sent to India also an A.I.F. administrative staff, though on a very small scale. Small bodies of the A.I.F. were at one time scattered over a great part of Asia. Among others, Capt. Ross Smith, with Sergts. Bennett and Shiers, visited this scene of operations, though they took not part in them. They handed over to the Royal Air Force the giant Handley-Page machine in which they flew from Palestine to India, and it was eventually crashed in operations in the East.

No records of any of these existed at the Administrativ e H.Q. of the A.I.F. in London, nor was there any satisfactory scheme for settling accounts between the Indian and Australian Governments. For this reason in January, 1918, Captain F. H. Wickham was sent to India to find out the matters and to set up an A.I.F. representative in India and Mesopotamia, and, with Warrant-Officer T. I. Baker and a small staff, was attached to the Adjutant-General's Department at Indian Army Headquarters. Their task was to trace all records of the A.I.F. men in Mesopotamia by a search through the Third Echelon, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, Basra, as well as the H.Q. of the wireless squadron in Baghdad. The tracks of nurses and dispensers in India were obtained and their records dealt with in orders by "Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. (Indian Section)", which by this time had been established in Bombay. It was discovered that the dispensers—fifty in all—though doing very valuable work, were not being employed on duties commensurate with their rank (Warrant-Officer, Class II.), so they were withdrawn and returned to Australia.

It proved much easier to send the A.I.F. to Asia than to get it back. The difficulties which hampered Wickham and his staff were—lack of shipping between India and Australia; the desire of the Indian Government to continue to employ the nurses long after the Armistice; and the desire of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force to retain the last section of the wireless squadron. It was only after very strong and persistent representations to the Indian Government that, towards the end of 1919, they had all been returned (except the twenty nurses who had married in India). Last of all, after a financial cleaning up, the adjutant's hotel was done back. It is worth recording that it had performed for the New Zealand Government exactly the same work as for the Australian.