

SOME THIRTEENTH CENTURY
MANUSCRIPTS

THE EARL OF GLOUCESTER

Andrew Murray



SCHOOL OF MILITARY
ENGINEERING
LINTON

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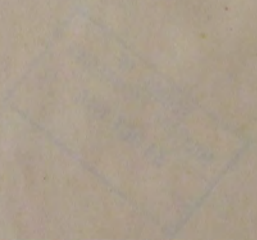
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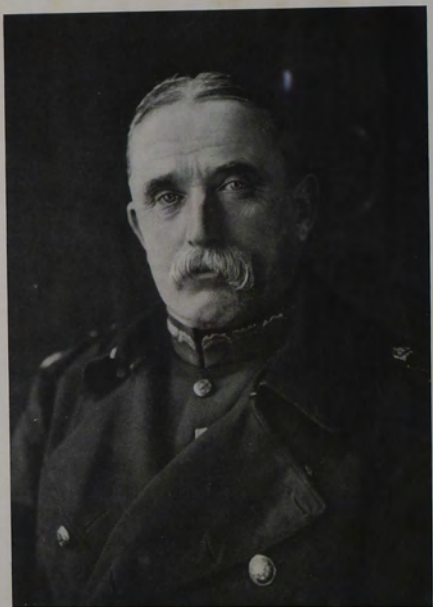
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SCHOOL OF MILITARY
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SOME WAR DIARIES, ADDRESSES, AND
CORRESPONDENCE



FIELD-MARSHAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF YPRES,
K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G.

SOME WAR DIARIES,
ADDRESSES,
AND
CORRESPONDENCE
OF

FIELD MARSHAL THE RIGHT HONBLE.
THE EARL OF YPRES
K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G.

EDITED BY HIS SON
MAJOR THE HON. GERALD FRENCH, D.S.O.

HERBERT JENKINS LIMITED
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**SCHOOL OF MILITARY
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INTRODUCTION

During the course of his South African and European campaigns, Lord Ypres kept a careful record of events day by day as they occurred.

In the quieter or more peaceful intervals entries were made in ink, whilst at other times the use of an indelible pencil was resorted to.

Often, particularly in South Africa, these diaries were written up in circumstances of extreme difficulty, stress and discomfort; and the fact that they were compiled on the spot, and at, or soon after, the actual time of the various occurrences, must add considerably to their interest as well as to their historical value.

The weather-beaten state of many of the pages testifies to the conditions in which much of the writing had perforce to be done.

As regards the Great War diaries, the extracts selected for reproduction in this volume do not, of course, include those which have appeared in two previous publications.

Lord Ypres, better known as Sir John French, saw his first active service in the Sudan campaign of 1885, when as a Major in the 19th Hussars he accompanied the Desert Column in the abortive but gallant attempt to relieve Khartoum and save General Gordon, but unfortunately no diaries or letters relating to that early period of his life are available.

Special mention by Sir Redvers Buller in his dispatch at the conclusion of that enterprise doubtless helped him to secure various subsequent appointments, culminating in his selection to command the cavalry in South Africa (1899-1902).

Throughout that long and arduous campaign, in which mounted troops played so conspicuous a part, the cavalry passed from one triumph to another till they and their commander became synonymous with victory. It was, therefore, not surprising that, when twelve years later the European conflagration broke out, Sir John French, who ever since the cessation of hostilities in South Africa had worked with unrelenting vigour to prepare the army for the supreme trial which he knew lay before it, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Expeditionary Force, thus achieving his life's ambition.

As the world knows, in undertaking that task he shouldered

a burden of responsibility immeasurably heavier than any commander had previously been called upon to bear in the long and glorious history of the British Army, and, after shepherding his force through the most desperate and critical part of the war he handed over to his successor a "going concern" and a situation in which little cause for anxiety remained. It was no longer a question of *whether* the Allies would win, but merely *how long* it would take them to win.

Then, as Commander-in-Chief in England, he was responsible for the defence of the country against invasion, naval bombardment and aerial bombing raids.

Subsequently he was called upon to rule over Ireland during what were perhaps the most difficult and critical years in the history of that disturbed country.

Himself an Irishman, he understood the Irish people and they understood him. For this reason, had he been less restricted by the Government in his administration and in his efforts to stamp out the campaign of hooliganism and cold-blooded murder by means of which a small and misguided section of the community was terrorising the people and bringing shame and dishonour to the fair name of Ireland, her progress might well have developed on different lines.

The fact that throughout his Viceroyalty the likelihood of assassination was ever-present, concerned him not at all, his iron nerve and high Irish spirit enabling him, as always, to treat danger with contempt, and indeed to be the stronger for its presence.

His life, from the early age of 14, when he became a Naval cadet in H.M.S. *Britannia*, until his death 59 years later, was devoted to one purpose—the service of his country, and it is, I venture to hope, with the aid of material such as this book contains that posterity will be able to form a true judgment of his merits.

In conclusion let me quote from a letter recently written to the Press by Colonel Sir Charles Warde, an old 19th Hussar and a former brother officer of Lord Ypres:

"It is now close on 20 years since 'The Ypres Salient' became a romance of War, and his countrymen of to-day have almost forgotten the lion-hearted soldier who made it so; have forgotten that it was due to his personal courage and example that with his 'Contemptible little Army' stemmed the onrush of the Germans, and by so doing saved Paris, saved France, and probably our own Channel ports as well."

E. G. F.

SUMMARY OF CAREER

Born at Ripple, Kent (only son of Capt. John Tracy French, R.N.)	1852
Naval Cadet, H.M.S. <i>Britannia</i>	1866
Midshipman, R.N.	1868
Resigned	1870
Joined Suffolk Artillery Militia	1872
Gazetted Lieutenant 8th Hussars	1874
Exchanged into 19th Hussars	1874
Adjutant 19th Hussars	1880
Captain	1880
Adjutant Northumberland Hussars (Yeomanry Cavalry)	1881-84
Major 19th Hussars	1883
Sudan Campaign (actions of Abu Klea and Metemmeh, despatches, medal with two clasps, Khedive's Star)	1884-85
Lieut.-Colonel	1885
Colonel, commanding 19th Hussars	1889-93
Half-pay	1893-95
Asst. Adjutant-General, H'd Q's of Army	1895-97
Colonel on Staff (commanding Cavalry Brigade), S.E. District	1897-99
Brigadier-General, commanding 1st Cavalry Brigade, Aldershot	1899
Major-General, commanding Cavalry, Natal	1899
South African War (Battle of Elandslaagte, relief of Kimberley, actions of Poplar Grove, Driefontein, Diamond Hill, Belfast and throughout operations in Transvaal and Orange Free State, despatches six times, promoted substantive Major-General (1900) and Lieut.-General (1902), Queen's medal with seven clasps and King's medal with two clasps, K.C.B. (1900) and K.C.M.G. (1902)	1899-02
Colonel, 19th Hussars	1902
General officer Commanding-in-Chief at Aldershot	1902-07
Hon. L.L.D., Cambridge	1903
Hon. D.C.L., Oxford	1904
Member of Imperial Defence Committee	1905
G.C.V.O.	1905
General	1907

Inspector-General of the Forces and President of the Selection Board	1907-12
Member of Territorial Force Advisory Council	1908
Hon. Colonel 1st B'n Cambridgeshire Regt. (T.F.)	1909
G.C.B.	1909
A.D.C. General to the King	1911-13
Chief of the Imperial General Staff and First Military Member of the Army Council	1912-14
Field Marshal	1913
Colonel-in-Chief Royal Irish Regt.	1913
Resigned C.I.G.S.	1914
Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders	1914-15
Order of Merit	1914
Became Viscount French of Ypres and of High Lake, co. Roscommon	1915
Thanked by Parliament and awarded grant	1915
Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief the Forces in the United Kingdom.	1916-18
Colonel Irish Guards	1916
Knight of St. Patrick	1917
Viceroy of Ireland	1918-21
Privy Councillor (England and Ireland)	1918
Alternative seat in the Cabinet	1919
Hon. L.L.D. Dublin	1919
Narrowly escaped assassination in Ireland	1919
Created Earl of Ypres	1921
Captain of Deal Castle	1923
Died	1925

Foreign Decorations:

Spanish Order of Merit.
 Russian Orders of Alexander Nevsky and St. George.
 Order of Dannebrog of Denmark.
 Grand Cross of Order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus of Italy.
 Grand Cross of Japanese Order of Rising Sun.
 Grand Cross of Legion of Honour of France.
 First Class of Serbian Order of Karageorge with swords.
 Croix de Guerre (France).
 Médaille Militaire (France).
 Croix de Guerre (Belgium).
 Grand Cordon of Leopold of Belgium.
 Order of the Red Eagle of Germany.
 Order of the Crown of Austria.

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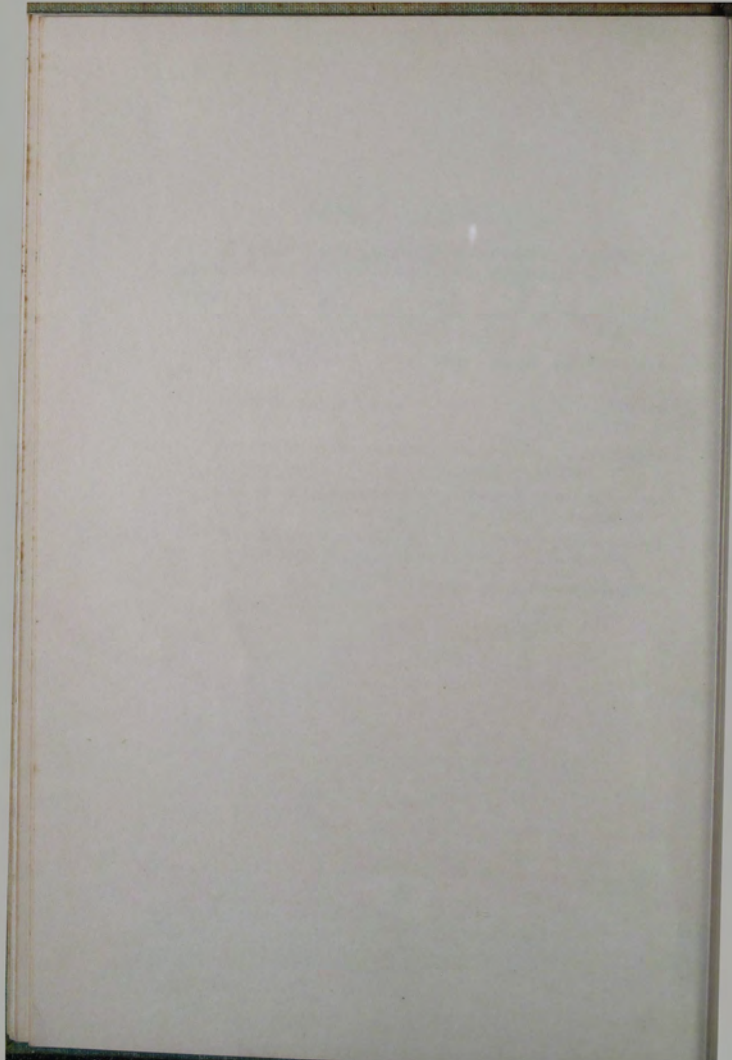
My thanks are due to all those who have most kindly allowed me the use of letters for the purpose of this book.

E. G. F.

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SOME WAR DIARIES

CHAPTER I

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

(1899 and 1900)

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Elandslaagte (Oct. 21st, '99).

My personal experiences have showed me the great necessity for a General in command during an extensive engagement to keep in the most commanding position and in one place, if possible.

It was a pity the horses of the artillery were so done up as to prevent the guns advancing to closer ranges as the infantry closed on the position.

[This was General French's first engagement of the Boer War (1899-1902) and resulted in a brilliant victory.]

Lombards Kop (Oct. 30th, '99).

Another point of immense importance was brought out forcibly in this action—viz. *Communication of Orders*. Royston's Horse received some wrong order and were actually giving up a vital point in the line of defence when I stopped them just in time. Milbanke¹ brought me back entirely erroneous information about the troops on our left flank because he failed to look *himself* and took second hand information.

Arundel (Dec. 8th, '99).

We have heard a great deal in books and from lecturers of "moral effect." It was never better exemplified than in

¹ Captain (afterwards Brig.-Genl. Sir John) Milbanke, 10th Hussars, A.D.C. to Genl. French, by whom he was subsequently recommended for the Victoria Cross which was later awarded him.

this action! The Boers had regularly "established a funk."
... To establish a "moral superiority" over the enemy
is an object of the *first importance*.

Coles Kop (Jan. 1st, 1900).

The night march, altho' very successful, was not wanting
in cogent lessons as to the risk and danger of such operations.
Two companies of the Berkshires, in spite of the best disci-
pline and arrangements, lost their way in the dark.

Coles Kloof (Jan. 4th, 1900).

In the early morning a great example appeared of the
danger of slack outposts, especially opposite such wily enemies
as the Boers! And this again was more or less the result of
a "moral superiority" established by the enemy . . . an—
outpost allowed 800 Boers to establish themselves in the
dark within a few hundred yards of them.

The force was not properly organised. No arrangements
were made for a sudden turn-out, no alarm post!

Reit River (Feb. 12th, 1900).

. . . In seizing a passage over a river it is also of
vast importance to get troops across to hold the ground
on the opposite bank without a moment's unnecessary
delay.

It is also advisable, if possible, to *threaten* or *feint* on several
points and not on only *one*.

[MESSAGE TRANSMITTED BY HELIO TO LORD ROBERTS,
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN SOUTH AFRICA.]

Kimberley. Feb. 17th (1900), 3 a.m.

Many thanks for tel. stop am marching on Koedoes Drift at once
stop your instruction fully noted stop all well Kimberley leaving
brigade under Porter¹ here.

GENL. FRENCH.

[This message was sent, shortly after the relief of Kimberley
by the Cavalry Division under General French, in response to
orders from Lord Roberts for the cavalry to cut off the retreat
of the Boer General Cronje, an exploit which was successfully
carried out.]

¹ Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) T. C. Porter, commanding 1st Cavalry
Brigade.

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Thursday, April 5th, 1900.

The F.M. (Lord Roberts) sent for me at 6.30. It was about a matter of outposts. In course of conversation I asked him what he thought of M.I. (mounted infantry).

He said he was a great advocate for their use but that he was sure they could never in any sense replace cavalry. He has a strong idea that the value of their fire is much greater than that of cavalry. I think we ought to *combat* this idea strongly.

The Boer's Mauser Carbine is our strong argument.

Saturday, April 14th, 1900.

. . . Hutton¹ has been interfering. I had to go to Headquarters (Bloemfontein) and get his little games stopped. He wanted his M.I. relieved on outpost duty by the cavalry. The cavalry must have complete rest. They have hard work before them. . . .

Sunday, April 15th, 1900.

. . . There are rumours about that the Boers are trying hard for peace. Their delegates are said to have got Germany to intercede with this country on their behalf. . . .

Monday, April 16th, 1900.

. . . Poor Peel² (2 L.G.) and Meeking³ (10 H.) died this evening. . . . Young Brooke⁴ has joined Staff. F. Rhodes⁵ arrived here to-day. Went to Headquarters about 12. Milbanke has been recommended by F.M. for V.C. Tried to get more horses for pom-poms which cannot, as now horsed, keep up with cavalry. They have none to spare so we must do what we can ourselves.

In the evening I attended Peel's and Meeking's funeral.

Friday, April 20th, 1900.

. . . The betting amongst the War correspondents is in favour of an "unconditional surrender" within 3 weeks.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Edward) Hutton, commanding mounted troops other than cavalry.

² Major R.A.H. Peel, 2nd Life Guards, died of enteric fever.

³ Captain B.C.C.S. Meeking, 10th Hussars, died of enteric fever.

⁴ Lord Brooke (afterwards 6th Earl of Warwick), joined Genl. French's Staff for service in South Africa at the age of 17.

⁵ Colonel Frank Rhodes, brother of Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

This is very doubtful in my view. At 4 an order arrived from Headquarters that the 4th (Cavalry) Brigade under Dickson¹ was to march at daybreak to-morrow and join the XI Division under Pole Carew² at Springfield. Haig³ was directed to accompany the Brigade. Orders were issued accordingly. Laycock⁴ and Brooke have asked to go and I have sent them. . . .

Saturday, April 21st, 1900.

Went out early to see the horse establishment at Fusiliers Farm. Saw about 1,500 horses in various stages of weakness and convalescence. Only about 15 or 20 fit for work. It is an excellent place for the purpose. A charming house and garden full of flowers, where we breakfasted with Teck.⁵ Got back here about 11 and found a wire from Porter saying that the waterworks were unoccupied which I took to Kitchener⁶ who showed to the F.M. They seem very pleased at the news. . . . It is now reported that Rundle⁷ had a small fight yesterday and took possession of a position overlooking De Wet's Dorp, and that the Boer forces are all moving South to oppose his advance.

They are certainly playing a dangerous game. If we can only move round quickly by Brandfort and Winburg we shall be able to hem them in on the Basuto border.

[FROM LIEUT.-GENERAL KELLY-KENNY,⁸ G.O.C. 6TH DIVISION,
SOUTH AFRICA.]

FROM LT.-GENERAL K. KENNY, C.B.
COMG. 6TH DIVISION.

To

LT.-GENERAL FRENCH, C.B.
COMG. CAVALRY DIVISION AND LEFT COLUMN
ASSVOGEL, O.F.S.

March 11th, 1900.

SIR,

I have the honour to report to you briefly the part taken by my division in yesterday's operations. In consultation with you, it was decided to make a turning movement avoiding the

¹ Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl.) J. B. B. Dickson.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Reginald) Pole Carew.

³ Lt.-Colonel (afterwards F.M. Earl) Haig, A.A.G. Cavalry Division.

⁴ Captain (afterwards Lt.-Col. Sir Joseph) Laycock, A.D.C. to Genl. French.

⁵ Captain H.S.H. Prince Adolphus of Teck (afterwards Lt.-Col. the Marquis of Cambridge), Transport Officer Household Cavalry.

⁶ Lieut.-Genl. Lord (afterwards F.M. Earl) Kitchener, Chief of Staff.

⁷ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Genl.) Sir Leslie Rundle, commanding 8th Division.

⁸ Lieut. Genl. (afterwards Genl. Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny.)

Abraham Kraal position and to march on our new bivouac wide of the Enemy.

The Boers seemed to anticipate such a Movement and occupied a position so as to directly bar our way.

Finding the Enemy strong on my front I contented myself for a considerable part of the day in containing him, awaiting the result of the turning movement by the mounted Troops, settled on by you, on the Enemy's left. In the meantime my troops were a good deal harassed by the enemy's frontal fire and by the shelling from the two long range guns on the Extreme end of the Abraham's Kraal position.

The afternoon was thus passing away and it became necessary to dislodge the enemy from the Commanding line of Kopjes in my front, whether we were to continue our advance or bivouac on our positions.

The baggage and trains required a very strong guard, so that I only had the Buffs, The Yorkshire Regt., The Gloucester Regt., The Welsh Regt. and The Essex Regt., with 2 Batteries of Field Artillery to carry out the operation.

The Welsh Regt. seized a commanding Kopje in front, but the enemy took up another strong position further back. Our line was prolonged by The Buffs and Yorkshire Regt., but the opposition was very stubborn and the shelling continued.

My Field Artillery did not succeed in keeping the Boer fire down. The fighting continued on a very extended front during the afternoon and it is difficult to give the various phases of it. I may mention however that the constant pressure on the Boers was carried out entirely by the Infantry, nothing could exceed the conduct of all the Regiments engaged and the very fine leading of the Regimental officers. The final phase of the day was a charge on the enemy's right flank, by The Essex Regt., acknowledged by all the troops who witnessed it as a very fine piece of work.

The Enemy gave way all along the line and we occupied all the ground in our front.

I much regret the somewhat severe losses.

I may add that the R.A.M. Corps, officers and men worked incessantly throughout the night, collecting and tending to the wounded.

Notwithstanding the losses, the heavy fighting all day, the discomfort inseparable to a night on the battle-field, we resumed our march at 6 o'clock this morning and have covered 15 miles to this place.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. K. KENNY,
Lt.-General.

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Wednesday, May 2nd, 1900.

. . . I went to the hospital this evening to see the Boer wounded—2 Comdnts. amongst them—Losche and Banks (a German Comdr.) . . .

Losche seems a good . . . but Banks has the reputation of being a bully. I should say he has earned it!

Friday, May 4th, 1900.

. . . I hear Broadwood¹ had a fight a day or two ago in which Kensington² was very badly wounded, also Alexander³ of the 10th wounded for the 2nd time this campaign.

Kelly-Kenny came to see me this evening. He hadn't much news. He goes forward as soon as Chermide⁴ arrives from De Wet's Dorp. The fight yesterday at Brandfort was not severe.

Wednesday, May 9th, 1900.

Started at 7 a.m. Reached X roads of S. of Zand River at 11.30. Saw Porter who had arrived there with 1st Brigade and sent a squadron to occupy and hold the drift, which was done. Later on moved all 1st Brigade across the river.

About 2.30 Kitchener came over and brought Hutton and M.I. with him. He said that about 2,000 of the enemy were in the bed of the river at the Railway Drift and that they had left their wagons at Ventersburg Road Station. He said he was sorry I had crossed the drift and shown my force. I went over the ground with him and pointed out the danger of the enemy getting possession of it and he agreed that I had done right.

We bivouacked for the night to the North of the Drift with Porter's brigade and the M.I. Dickson remained 5 miles South.

Thursday, May 10th, 1900. Action of Vredes Verdag.

Marched at daybreak, Porter's brigade leading followed by M.I. Made for Ventersburg Road Station or railway.

¹ Colonel (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) R. G. Broadwood, commanding 2nd Cavalry Brigade.

² Lord Kensington, Lieut. 2nd Life Guards.

³ Major (afterwards Colonel) H. Alexander.

⁴ Major-Genl. (afterwards Hon. Lieut.-Genl.) Sir Herbert Chermide, commanding 3rd Division.

On reaching a hill about half way to the railway a large number of the enemy were seen to be moving near the railway in a Southerly direction on Virginia Siding. The adv. gd. squadron (Garratt¹, Carbs.) moved forward towards the next ridge.

On viewing our advance the enemy detached from 200 to 300 men to occupy a farmhouse about 1,800 (yards) from the hill we were on and opened fire. Garratt's squadron suffered heavily from this fire. I now directed Porter's brigade to continue the advance towards Ventersburg Road Station by skirting round to the North of the hill. Dickson's brigade now coming up was ordered to follow Porter. Hutton was to follow the movement but not altogether lose touch with Erasmus Drift by which we kept up communication with Headquarters.

Porter's advance was now directed on a commanding position called Vredes Verdrag. On approaching this, 3 squadrons (Inniskillings & Carbs.) were sent forward to occupy this position. Seeing a white flag flying on it they concluded no enemy was there and moved on it with great confidence. No sooner were they there than they discovered a strong force of Boers strongly intrenched within a few yards of them, and they were driven back on the brigade with great loss. Elworthy² (Carbs.) was killed and about 13 men. Haig³ (Inngs.), Collis⁴ and Moncrieff⁵ (Carbs.) and many men were wounded. Several prisoners were taken.

The enemy now came on with much boldness and tried to turn Porter's left flank. I thereupon brought up Dickson's brigade on Porter's left and directed the latter to withdraw and follow him.

The enemy now turned on Dickson and tried to prevent his further advance by severely harassing his flank. . . . As they had now come into the open I galloped down to Dickson and ordered him to wheel about his brigade and charge the enemy. The horses were very done, and the charging lines were not well formed, but a very effective attack was made before which the enemy fled with great precipitation. Our horses being tired it was difficult to come up with them, but about 8 or 10 Boers were killed and several wounded.

¹ Major (afterwards Brig.-Genl. Sir Francis) Garratt, 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers).

² Major C. K. Elworthy, 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers).

³ Captain (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) Neil Haig, 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons.

⁴ R. H. Collis, Lieut. 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers).

⁵ M. M. Moncrieff, Lieut. 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers).

Dickson's battery, which had been unable to keep up, now arrived and came into action against the ridge on the East to which the enemy had retired and whence hostile artillery fire was now brought to bear on us. Alderson's¹ M.I. had in the meantime come up and filled the gap between me and Hutton.

Seeing the impossibility of getting the Ventersburg Road Station without more severe fighting, and this being contrary to my instructions, I moved North on a commanding position at Zanderhout farm which we seized. From this position we could see several thousand of the enemy between us and the railway trekking fast back to Kronstad and covering the retirement of a line of wagons several miles long. It was now getting dark so I bivouacked at the farm for the night. About 6.30 p.m. I got a message from the F.M. . . . brought by Sadlier-Jackson² . . . telling me to move with all speed to cut the railway and telegraph in rear of Kronstad. Our wagons had not come up and there was no hope of getting them. So we were obliged to make up our minds to live on the country for the next 2 days and orders were issued accordingly.

Saturday, May 12th, 1900.

All indications and reports pointed to the enemy having completely evacuated Kronstad and its neighbourhood this morning. It was necessary, however to proceed with caution. I rendezvoused the whole (cavalry) division on the Eastern Bank of the river behind the outpost line. Pilcher's³ M.I. arrived from Hutton and took over charge of the drift. I sent out reconnoitring parties to the N.E. and East. They met no enemy and the division advanced on Kronstad. I had surrounded the town, the Landrost (Mayor) had surrendered and I had posted detachments at the station, etc., when a helio message arrived from the F.M. (thro' Gordon⁴ with whom we are now in touch) that no one was to enter till he arrived.

I therefore withdrew everyone and directed the Landrost

¹ Colonel (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Edwin) Alderson, commanding Mounted Infantry.

² L. W. de V. Sadlier-Jackson, 2nd Lieut. 9th Lancers (afterwards Brig.-Genl.).

³ Lt.-Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl.) T. D. Pilcher, commanding Mounted Infantry.

⁴ Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) J. R. P. Gordon, commanding 3rd Cavalry Brigade.

to make his submission to the F.M. in person. Water was somewhat scarce so I ordered a concentration of the Division at Jordan Siding about 5 miles N. of Kronstad. We reached this point and bivouacked, placing outposts.

The F.M. entered the town at the head of the Guards' Brigade.

The Boers are reported to be in full retreat to the Vaal River.

Wednesday, May 16th, 1900.

Went in at 3 to see F.M. and took him states shewing effective strength of each unit in division. We are very weak in horses.

F.M. said he could not understand the great expenditure in horse flesh. I am writing a memo on the subject. . . .

Thursday, May 17th, 1900.

At 4 p.m. I inspected the recently arrived remounts for 8th and 14th Hussars. They are quite the worst lot I have yet seen and half of them unfit for service. The Remount Dept. at home have not done well by any means. I am writing a strong memo to C. of S. on the subject. This I think is the main cause of the waste of horse flesh in this campaign.

Wednesday, May 23rd, 1900.

Have arranged with Hutton to march early to-morrow . . . and cross the Vaal. My messengers returned from Headquarters about 6. Kitchener said that F.M. approved my action and also my proposals. He told me that Buller¹ was at Langs Nek with a force of Boers in front of him; that Hunter² was at Vryburg, Methuen³ at Bothaville.

Sunday, May 27th, 1900. Action of Katsburg Pass.

After watering and resting the Division I started North about 12, moving in the direction of the pass thro' Katsburg range. I entered it about 3 p.m. and my advanced scouts were fired upon by riflemen and a gun on the Western slopes. Porter advanced along the foot of the Eastern slopes, but was met by artillery fire from those heights which obliged him to move up the centre of the pass where he got his battery into action against them. I ordered him to move on up the

¹ Genl. the Rt. Hon. Sir Redvers Buller.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Genl.) Sir Archibald Hunter.

³ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards F.M.) Lord Methuen.

pass and secure the exit to the North. This he succeeded in doing after considerable opposition by 300 riflemen of the enemy who were coming up to hold the heights on the Western side.

Dickson in the meantime had continued his advance on the Western side, clearing the heights as he went.

Darkness was now fast coming on and I ordered Dickson to hasten his march and occupy the N.W. exit, bivouacking below it, while Porter did likewise on the Eastern side. The enemy was now getting very pressing on the Western exit and before dark twice drove our troops back off the ridge, but on the arrival of Dickson's brigade it was finally occupied and held securely during the night. As darkness closed the pass was in our entire possession.

Large parties of the enemy had been driven out of the S.E. end of the pass by our artillery but his guns from that quarter fired on us till dark. Our camp was exposed to the rear as Hutton had been left with the baggage at the entrance to the pass. I sent to him for some M.I. to cover our rear and at 10 o'clock about 300 arrived and were posted.

Monday, May 28th, 1900. Action of Van Wyk's Rust.

At daybreak Dickson reported that the enemy had gone from his Front and 2 squadrons were sent forward thro' the pass to reconnoitre. The division was delayed by having to wait for supplies but a concentration was effected at Reitfontein by the time ordered (10 a.m.).

Hamilton¹ and Broadwood were reported as in occupation of the Katsburg position behind us. A large body of the enemy was descried in the early morning from Doorn Kop to the West of us in a N.E. direction and when we crossed the Klip River a heavy artillery fire was opened on us by the enemy from the North and N.E. Alderson's corps of M.I. (with 2 pom-poms) moved to our right front and drove the enemy from a long bushy ridge and occupied it. Our guns had previously come into action against the enemy's artillery and the force seen moving N.E.

About 10.30 a.m. I directed Porter's brigade to pivot on Alderson, advance N.W. and occupy a large ridge in that direction. I directed Hutton to support this movement and moved myself with Dickson's brigade and Pilcher's M.I. West along the Northern edge of the Klip River to a drift

¹ Colonel (afterwards General Sir Ian) Hamilton.

about 6 miles on, intending to make a wide turning movement and drive the enemy back towards the North. On crossing, however, we found that a spruit (stream) running at right angles to the Klip River separated us from the rest of the force. We also found ourselves under a hot artillery fire from the enemy's batteries posted on the Rand position near Roodepoort. This was kept down by Jervis'¹ battery which came into action on the ridge to our left.

This revealed to me the great extent of the Boer position and the impossibility of turning it with one weak brigade (separated by a nasty obstacle from the main body) at that late hour (3 p.m.) of the day. I therefore resolved to cross this obstacle at a Drift there was about 2 miles to the North and support on the outer flank the forward movement of Hutton and Porter then seen to be in progress.

I left Jervis' battery and Pilcher's M.I. to cover our movement to the drift and sent Dickson on. Shortly afterwards Hutton and Porter were seen to be checked by a hot artillery and musketry fire from the North and N.W. Jervis' battery having limbered up and followed Dickson, the Boer's guns to the West opened again on their position.

Our troops crossing the drift then attracted the fire of the guns to the North and N.W., and they crossed with some trouble and loss. Makeson (Dickson's A.D.C.) was badly wounded with several others. Finally the troops were all got across and under partial cover in rear of the slope but although 2 batteries were in action against the enemy's position, the latter's shells fell all over the ground till nearly dark.

Pilcher was ordered to remain for the night beyond the Drift and hold an important position on our left flank.

I arranged with Hutton that he should hold our present position for the night and that the cavalry should be withdrawn beyond the Klip River to Van Wyk's Rust ready to make a wide turning movement early to-morrow morning. On my way back to the farm I got a message from Headquarters ordering me to secure the Waterworks, march via Florida on Driefontein (North of Johannesburg) and try to communicate with the F.M. at Germiston Junction by the East of the town. . . .

¹ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) Sir John Jervis-White-Jervis, Royal Horse Artillery.

Tuesday, May 29th, 1900. Action of Doornkop.

Our supplies arrived so late that we were unable to fill up and move off till 7.30. At that hour Dickson's brigade moved on to the Waterworks followed by Porter. On reaching and crossing the Drift near the Waterworks (which we secured) our scouts moved towards the ridge to the N.W. and a strong position to the West from which they were heavily fired upon. Pilcher still retained his position of yesterday and pivoting upon that I ordered Dickson's brigade to take this position, supporting him with Jervis' battery which came into action at the Drift. The position was strongly held but eventually was carried with a good deal of dash and very little loss by the 4th Brigade which now occupied it and the ridge to the North of it.

We were now subjected to a hot artillery fire from the same position on the Rand as yesterday. The enemy evidently had at least one big gun there and a very strong position. Hamilton's troops were now coming up and I arranged with him that he should move direct on Florida whilst I recrossed the Klip River and made a wide turning movement by Doornkop and Roodepoort with the cavalry and Hutton's M.I.

Hutton now came up and told me he was detained by a difficulty in leaving his position last night, as the enemy was harassing his retreat. Broadwood's brigade had remained behind to assist him and he got away with very little loss, but too late to enable him to support my turning movement closely. I was told that Alderson exhibited great skill and judgment in the withdrawal.

We recrossed the Klip River about 1 p.m., Porter leading, Dickson supporting (his brigade having been relieved in the position they had taken by Hamilton's infantry). I arranged with Hamilton that Broadwood's brigade (with whom was De Lisle's¹ M.I.) should come with me.

Porter moved on towards Doornkop and Roodepoort, driving the enemy back as he went and using his guns freely. The enemy never made much of a stand. The enemy in large numbers in front of Hamilton's advance were also seen to be retiring in all directions. About 4 p.m. we gained the hither edge of the Rand position and the Doornkop position lay to the North of us.

¹ Captain (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Beauvoir) De Lisle, Durham Light Infantry.

Numbers of the retiring enemy had crowded into this position, when seeing we had turned it, they began to leave it and retire in great force towards Roodepoort, Krugersdorp and Johannesburg. Both Porter's and Dickson's batteries came quickly into action and, our dismounted men lining the ridge, great loss was inflicted on the Flying Boers.

Doornkop (the historical scene of Jameson's¹ surrender in January '96) was soon cleared and several prisoners were captured including the Commandant (Botha) and Adjutant of the Krugersdorp Commando.

We bivouacked at and around Doornkop.

Wednesday, May 30th, 1900.

. . . Hutton being then in Front of the Division asked me if he might push on and try to hamper the enemy's convoy and if possible effect a capture. After some little demur I acceded permission to push on at a trot. . . . Before dark he succeeded in capturing a gun, several wagons, and a number of prisoners besides inflicting some loss on the enemy. He was supported by the guns of the cavalry. All the Colonials showed great dash in this operation. . . .

Thursday, May 31st, 1900

. . . During the day we learnt that our troops had occupied Johannesburg at 10 a.m. and had marched past the F.M. in the town. . . . In the morning I went to Hutton's camp and spoke to the C.O.'s who were engaged in yesterday's work, thanking them all for it.

Friday, June 1st, 1900.

. . . At 5 p.m. I went in and reported personally to the F.M. He expressed satisfaction with our recent operations and gave me instructions as to our future movements. We are to march in a N.Ey. direction supported by Hamilton, cross the Magelies range, turn East and cut the railway and telegraph North of Pretoria on the Petersburg line.

. . . I had secret instructions to dispatch Hunter-Weston² (with Burnham³) and a suitable detachment to cut the Lorenzo Marquez line. I sent him off with 200 picked horses and men from Gordon's brigade.

¹ Dr. Jameson (afterwards Sir Starr) leader of the raid against the Boers in 1896.

² Major (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Aylmer) Hunter-Weston, Royal Engineers.

³ Scout Burnham, an American with wide experience of South Africa.

Saturday, June 2nd, 1900.

News came early from Gordon that Hunter-Weston had been stopped by a large Commando 9 miles N.E. of his camp. He had to retire. . . . Pretoria is said to be in a state of anarchy. The Government has moved to Lydenburg. . . .

Sunday, June 3rd, 1900. Action of Kalkheuvél.

Marched at 6.30 a.m. in the usual order, Dickson leading. We found there was no crossing over the Crocodile River so made for the crossing over the Crocodile River at Rodeval and crossed there about noon. Here we got information that a large convoy of the enemy with about 1,200 men (several hundreds being dismounted) had left there (where they had laagered) that morning and were then on the way to Pretoria by the bridge near Schumann's Rust. We could plainly see their dust in the defile of Kalkheuvél.

After watering and feeding I directed Porter's brigade to move after them supported by Dickson. Hutton was to follow and guard the baggage.

At the first ridge Porter's scouts were stopped and his battery came into action against it and cleared it. I now directed Porter to continue his forward movement and Dickson to make a wide outflanking movement to the left and try to cut some of the enemy off. 300 M.I. under Alderson were called up in support of Porter. The country now became most difficult—a bad road running between rugged mountains covered with trees and brushwood. It was in fact a very bad defile and most favourable to Boer defensive tactics. Dickson's turning movement completely failed and he had to follow on in support of Porter whom I joined in front. Proceeding on we came near the lowest and most central part of the pass when we were suddenly arrested by a heavy fire of artillery and riflemen from front and flanks. The advanced parties came galloping back and the situation became somewhat critical as bullets and shells were falling in all directions. We immediately took up a strong position on some high ground about 100 yards in rear of us and lined it quickly with dismounted men. 2 guns and a pom-pom were quickly brought up and soon the enemy's advance (which he had commenced to develop on the flanks) was checked and his fire slackened. Dickson's brigade and the M.I. soon after arrived. The former extended the defensive position on both flanks while the M.I. was directed (under Alderson) to move along a ridge

(already partly occupied by the Inniskillings) and seize a high conical hill which commanded the whole pass. This they were successful in doing and then, the enemy retreating, the Greys got possession of the hill to the East of the pass.

By dark all was quiet again and the troops bivouacked in the pass along the spruit.

It was a smart action and but for the excellent behaviour and coolness of the 1st Brigade might have had a very different ending. We lost a good many horses shot, 2 N.C.O.'s. and men killed and 7 wounded—a very small casualty list considering the heavy fire. Rundle¹ of the Carabiniers had 3 horses shot under him. The enemy's loss was rather severe. Field Cornet Kruger was killed, we buried several bodies and we heard of many wounded.

[C. S. Goldman, in *With General French and the Cavalry in South Africa*, commenting on the critical position referred to wrote—"Quietly in complete mastery of the situation, General French gave his orders."]

Tuesday, June 5th, 1900.

. . . A number of Boers came in and gave up their arms. We halted for the night at — the residence and farm of Mr. —, Kruger's² son-in-law.

He abused his family roundly!

Wednesday, June 6th, 1900.

. . . Several large batches of Boers came in to give up their arms. They were all allowed to return to their farms under the usual conditions. About 1 I heard by helio from Porter that he required no further support, that the enemy had retired, that he had reached Waterval and had released 3,600 N.C.O.'s. and men and 21 officers who were held there by the enemy as prisoners of war. . . .

Friday, June 8th, 1900.

. . . I was sent for again about 12 and found the F.M. in consultation with Mrs. Botha (wife of the Boer Commander-in-Chief). . . . I don't know what transpired but at the close of this interview I was told to stand fast in the position at Kameel Drift for the present and remain myself in Pretoria to await further orders.

¹ 2nd Lieut. Rundle, 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers).

² Paul Kruger, President Transvaal Republic.

. . . Yesterday evening I received a visit from my old friend General Schumann¹ and his A.D.C. He was very anxious to come to terms. I advised him to see the F.M. early to-day and during the course of the morning I got a message from the F.M. (thro' Kenna²) that I was to deal with his case and he (F.M.) would ratify what I did. It was late, when I saw him but after a long palaver he agreed to sign a paper promising on his word of honour as a soldier not to fight against us during the present war, and to give up all his and his son's arms—retaining only a Mauser rifle of his own in consideration of his rank—a General.

To this I agreed and it was arranged accordingly. He has impressed me a good deal. A fine handsome man of about 60. He has good manners and seems very earnest. . . .

Saturday, June 9th, 1900.

. . . I hear the negotiations with Botha have failed. Kitchener has gone South to square matters in the Free State where De Wet³ is giving trouble. The line has been destroyed in several places. . . .

Monday, June 11th, 1900. Action of Crocodile Spruit Hill.

Left Kameel Drift at daybreak marching on Kameelfontein. Dickson led followed by Porter. M.I. in rear. The baggage and ammunition columns were sent back to Diedepoort with orders to follow the general movement in rear of Pole Carew. . . . About 2 miles East of the River (Pienaars River) the scouts were stopped by a heavy musketry, pom-pom and artillery fire from Crocodile Spruit Hill. At the same time a large body of the enemy was seen crossing our Front to the North and moving on to a strong position 4 miles North of us. It was apparently an endeavour to turn our left flank. Jervis' battery and a pom-pom were at once ordered up to shell this latter force. They shelled them heavily which caused them to turn further Eastward. In a few minutes, however, a very powerful musketry and artillery fire developed in our front and it was evident we were being strongly opposed. I therefore directed Dickson to deploy his whole brigade against Crocodile Spruit Hill and to send a squadron to hold the Kameelfontein ridge on our right.

¹ Boer Genl. who opposed General French in earlier operations around Colesburg.

² Captain (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) Paul Kenna, 21st Lancers.

³ Boer General.

Porter was ordered to show a front to the North, move behind the Pienaaers River ridge (East of the river) and try to gain possession of the hills 4 miles to the North. I directed Hutton to support the squadron holding Kameelfontein ridge and to hold the rest of the M.I. in reserve to use as occasion required.

Porter continued his movement to the North and about 1 p.m. was successful in driving the enemy off the hills to the North which we occupied.

The enemy throughout the day developed a powerful artillery fire from his front and both flanks. Porter's movement, however, kept down the fire from the North. Dickson retained his position throughout the day. . . .

News was received to-night from F.M. that Broadwood had been severely checked on our right flank and that Hamilton had been unable to advance.

Hathaway¹ dangerously wounded, O'Brien², 8th Hussars, severely wounded.

Tuesday, June 12th, 1900.

. . . I went up to Kameelfontein ridge. On our way there the enemy opened with his guns all along the line and the same desultory musketry fire action commenced and continued throughout the day. We saw large bodies of the enemy and guns moving about their position. They certainly seem very unsettled and undecided as to what to do. . . . We heard with deep regret of Airlie³ being killed yesterday in a charge, as well as Lionel Fortescue⁴ and young Cavendish.⁵

As the fire from the S.E. was getting rather hot I told Hutton to get Allason's⁶ battery on to the ridge at the foot of the hill we were on and try to keep it down. About 2.30 p.m. I left Hutton in charge on the hill and moved across to inspect Porter's position. Just as we arrived the enemy commenced to shell this position heavily. Lukin's⁷ battery came out and kept their fire fairly down, but Porter had to

¹ Major (afterwards Major-Genl.) H. G. Hathaway, R.A.M.C., M.O., Cavalry Division Staff, shot in stomach when riding with G.O.C.

² Capt. E. A. S. O'Brien.

³ Lieut. Col. the Earl of Airlie, commanding 12th Lancers, killed at Diamond Hill.

⁴ Major the Hon. L. H. D. Fortescue, 17th Lancers.

⁵ The Hon. C. W. H. Cavendish, 2nd Lieut., 17th Lancers.

⁶ Major (afterwards Major-Genl.) R. Bannatine-Allason, R.H.A.

⁷ Major (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Henry) Lukin, Cape Permanent Forces.

move his horses under cover. I found him very strongly posted but with a terrible country to his front and half left. We returned to bivouac at dusk.

Thursday, June 14th, 1900.

. . . This afternoon I assembled the C.O's and Squadron Comdrs. of the 4th Brigade and told them how well I thought they had behaved and what good service they had done in the actions of the 11th and 12th.

Friday, June 15th, 1900.

The Divisional Staff came into Pretoria this morning. On arrival I reported personally to the F.M. He expressed himself as much pleased with our work on the 11th and 12th. Hamilton's advanced troops are as far as Bronkers Spruit. The enemy has retired on Middleburg. Hamilton is to be withdrawn to occupy the position lately vacated by the Boers.

Baden-Powell¹ is marching from the West on Pretoria. It appears that there is still trouble with De Wet in the Free State and the wires are cut. But it is believed that things are getting right there. Buller has passed Langs Nek and is in the neighbourhood of Volksrust. A. Cronje² and 4,000 men have surrendered to Hunter at Potchefstroom.

I read some very interesting telegrams seized in the P.O. here. They were passing between Botha, Kruger, De Wet and others. We gather from them that they have great difficulty in keeping the Burghers together—that the Generals wish to continue fighting—but that Kruger rather wants to make peace.

Saturday, June 16th, 1900.

. . . I had another visit from Genl. Schumann this morning. I hear negotiations are going on between Botha and the Field Marshal which may possibly bring about peace, but everything is very uncertain. There is no reliable news from anywhere but the air is full of wild rumours. . . .

Monday, June 18th, 1900.

. . . Recd. telegram from Master of Armourers Coy. asking me to accept honorary freedom of company. Wired accepting.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Lord) Baden-Powell.

² Boer General.

Also telegram from "Irishmen of Durban" with congratulations. . . .

Friday, June 22nd, 1900.

Lady Sarah Wilson¹ came to tea this evening and told us some interesting stories about Mafeking.

Sunday, June 24th, 1900.

Hamilton has broken his collar bone and his force is going on under Hunter who has reached Johannesburg with his division.

Tuesday, June 26th, 1900.

I had a visit from Genl. Schumann at 10 this morning. He wanted to be allowed to open peace negotiations with Kruger and Botha. He said he thought he was a 'persona grata' with them. I went to the F.M. about it, but in the meantime he had received a very bad account of Schumann from a man called Marks described as a Polish Jew. The F.M., however, believes in Marks and declines any dealings with Schumann.

Tuesday, July 3rd, 1900.

Neville Chamberlain² came this morning and presented me with some studs, etc., and a pin from the 'Ladies of Kumara, New Zealand.' A present from them has also been sent to Buller.

Saturday, July 7th, 1900.

Went to see K. this morning and there I found Buller. He was very kind and nice. I arranged to go and see him in the afternoon, but when I went he had been called away by the F.M., but he left all sorts of kind messages with Stopford³ who met us. Haig and Milbanke went with me. In the evening I got a very kind letter from him. He has gone back to Standerton. He and his Staff were fired upon when riding between Graylingstad and Heidelberg.

¹ Daughter of 7th Duke of Marlborough. Fell into the hands of the Boers near Mafeking in December, 1899. Subsequently released in exchange for a Boer prisoner of war.

² Colonel (afterwards Sir Neville) Chamberlain, Private Secretary to Lord Roberts 1899-1900.

³ Colonel the Hon. Frederick (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. the Hon. Sir Frederick) Stopford, Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller 1899-1900.

Thursday, July 12th, 1900.

I hear that Smith-Dorrien¹ had a fight yesterday at Krugersdorp (or N.W. of it) and gave the enemy snuff. However, he was obliged to be recalled to reinforce Pretoria.

I dined with the F.M. and Lady Roberts this evening—a very pleasant dinner.

I saw Alexander,² Middleton³ and Scobell⁴ to-day and from all I gather no blame can be attached to the cavalry over the . . . affair. It appears to have been altogether the fault of . . . who was in charge of the post. He neglected all 'safety' precautions and allowed the Boers to crown the heights above him almost unopposed whence they opened a murderous fire on his camp. He appears to have lost his head completely. But all along the Front (Northern) the troops don't seem to have shown enough stuffing. X gave up his forward position and retired on Diedepoort without any orders to do so, although that place was held by a battalion of infantry and a battery. Then when Y was pressed from the North he retired on Wonderhorn. Here there was perhaps more excuse as X had uncovered his flank by retiring on Diedepoort.

Friday, July 13th, 1900.

In the afternoon I went to see my old friends of the I.L. Horse⁵. They turned out of their lines and cheered and I had a short talk to them. They have had 22 officers killed and wounded during the war! They only began with 28.

Friday, July 20th, 1900.

A bearer of a Flag of truce came in from Comdant. Dickson with a letter asking about his wife and children at Boksburg. We sent an evasive reply. . . .

Also received a long telegram from F.M. saying that we must still further delay our movement owing to delay of Hamilton on the North and Pole Carew on the railway, but chiefly because the 2,000 men who have broken thro' Hunter's

¹ Colonel (afterwards General Sir Horace) Smith-Dorrien, Commanding a column.

² Lieut.-Col. the Hon. W. P. Alexander, commanding 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys).

³ Major W. C. Middleton, 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys).

⁴ Major (afterwards Major.-Genl.) H. J. Scobell, 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys).

⁵ This famous South African corps, the Imperial Light Horse, had played a conspicuous part in the battle of Elandslaagte under Genl. French's command.

cordon, are rapidly coming North (with Steyne¹ and De Wet who are with them) with the object of joining Kruger East of Middleburg. Broadwood and Little² are pursuing them. A subsequent message from the F.M. informed me that I was not to move till Monday and that a demonstration would be made on Pole Carew's right front to-morrow.

I fear all this entirely does away with the surprising and decisive character of the great turning movement I had designed.

Saturday, July 21st, 1900.

The Queen has invited representative detachments of Colonial corps to visit England after the war.

Wednesday, July 25th, 1900.

I rode forward to the high ground which Gordon had taken and saw a very wonderful sight. An enormous 'trek' of wagons, several thousand Boers, and guns extending over many miles—the head nearly at Middleburg. They appeared to be in much disorder.

Thursday, July 26th, 1900.

The C.-in-C. expressed himself 'much pleased' with the progress we had made. He added that I was not to move beyond Middleburg just yet as the main body was delayed by damage done to the railway and the bringing up of supplies. He told me to occupy Middleburg if possible. I therefore arranged for this to be carried out by Hutton to-morrow morning, Dickson to be ready to support him if necessary and Gordon to advance to the line of the Klein-Oliphant River.

Friday, July 27th, 1900.

Middleburg was occupied at 10.30 a.m. without any opposition. . . . There is nothing remarkable about the town which is of the ordinary Dutch character with a market-square and large church in the centre. There are a great many Hollanders and disaffected people about and it will be necessary to take stringent measures to keep order and prevent information getting thro' our outposts. . . . The plans are changed and it is found necessary to delay any further advance for a fortnight. . . . The F.M. has conse-

¹ President Orange Free State.

² Lieut.-Col. M. O. Little, 9th Lancers.

quently placed me in command of all the troops to the East of Pretoria. My task is (a) to prevent the enemy coming further West than he is at present, (b) to guard the line from damage from any bodies of Boers left to the North and South of the railway after our advance. . . . I am arranging a plan of 'offensive defence' on the same lines as at Colesburg.¹

Saturday, July 28th, 1900.

There is news from the South that . . . P. De Wet² has surrendered at Kronstad and that C. De Wet³ is still South of the Vaal.

Sunday, July 29th, 1900.

There has been an unfortunate disagreement between Pole Carew and me. He has replied in what I consider to be a very improper manner to my queries and orders. I have therefore wired to the C. of S. requesting to be relieved from the command of the troops West of (and including) the Oliphant's River as Pole Carew does not seem to think he is entirely subject to my orders. I have also wired to Pole Carew himself saying I have done so.

I fear the discipline of our army is very indifferent. This shows itself more in the higher ranks than anywhere else.

Monday, July 30th, 1900.

I received a very kind wire from F.M. this morning, in reply to one I sent him yesterday, saying he thought there must be some misunderstanding about P. C., and he felt now I should find things all right. I suppose I must leave the matter in this way but such conduct as this has brought armies to grief many times in the world's history! . . . News has come that Prinsloo⁴ has surrendered to Hunter in the Free State with 5,000 men—a great haul!

Wednesday, August 1st, 1900.

News comes to-night from the telegrams at Pretoria that 3,500 and 4 guns have been taken by Hunter, but that Olivier⁵ with 1,500 and 6 guns (disregarding the agreed conditions to surrender) has made off towards Harrismith.

¹ It was in the operations around Colesburg that Genl. French achieved such pronounced and continuous success.

² Genl. Piët De Wet.

³ Genl. Christian De Wet.

⁴ Boer leader.

⁵ Boer leader.

Thursday, August 2nd, 1900.

. . . He (Gordon) said that Botha was with 8,000 men at Machadadorp. . . . Saw Major Cubitt and Capt. Brett (Suffolks)¹ at 9.30 and heard the latter's account of the affair at 'Grassy Hill' near Colesburg. Afterwards, at 10, addressed the battn. on parade. . . . Waterfield² (A.D.C. to F.M.) arrived with a despatch to be sent under a flag of truce to Botha from our outposts at Wonderfontein.

Friday, August 3rd, 1900.

800 more men and horses have surrendered to Hunter. Smith-Dorrien at Frederichstad was called upon yesterday by Boers to surrender. Before he could reply they attacked him but were easily driven off with little loss. It is reported from home that the British Legation at Peking was safe on the 18th ulto. and that the allied forces had defeated and dispersed the Chinese Army near Tientsin.

Saturday, August 4th, 1900.

We rode out this morning to visit the German Lutheran Mission about 8 miles off. It is a very pretty spot and there is a nice old church there. The inhabitants are all Kaffirs. There is a rum old German parson in charge.

The other battn. of Guards (Scots) arrived about noon under Pulteney³—also the heavy and naval guns and the 84th Field Battery.

Pole Carew arrived in the evening. He came to see me and our interview was at first somewhat stormy! However we calmed down and I hope are now very good friends. I fear he doesn't understand how to fight the Boer.

Sunday, August 5th, 1900.

Milbanke returned this afternoon from Pretoria bringing a lot of news. It appears that Baden-Powell is now shut up in Rustenburg and that Hamilton is marching to relieve him, also that De Wet is nearly surrounded by Broadwood, Little and Hart.⁴

Waterfield is still waiting at the outposts for Botha's reply.

¹ 1st Bn. Suffolk Regt. which suffered severely in a night attack.

² Capt. A. C. M. Waterfield, Indian Staff Corps.

³ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir William) Pulteney.

⁴ Major-Genl. A. Fitzroy Hart.

Monday, August 6th, 1900.

Gordon's horses have been suffering much from want of something more filling than oats. I have now arranged to give them 2 lbs. of bran and 5 lbs. of hay per diem. These American saddles are worse than useless and are a fruitful source of sore withers. I am trying all I can to get more English saddles. There is news to-day that patrols from the Heidelberg Comdo. are visiting farms and recommandeering burghers. . . . We hear that Carrington¹ is moving with a force of 5,000 from Mafeking on Rustenburg. This is very good news.

Thursday, August 9th, 1900.

Left Grootlaagte with Gordon at 7.30 and rode to Allenby's² position on the right of the line. He here occupies with his main body (2 sq. Inniskillings and 100 Carabiniers) a very commanding plateau from which he patrols the Komati River, the line of which is plainly visible from it.

Friday, August 10th, 1900.

. . . I found a wire from the F.M. saying that Buller was progressing well in his march on Carolina which he would probably reach on the 15th. He added that De Wet crossed the Vaal into the Transvaal and was moving N.E. pursued by Hart, Broadwood and Little—all under Kitchener. It appears that Carrington on his way to Rustenburg has been met and driven back by De La Rey,³ and that Hamilton and Baden-Powell are being driven back into Pretoria.

A plot has been discovered in Pretoria to *kidnap Lord Roberts*. Many of the authors are arrested. I fear we are not severe enough with these Boers.

Saturday, August 11th, 1900.

. . . News comes that De Wet (apparently having eluded Methuen) has turned N.W. and was to-day being engaged by Smith-Dorrien at Welverdiend. He is closely followed by Kitchener.

Sunday, August 12th, 1900.

News is received to-day that De Wet has again eluded pursuit and is moving West. Olivier is understood to have

¹ Major-Genl. Sir Frederick Carrington.

² Major (afterwards Field Marshal Viscount) Allenby, 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons.

³ Boer General.

crossed the Vaal near Roberts' Drift and to be marching on Machadadorp. I am trying to organise a flying column with which to intercept him if he comes further North. The Free State is at last about clear of the enemy.

Went to the Dutch church this morning. The service was conducted by Canon Knox-Little, who preached an excellent sermon.

I had a long talk with Pole Carew and arranged with him to make certain proposals to the F.M. which, if adopted, will leave the cavalry free to take the offensive either against Olivier (should he come North) or by pivoting on Buller (after he reaches Carolina) to work round Botha's left flank. I think, in that case, our first objective should be Barberton.

Monday, August 13th, 1900.

We now hear on reliable authority that Erasmus¹ has left his commando and returned to his farm. He was heard to say he had had 'enough fighting'. . . . De Wet is still at large with Kitchener and Methuen in hot pursuit.

Thursday, August 16th, 1900.

We got news this evening that De Wet (apparently having completely eluded his pursuers) is 10 miles West of Rustenburg, De La Rey at Lichtenburg, Lemmer at Zeerust. If these all join together under De Wet the fat will be in the fire in that district!

Friday, August 17th, 1900.

It is very difficult to follow the movements in the West. De Wet seems to be able to elude all pursuit and apparently does what he likes. Methuen is said to have relieved Hore² at Elands River (West of Rustenburg) where he has been shut up for 12 days.

I was very much annoyed to-night to find that our cavalry horses have had no hay or bran for two days. It is some stupid blunder on the part of the A.S. Corps and I think — is a good deal to blame.

Saturday, August 18th, 1900.

I saw several old Natal friends to-day—Crichton—Steward and Schofield.³

¹ Commandant Erasmus.

² Lieut.-Col. C. O. Hore, South Staffordshire Regt.

³ Captain (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) H. N. Schofield, R.H.A., A.D.C. to Sir Redvers Buller, 1899-1900. Awarded Victoria Cross after battle of Colenso. Married in 1917 Miss Dorothy Isham, a niece of Genl. French.

. . . De Wet is reported to be moving North from Rustenburg and has sent a letter to Baden-Powell (at Reitfontein . . .) calling on him 'to surrender.' Evidently a blind.

Sunday, August 19th, 1900.

Attended church parade in Gordon's camp at 10. Afterwards rode over to Buller's camp and reported to him. We met many old friends from Natal. Haig and I lunched with Buller. He has handed over Brocklehurst's¹ brigade to me. It consists of the 5th Lancers (2 squadrons) 18th and 19th Hussars, and 2 pom-poms. No horse artillery. I told Buller that I considered myself and the Cavalry Division entirely under his command. . . . I met Brocklehurst and rode with him to his brigade camp and looked round the horses. They are looking very well. The 5th Lancers are the best mounted. It was a great pleasure to me to meet the old 19th² again.

Monday, August 20th, 1900.

Saw Gordon at 9.30 and talked over future plans with him. Afterwards rode round the outposts with him. The enemy fired a few shots at us.

Wednesday, August 22nd, 1900.

Lennox brought me a letter and a packet from Teck. The latter contained P. Cronje's watch which was looted by one of 'French's Scouts' at Paardeburg. It is an interesting souvenir. He also gave me a few details of the plot to kidnap the F.M.

Thursday, August 23rd, 1900.

As the enemy seemed active Buller sent some infantry up to the ridge to keep down their fire, and towards evening the Liverpool Regt. advanced close up to the enemy's position and had to retire with upwards of 90 killed, wounded and missing. This advance was a great mistake and made without orders. It is said that the Boers behaved with great brutality, shooting the wounded men on the ground.

Saturday, August 25th, 1900.

It is reported that De Wet has left his guns with Grobelaar³ and gone South to the Free State with 300 men. Steyne is

¹ Major-Genl. J. F. Brocklehurst.

² 19th Hussars—Genl. French's own regiment.

³ Boer leader.

said to have joined Botha at Machadadorp. Kruger's flight to Krugerport is confirmed.

Tuesday, August 28th, 1900.

We reached Elandsfontein about 2 p.m. and found the position lightly occupied. On our advance the small force keeping up the connection between the two Boer positions was brushed aside after a slight resistance (this was effected by a very smart flank movement of the Inniskillings under Allenby) and retired North. The position at Elandsfontein was heavily shelled by Gordon's H.A. and was very gallantly seized by the Greys under Alexander.

It was most unaccountable that the Boers did not defend this position more stubbornly. They had it strongly intrenched with large gun emplacements. It was very strong in front and almost impossible to turn on either flank. On cresting it we found the ground commanded all the country to the E. and S.E. Machadadorp was in full view on the railway below us and we could see Buller's troops entering the town. We got a few long shots at retiring Boers. We got into helio communication with Buller. It appeared that his advanced troops under Dundonald¹ were being stopped by a heavy artillery fire from the direction of Helvetia.

Thursday, August 30th, 1900.

In the afternoon about 1,700 prisoners who had been released by the Boers came into our camp.

Friday, August 31st, 1900.

I found the 60th here under Johnny Campbell² whom I was very glad to see again.

Thursday, September 6th, 1900.

One of Gordon's night picquets had occupied a farm to the S.E. of his position last night. They were leaving this farm this morning after their brigade had passed and had hardly gone 200 yards when they were heavily fired on from rocks close to the farm.

One man was badly wounded.

It is quite certain that they were concealed in the farm

¹ Colonel (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) the Earl of Dundonald, commanding 3rd Mounted Brigade.

² Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir William) Pitcairn Campbell, commanding 1st Btn. K.R.R.C.

all night. There was a white flag flying all the time. I caused the farm to be shelled and burnt down. The men made good their escape. There was a little sniping from that flank all the morning.

By noon the division with all the transport concentrated at Carolina which was entered without opposition. It is the usual kind of Dutch country town—fairly clean and good houses. We took some 20 prisoners.

Friday, September 7th, 1900.

The Greys got up a cricket match this afternoon which was very refreshing to watch.

Saturday, September 8th, 1900.

I had a long talk with Sampson¹ (I.L.H.) at 9 this morning. He has an intimate acquaintance with the Barberton country. He is very anxious to be allowed to take his regiment to the East of Barberton, cut the line and capture some trains. Knowing the country as he does the plan seems feasible and promising.

It is a dull day and helio impossible. The telegraph party has returned finding it impossible to repair the line. I am going to risk sending in an officer to Belfast with a small patrol. It is really our only means of communication. . . . 'Samuel'² has started for Belfast. The telegraph began to work this afternoon. Buller has reached Lydenburg and is marching on Spitzkop. It is reported Steyne and Kruger have bolted to Lorenzo-Marquez.

Sunday, September 9th, 1900. Action of Rooihoopte.

The enemy was reported as holding the hills West of the Spruit and the 8th Hussars reconnoitring in front were stopped by a hot musketry fire from a position held by the enemy in some strength West of Rooihoopte. Reconnoitring this position we were able to see, from high ground on the flank, that the enemy had laagered East of Rooihoopte last night and that the positions now held were extended to cover the retirement of their wagons, etc. Detachments appeared on a kopje some 3 miles to the South and it became necessary to clear up the ground in that direction.

¹ Colonel (afterwards Sir Aubrey) Wools-Sampson, founder of the Imperial Light Horse.

² E. H. E. Abadie, Lieut. 9th Lancers, A.D.C. to Genl. French.

I directed Spens¹ with the infantry and field guns to 'hold' the enemy in front and endeavour to drive him back with long range musketry and artillery fire. Gordon was ordered to extend well to the South, turn the enemy out of that position and act against his left flank, whilst Mahon² was held in readiness to operate against his right. Two of the latter's guns were got into position to assist Gordon till he could get well away, and 2 of Gordon's own guns were got into position on the hill occupied by the infantry for the same purpose. About 11 a.m. the enemy were driven from their forward position back to Rooihoogte and the Imperial L.H. galloped forward to occupy it. They were followed shortly by Mahon's H.A. battery and the infantry.

In the meantime Gordon had cleared the enemy off their most southerly position and was making good progress in his turning movement.

I now directed Spens to get his infantry as close to the front of the position as he could get under cover and gradually creep along up it, and supported him by the fire of Mahon's 6 H.A. guns, 2 of Gordon's and his own 2 field guns. Mahon's brigade was at the same time moved round to our left to try and turn the enemy's right.

These movements were well in progress by 2 p.m. and at that time the enemy were still stubbornly contesting the ground.

The position whilst very strong for defence also offered advantages to the attackers owing to the amount of 'dead ground' and 'cover' in front of it. This was most skilfully taken advantage of by Spens' infantry brigade (Shropshires and Suffolks) . . . the Suffolks on the left of Spens' brigade advanced with great boldness and supported by the Shropshires rushed the position in very gallant style. Mahon sent the Imperial Light Horse on in pursuit and the guns quickly followed.

The enemy suffered considerable loss and hastily retired on the drift.

From the high ground he then got 2 long range guns into position and shelled our troops as they crossed the ridge. This fire covered his retreat as the naval gun could not be got up to stop it. The fire continued till sunset. . . . The

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major-Genl.) J. Spens, The Kings (Shropshire Light Infantry).

² Colonel (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. the Rt. Hon. Sir Bryan) Mahon.

Inniskillings moving with great boldness, seized a position before dark which completely commanded the exit from the pass.

Wednesday, September 12th, 1900. Action of Nelshoogte.

About 9 a.m. Gordon's artillery got into action and we saw his shells falling on the heights to the South of the pass, at the head of which, on a high bushy kopje, the enemy had taken up a very strong position from which they opened musketry fire.

I now brought the field guns up to within easy range of the head of the pass and they came into action against the bushy hill which being thus subjected to a heavy cross fire was soon evacuated.

Spens in the meantime had sent on his divisional cavalry to occupy a commanding hill near one end of the pass and 2 companies of infantry to follow them. He got the remainder of his infantry into advanced positions to push up the pass as it became gradually cleared by Gordon's turning movement.

Meanwhile the enemy had occupied the whole of the ridge bordering the Northern side of the pass. But it was so high and precipitous that they were only able to command the road (for some distance up the pass) with very long range fire.

Mahon got his guns into action at the foot of the pass against this ridge upon which, soon after, Gordon was also able to direct his fire. Mahon's brigade also occupied the lower ridges of the pass on that side.

The enemy's fire having slackened the Shropshire Regt. very gallantly pushed right up the pass and by 12 o'clock the summit was completely in our possession. . . . The enemy was now holding a very commanding hill at the N.W. end of a kind of causeway along which lay his line of retreat to the S.E. My next objective was to secure this hill. The I.L.H. was sent to try and turn it by the left and our guns shelled it from the head of the pass, whilst Spens with the infantry moved direct upon it. The enemy held it stubbornly with his rear guard, getting 2 guns and a pom-pom into action against us. At last he was forced to retreat leaving many wagons loaded with provisions behind. The hill was then taken possession of by the infantry and became the centre of our position that night with Mahon's brigade on the left and the Inniskillings, who had led their horses across one of the deep ravines, on the right.

Thursday, September 13th, 1900. Capture of Barberton.

I moved off at 6.30 a.m. with Gordon's brigade to get across the mountains by bridle paths and take Barberton by surprise. On reaching the hills we found it quite impossible to take guns (or even Cape carts) by these paths and they were accordingly diverted round by the road which was about double the distance. We found three mountain paths most rugged and precipitous and deep bogs and spruits intersected them every few hundred yards. We all had to walk and lead horses. We ran some risk for the enemy might easily have caused us much annoyance and loss from the heights above.

We reached the foot of the mountains about noon and 2 squadrons of the Greys were at once despatched at speed to a point some 4 or 5 miles N.W. of Barberton to destroy the line and prevent any movement of engines or rolling stock. The ground in our future advance was still very bad winding across nullahs and spruits.

About 2 p.m. we halted at a point near where the mountain path joins the main road about 7 or 8 miles from Barberton. Here I got a helio message from the squadrons sent to the railway that they had arrived there, destroyed the railway and made large captures of wagons with provisions, etc., also a parcel containing £10,400 in gold and notes. They had also taken some prisoners. A small detachment was sent into the town from which the Boers in some numbers had only retreated about an hour previously.

A squadron of the 14th Hussars was at once sent on, the brigade followed and I rode on with the Staff to take formal possession of the place.

On nearing the town we heard firing from the heights above, and saw that a good deal of confusion was going on. Beech,¹ Milbanke and Brinsley² were already there.

When close to the town I was met by the Boer Military Governor, Commandant Van der Post. He was driven out in a trap by a resident banker in the town (Mr. Forrest). He was in a violent state of excitement and complained that he had been led into a trap. He seemed altogether off his head.

On reaching the town I found Beech hard at work reducing it to order. A little sniping still continued from the hills.

¹ Major R. J. Beech, Warwickshire Yeomary, Provost Marshal.

² Captain (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) Brinsley FitzGerald, A.D.C. to Genl. French.

I immediately issued a proclamation saying that if this sniping continued I would withdraw the troops and shell the town without further notice. We have found all our prisoners of war here (96 officers and men in all). . . . There is a jail full of Boer prisoners—many of them (including our old friend Genl. Schumann) Boers who have refused to break their oath and fight against us again.

We have seized 43 locomotives and a good deal of rolling stock. A large number of prisoners have been taken. . . . We are putting up in an empty hotel. The town is quieting down and there has been no more shooting since sunset.

Friday, September 14th, 1900.

We have received wires of congratulation from the F.M. on our successful march here. I had a visit from Van der Post this morning and gather from him that Kruger is really about to leave the country, and that Steyne is trying to get back to the Free State.

Saturday, September 15th, 1900.

We had a parade of the troops in the middle of the town this morning and hoisted the Union Jack over the court house amidst cheers for the Queen.

At 10 I saw the Boer prisoners who we have released and complimented them on their plucky behaviour. . . . Botha's personal telegraphist has come in. He says Botha is at Hester's Spruit and *very ill*. . . . I had a wire of congratulation from Buller who is at Spitzkop.

Monday, September 17th, 1900.

I got a wire this morning from Sir A Milner¹ congratulating us on our rapid march and seizure of Barberton.

Friday, September 21st, 1900.

Botha's telegraphist (Ewing) came to report himself to-day on the expiration of his parole. I have extended it for a week. He was much more communicative, and it appears that he knew when he came in to us that all was over. He tells me he was often, during the campaign, able to tap our wires by "vibration" and heard much news from our careless headquarters' telegraphists.

¹ Sir Alfred (afterwards Viscount) Milner, High Commissioner for South Africa.

Saturday, September 22nd, 1900.

There are native reports that the Portuguese have found themselves unable to protect their territory from the incursion of armed Boers and have asked that our bluejackets and marines should be landed, which has been done. This is only report. . . . As to the future it is probable the F.M. will return home at once.

Monday, September 24th, 1900.

This is the day upon which (it is reported) Kruger will embark for Europe. He has been at Lorenço-Marquez for the last fortnight.

Saturday, September 29th, 1900.

It is now reported that 26 guns have been found destroyed between Hester Spruit and Kumati Poort and that 1,500 foreigners crossed into Portuguese territory and laid down their arms. They are being given passages to Europe.

Sunday, September 30th, 1900.

Mr. Smuts¹ and 2 others arrived here to-day from Pretoria to take part in interviews with the Indunas² from the Swazi Queen. We are going to get the Indunas in here. Smuts carries written instructions from Sir A. Milner.

Monday, October 1st, 1900.

My poor old mare died suddenly in the night. She carried me at Elandslaagte and in many other important engagements.

Wednesday, October 3rd, 1900.

There was heavy thunder and rain throughout the whole day. A Sergt. and 1 man of the artillery, 1 horse and 6 mules were killed on the road by lightning.

Saturday, October 6th, 1900.

Lord Roberts has been appointed Commander-in-Chief in succession to Lord Wolseley. I have sent a telegram congratulating him in the name of the Cavalry Division.

¹ Boer Genl. Afterwards Hon. Lieut.-Genl. in British Army and Privy Councillor.

² Headmen.

Monday, October 8th, 1900.

Buller came in about 9 and I had a long talk with him. He is going home at once. We have no idea yet as to the movements at headquarters.

. . . Buller and his Staff left here (Machadadorp) at 2 by train for Pretoria. We all went to see him off and he was heartily cheered.

Dundonald is here with remnants of his brigade which is being broken up.

Saturday, October 13th, 1900.

I left Machadadorp at 7.30. About 8.30 near Elandskop I got a wire from Mahon (sent thro' Belfast) which had evidently been dispatched quite early. It informed me that the enemy had attacked him on three sides at daybreak with a large force and at least 3 guns, and that he was hard pressed and retiring on Belfast.

On this I sent word to Gordon (who had got well ahead and was already on the river) to move forward with caution and to keep an eye to his right rear. I also sent to tell Lowe¹ that he was to withdraw 2 of his 3 squadrons and the pom-pom from the ridges to the East and cover the right (Western) flank of the Supply Column by moving in the direction of Geluk. This movement was also designed to check the enemy's pursuit of Mahon. An hour later I got a second wire from Mahon saying the enemy was still very active in front of him and that he had sent his baggage back to Dalamanutha whither he was proceeding himself. On this I determined to send Haig and Bingham² to him as I was sure he was retreating without due cause.

Soon after this I reached the bridge over the Kumati River and there found that Gordon had withdrawn from the high ground which he had previously occupied and strengthened his right flank. From various indications I judged the enemy's pursuit of Mahon must now be checked and that he was really now driving the Boers back. A message from Haig confirmed this and I ordered Gordon to re-occupy the high ground and move his force on to Everard's store, which he did.

¹ Lieut.-Col. W. H. M. Lowe, 7th Dragoon Guards.

² Major the Hon. C. E. (afterwards Major-Genl. the Hon. Sir Cecil) Bingham, 1st Life Guards, A.D.C. to Genl. French.

Mahon helioed that the enemy was retiring on Van Wyke's Vlei and that he was going to bivouac at Welveregen. His casualties are rather heavy.

We came on to Everard's and there I had a talk with E. and went with him up to the high ground near his house. From this point we saw what we believe to be a big trek of the Boers going back towards Ermelo. This is partially confirmed by natives. Haig came back about 5 and told me of Mahon's fight. I fear the latter neglected to carry out my particular injunction to him to — and move on a wide front. It appears the Boers — him into his camp and placed guns in position against him in the darkness with which they opened fire before daylight. I feel they laid a trap into which Mahon readily fell.

We are moving on Carolina before daybreak to-morrow, hoping to surprise a few of our friends in that town.

Casualties to-day—*Mahon*.

Killed. Capt. Taylor, R.H.A.
Lt. Jones, 8th Hussars.
Lt. Wylam, 8th Hussars.
8 men.

Wounded. Major Duff, 8th Hussars.
Lt. Gilmour, 16th Lancers.
Lt. Brancker, R.H.A.
25 men.

Dickson.

Wounded. 2 men of D. G's.

Sunday, October 14th, 1900.

The wire has been cut somewhere so we can only communicate by lamp and helio.

Monday, October 15th, 1900.

I went out to reconnoitre the country towards the South this morning. It seems very open and good going.

I then went to see Dickson's command. He has already lost 384 oxen. They are in a bad condition and want food. We hear from the Intelligence at Hd. Qrs. that the last Boer move was made "To hem in General French."

Tuesday, October 16th, 1900.

. . . we took this road till stopped on a hill by a heavy musketry fire. Bullets were falling round our horses in all

directions and there was nothing for it but to turn and gallop back thro' the fire. Fortunately no one was hit. We were really fired on by a squadron of the Carabiniers who took us for Boers. I met Gordon shortly afterwards who told me that on reaching his bivouac he had sent the Inniskillings to occupy a hill to the right front. They had been attacked en route by a large force of the enemy and the leading squadron being short of ammunition was driven back on the supports. By some unfortunate mistake very few of these men had swords. So charging was almost impossible. The enemy had also developed an attack against the Greys to the left. The enemy came on so boldly that Gordon turned out the Carabiniers and his battery. He brought the former up at a gallop to charge the Boers. They did not, however, await this development but retired in haste and some confusion.

Saturday, October 20th, 1900.

We left Kaffir River about 4.30 a.m. and halted at some water about 7 miles East of Bethal. During this march the enemy continued to follow and caused a little annoyance by sniping. Middleton of the Greys was doing rear guard with his regiment and remaining rather too far behind had a brush with the enemy.

Russell (R.A.M.C.) and 4 stretcher-bearers were taken prisoners and Commandant Smuts threatened to keep them as revenge for our burning farms. One of his Field Cornets sent in a very insolent message to me by one of the stretcher-bearers whom he liberated for the purpose. Finally they were all released. . . .

Bethal is a smaller place than Ermelo but a clean little town. We found the wire to Standerton open and I was able to send messages to the F.M. and get a reply from him. He was evidently very pleased with our march and congratulated us upon its success.

Sunday, October 21st, 1900. Anniversary of Elandsplaagte.

After church I rode round the bivouacs and addressed a few words to each regiment separately. The men seemed pleased and gave me some kindly cheers. They have had a terribly hard time. I then went round the hospital and saw the wounded and sick. The number of killed and wounded has been very heavy since we left Machadadorp.

Monday, October 22nd, 1900.

Some little sniping went on in rear but nothing to speak of until we had halted, when some 150 Boers attacked the Carabiniers who were rear guard. The Carabiniers behaved splendidly and reserved their fire to close ranges when they drove back the enemy in confusion with great loss. . . . Just after we started a terrific thunderstorm came on, drenching everyone to the skin. The lightning was really dangerous. Two native drivers and a horse were killed by it.

Friday, October 26th, 1900.

A few small bodies of the enemy tried to harass the rear guard but were driven back with rather severe loss. Seven farms in various localities were burnt. I reached Heidelberg (where the division is now concentrated) about 12. . . .

Wednesday, October 31st, 1900.

The F.M arrived at 11 to-day by train. I had the division drawn up for inspection close to the station. He rode round the ranks and spoke a few kind words to each Brigadier and C.O. He seemed pleased, although terribly worried and depressed owing to his daughter's illness which is delaying him very much on his way home. Johnny Hamilton and Rawlinson¹ came with him. We leave here early to-morrow for Reitfontein, near which I hear the Boers have a laager.

I am to take the division to Pretoria where it is to be split up and cease to exist as a unit, and I personally am to take command at Johannesburg. The F.M. has promised me to wire and recommend John Vaughan² and Birch,³ R.A. for Staff college nominations. I fear it's rather late for this year.

Saturday, November 3rd, 1900.

We marched into Pretoria, without incident, at 10 this morning after a 'trek' of 3½ months, during which time we have captured several important towns and fought many actions. At last the men of the Cavalry Division are in tents. I hope they will now have at least 14 days absolute rest.

I saw Kitchener at 12. He is not very hopeful as to the future and thinks the war may drag on for some months yet.

¹ Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry (afterwards Genl. Lord) Rawlinson, A.A.G. Headquarters South Africa.

² Captain (afterwards Major-Genl.) J. Vaughan, 7th Hussars.

³ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Noel) Birch, R.A.

There are better accounts of Miss Roberts. It appears her attack is only a mild one, nevertheless the F.M. can hardly leave for a month at the soonest.

Sunday, November 4th, 1900.

I have a wire from the Cutlers' Company in London asking me to accept the freedom of the Company and a sword of honour. I have wired accepting and thanking them.

Monday, November 5th, 1900.

I find that over 200 mules died from exposure during the severe storms we experienced between here and Heidelberg.

Thursday, November 8th, 1900.

There was a severe fight at Bothaville on the 5th. De Wet and Steyne were present with 1,000 men and 7 guns. Le Gallais¹ surprised them in the morning and was afterwards supported by C. Knox² and De Lisle. After some hours' fighting enemy was heavily defeated with the loss of all his guns, ammunition and baggage, and nearly 100 killed and wounded.

Our losses were rather heavy and poor Le Gallais was killed, also 2 others and 8 men. About 7 officers and 25 men wounded.

Friday, November 9th, 1900.

The Brigadiers and Colonels of the division very kindly entertained me at lunch to-day as a kind of farewell on the temporary dispersal of the Cavalry Division. They drank my health very kindly and I responded as well as I could. I was much touched by this proof of their regard.

Saturday, November 10th, 1900.

I left Pretoria (with Brinsley and Hunter) at 8.45 and arrived at Johannesburg about 11.30. I had interviews during the morning with the F.M. and Kitchener. Miss Roberts is very much better and we all hope danger is over.

Important operations require immediate attention in the district.

I am to retain nominal command of the Cavalry Division in South Africa, but am entrusted also with the charge of the South and S. Western Transvaal with headquarters at

¹ Lieut.-Col. P. W. J. Le Gallais, 8th Hussars.

² Major E. C. Knox, 18th Hussars.

Johannesburg. The district is roughly bounded by the railways and the Vaal River which together form a triangle the corners of which are Johannesburg, Klerksdorp, Vereneging. . . . There are small bands of the enemy everywhere about. It is necessary to destroy the standing crops on either bank of the Vaal River. . . . We have got into a capital house. This is a wonderful place.

Sunday, November 11th, 1900.

The F.M. sent for me at 3 to-day. He discussed the question of cavalry armament. I fear he is somewhat inclined to take the M.I. view and regard the *rifle* as the principal cavalry arm.

The 19th appear to have carried out a rather brilliant charge (on a small scale) at night near Lydenburg.

Monday, November 19th, 1900.

Saw F.M. in the morning. He has had a bad fall from his horse and is laid up in his room.

Tuesday, November 20th, 1900.

They (the Boers) are still indulging in threats to shoot prisoners if we continue to burn farms and deport women.

Sunday, November 25th, 1900.

I went to see the F.M. in the afternoon to say good-bye to him. He said he was very pleased with the work done by the cavalry throughout the campaign.

Tuesday, November 27th, 1900.

I was just getting into the train at 9 this morning when I got a telephone from Kitchener saying he wanted to see me at once. On going to him I found bad news had been received from the Free State. It seems that the Boer force which started South a week or two ago attacked Wepener which was held by 480 British troops and 2 guns. The whole thing is very inexplicable but the fact is that after a very short resistance our troops surrendered and the Boers entered the place.

A strong relief column was already on the road to Wepener and reached it shortly after the Boers entered. The enemy were promptly expelled and put to flight with loss.

Thursday, November 29th, 1900.

. . . We found the O.C.—(a young Guards subaltern) in a very casual condition as regards his defences. He seemed

to consider the digging of trenches a work of superfluity! However, we put him right and I think the place is quite secure from attack.

Friday, December 7th, 1900.

I had a visit from Goldman¹ who is writing a book about the work done by the cavalry in this war.

Sunday, December 9th, 1900.

Various indications go to show that the Boers are getting rather tired of this. The refusal of the German and Russian Emperors to receive Kruger has had some considerable effect upon them.

Monday, December 10th, 1900.

A prisoner we have states that he knows where £80,000 is hidden in the Loshing and 12 guns buried at Vredeport.

Wednesday, December 12th, 1900.

I have just heard that Reggie Ward² (Blues) is on his way.

Thursday, December 13th, 1900.

In spite of the re-inforcement Reitfontein is as badly watched as ever and——— is not much better. I called the attention of the O.C. these posts to the defects and they are being remedied. It is the old fault! The infantry will not spread out and will not intrench sufficiently. We got back to J'burg at 5 and there bad news awaited us. It appears that Clements³ with 1,600 men and 9 guns (1 a 4·7!) was attacked at 4 a.m. to-day on the Magaliesburg by 2,500 of the enemy and driven back to Helipoort with great loss. Poor Legge⁴ has been killed and several other officers. There are many N.C.O's and men killed and wounded. The latest we have heard to-night is that he is camped at Helipoort with the enemy more or less all round him. His column from Krugersdorp started this morning and we hope they must have had a very beneficial effect both in bringing reinforcements and taking the enemy in flank and rear. This event has considerably upset our arrangements in this district. I have had to withdraw Gordon and Hicks from the railway and they are now

¹ Mr. C. S. Goldman, author of *With General French and the Cavalry in South Africa*.

² The Hon. R. Ward, Lieut. Royal Horse Guards.

³ Colonel R. A. P. Clements, South Wales Borderers.

⁴ Major N. Legge, 20th Hussars.

marching in hot haste on Krugersdorp. We must be strong against attack at that point.

There was a small fight, we hear, at Lichtenburg. The Transvaal General Lemmer is reported killed. They say De Wet is quite cornered now but we shall see!

Friday, December 14th, 1900.

No more news of Clements arrived till 11 and then we got a wire saying he had retired from Helipoort at 3 p.m. yesterday on Commando Nek. . . . He says enemy also suffered heavily and an important prisoner taken stated that it was the Boers intention to march on Krugersdorp. Clements' last move has certainly left the road quite open to them to do so. I am preparing for them, and by to-night a mobile column of 500 infantry, 500 cavalry and 6 guns will be in readiness at Krugersdorp under the garrison there. To-morrow evening or Sunday Hicks should arrive with another 600 and 2 guns. I think we are fairly ready for them. . . . I have wires from Chief saying he has ordered up the Scots Guards from De-Aar, and the 4th Cavalry Brigade from Heidelberg to Krugersdorp.

Saturday, December 15th, 1900.

We went to Krugersdorp by train at 8 a.m. Found Gordon had arrived. Some of the enemy's watch fires were seen during the night about 12 miles to the N.W. . . . I rode all round the position. To attack it would be madness with less than several thousand men and many guns. At 12 I had a conference with Hart and Gordon and arranged plans in case of enemy coming on. . . . I found a wire from Kitchener saying that I was to take up command of Clements' district (and all the troops in it) as well as my own. He wishes me to arrange a combined movement and drive De La Rey and his confederates back across the Magaliesburg.

Sunday, December 16th, 1900.

We had a train ready at 4 this morning in case there had been an attack on Krugersdorp. But a wire came at 4.30 saying things were all quiet.

Monday, December 17th, 1900.

There are reports that the removal of the women is having great effect and causing many Boers to throw away their arms and refuse to fight any more.

Thursday, December 20th, 1900.

I shall accompany Gordon to-morrow and on Saturday try to gallop through myself to Krugersdorp.

Saturday, December 22nd, 1900.

Leaving Gordon to follow up Beyers¹ I started to return to Krugersdorp at 4 a.m. We got a squadron from Gordon to escort us half-way and 30 of my scouts were also with us, guarding the baggage. Just after starting the scouts came across a party of 100 Boers who had been cut off and left in the neighbourhood of Tamhoek in the action of the 19th and were now trying to get back to rejoin Beyers.

They were crossing our road from North to South. After a slight engagement (in which 2 of my scouts were wounded) they cleared away to the S.W. and I hope some of them were caught by Gordon's people.

We reached Krugersdorp at 12.30.

Tuesday, December 25th, 1900.

We got up a Christmas dinner for the men of the Staff and I went across and spoke to them. . . . Our Xmas dinner party included (besides ourselves) Wharty Wilson,² Broadwood, Hindlip,³ and a Mr. Rodfree (a diplomat who has come up with letters from Sir A. Milner).

Monday, December 31st, 1900.

Reports have come in that 200 infantry and 1 4.7 gun occupying a post at Helvetia have been rushed and captured by the Boers. There are several killed and wounded.

¹ Boer General.

² Lieut.-Col. Wharton Wilson, commanding 12th Btn. Imperial Yeomanry.

³ Lord Hindlip, Lieut. 3rd Btn. Worcestershire Regt.

CHAPTER II

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR
DIARIES.]
(1901 and 1902)

Friday, January 4th, 1901.

Information comes from Kronstad that De Wet has gone back East of the line. It is believed that he has ammunition stored at De Wet's farm, and it is possible he went there to replenish. The Chief has asked my views as to the disposal of Paget.¹ I have recommended that he be sent to Elands River station on the Middleburg line to co-operate in a combined movement against Louis Botha and Viljoen.²

I have a very disquieting telegram about poor Bertie³ from Blomfontein. I fear he is in a bad way.

Sunday, January 6th, 1901.

A wire now comes from Babington⁴ this morning saying that whilst on the march he was attacked by De La Rey with 1,000 men and 1 gun. He defeated the latter with loss and his mounted men drove him back nearly 20 miles N.W.

Monday, January 7th, 1901.

Babington sent in his casualty returns. There has been something very wrong in the I.L.H. who have had 50 casualties in one squadron. The number in the whole of the rest of the force was only 8. They must have run into some trap.

Tuesday, January 8th, 1901.

News has been received that Lord Roberts has landed and had a great reception. He is created an Earl and a K.G.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Genl. the Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur) Paget.

² Boer leader.

³ Captain (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) R. L. Aspinall, late 15th Hussars, nephew of Genl. French to whose staff he was attached, suffering from enteric fever.

⁴ Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir James) Babington.

Wednesday, January 9th, 1901.

I have two telegrams from Gordon with accounts of his action. It appears he was as far N.W. as Zandfontein and fearing for his convoy he moved S.E. to meet it. He found Beyers with 2,000 men and 4 guns about to attack and he immediately launched a counter attack on Beyers' right. The Boers were driven back with much loss.

Sunday, January 13th, 1901.

Last night an important capture was made in the person of an ex-German officer named *Walter*, who is one of Beyers' adjutants. I have every reason to believe what he says, viz. that Beyers has crossed the line and gone East with 2,000 men and 6 guns. His intention is to join Botha. He says also that De La Rey's force is to the left in this district. He gave us valuable and interesting information.

Tuesday, January 15th, 1901.

Colville¹ has been placed on retired list for writing to the press. Butler² has the command in Canada.

Thursday, January 17th, 1901.

I had a long interview with Gordon and went thro' all the telegrams, etc. He undoubtedly failed to read carefully my wire No. 5 of Jan. 8th, and thought he was to move West at all hazards. It is curious that he could not better appreciate the situation. By his false move he gave Beyers 2 clear days to get away by the road he had left open for him.

I had also a visit from Paget. He is very furious with Gordon for giving him that long trek for nothing. I cannot, however, hold Babington free from blame. He was very wrong to retire on Ventersdorp.

A report has just come in from the Chief that De Wet is at Rhenosterpoort (near Vredeport) with a Commando and 3 guns. We can get no kind of confirmation of this.

News has come from Babington that he had a very successful fight and gave the enemy the knock pretty severely to the West of Ventersdorp.

Saturday, January 19th, 1901.

We have to-day arrested and confined in the fort *Walter*, the German adjutant to Beyers captured last week. He has

¹ Major-Genl. Sir H. E. Colville.

² Lieut.-Genl. Sir William Butler.

been spreading sedition all over the place. The fact is it is folly to treat these people like officers and gentlemen. We did all we could for this man and this is the return.

Sunday, January 20th, 1901.

News came from Springs very early that a few Boers under Field Cornet Myers had made a raid on the electric works at Brakpan and caused damage to the amount of £70,000! The brigade at Springs turned out but the enemy had made off.

We have had news to-day of the serious illness of the Queen. This has caused great depression everywhere. It would be a most terrible loss to the nation, and particularly at the present juncture of affairs most unfortunate in every way.

Monday, January 21st, 1901.

The accounts of the Queen are slightly more encouraging this morning, but H.M.'s condition is still very serious.

Tuesday, January 22nd, 1901.

I have had a long letter from Haig telling me of his doings in the Colony. It is quite evident that the Boer invasion is a dismal failure.

Wednesday, January 23rd, 1901.

This morning we received the sad news of Her Majesty's death which occurred at 6.30 p.m. yesterday. It has cast a great gloom over everyone. H.M.'s was indeed a glorious life.

Thursday, January 24th, 1901.

We were notified this morning that this was to be 'Accession Day' and the flags were hoisted and a Royal salute of 21 guns fired from the fort.

Friday, January 25th, 1901.

The flags were hoisted half-mast again this morning and 81 minute guns were fired at noon.

Saturday, January 26th, 1901.

Smith-Dorrien has had a fight South of Middleburg. He took the enemy's position with a loss of 1 officer (Lloyd, Suffolks) killed, 2 officers and 14 men wounded. Boers are said to have lost heavily.

Sunday, January 27th, 1901.

There was a memorial service in church this morning which we attended. Very sad and depressing.

Tuesday, January 29th, 1901. *Action of Boschmans Kop.*

The troops marched at 4 a.m. I left my Hd. Qrs. at 4.30. . . . I rode forward to Allenby's brigade and (about 7 a.m.) on approaching a ridge to the Eastward, upon which one of Allenby's advanced squadrons was halted, the enemy's shells were seen to be bursting upon it. On reaching the ridge we found the enemy (apparently in some strength) occupying a very extended position (of which Boschmans Kop was the Southern extremity) to oppose our advance Eastwards.

Allenby immediately brought up his artillery (4 H.A. guns, 1 Elswick and 1 howitzer) on the hill facing Boschmans Kop. He directed his Elswick fire on the enemy's guns (which were posted some 6,000 yards to the N.E.) and his H.A. and howitzer fired on Boschmans Kop. Knox's guns were soon afterwards heard to the North.

I sent word to Pulteney to hurry up and take up Allenby's position whilst Allenby moved to turn the enemy's left flank.

Pending Pulteney's arrival Allenby sent the Greys to the S.E. to commence the flank movement. The enemy was soon seen to be leaving Boschmans Kop and also retiring in considerable numbers from Knox's front. Knox had, however, been unduly delayed and was not up soon enough to enable us to effect a telling pursuit by turning both the enemy's flanks. Pulteney arrived about 8 and Allenby commenced his turning movement. Previous to this a squadron of the Greys had tried to rush Boschmans Kop. It was a rather ill-advised attempt. They were driven back with a loss of 1 killed and 7 wounded.

Allenby's flanking movement, our severe shell fire, and Knox's ultimate advance had their effect and the enemy was soon in full retreat at all points. . . . We learnt that the enemy numbered over 2,000 with 4 or 5 guns. Beyers in command. . . . A large trek of Boers was observed in the distance moving East. It was a great pity that Knox kept so far back, or we might have caught some of their wagons.

I established my Hd. Qrs. at Noogedacht. We found a Boer hospital here with 2 wounded men in it. Some 26 wounded had been taken away. There were also 3 or 4 women with red crosses on their arms calling themselves nurses. They were Boer women and have been sent into Graylingstad.

We have discovered several dead and wounded Boers and some dead horses.

Friday, February 1st, 1901.

About 6 a report came that the ridge to the East was held by the enemy in some force with 2 guns. I rode forward to a knoll which commanded the country to the front and examined the situation. Allenby was coming up on the right and 2 of the enemy's guns were in action against him. He was replying with his Elswick at some 6,000 yards range. I sent orders to him to turn the enemy's left and told Pulteney to send Rimington¹ round with the cavalry to turn their right. The troops were handled very well on both flanks and the enemy was made to abandon a very strong position with very little loss to us.

Saturday, February 2nd, 1901.

This must have been a mournful day in England and indeed in all parts of the Empire, being the burial day of Queen Victoria.

Wednesday, February 6th, 1901.

Smith-Dorrien sends me word that he was heavily attacked at 3 this morning by the Ermelo and Carolina Commandos. The attack was driven off by daylight with very heavy loss to the Boers. We also lost heavily—23 killed and 52 wounded. The Boer General Spuigt was amongst the killed. It seems they attacked under cover of a mist. Smith-Dorrien and Alderson are now cut off from all communication with the Chief so I am in command of all the forces. They number about 13,000 men and about 55 guns. We certainly should be able to bring things to a head in the neighbourhood of Piet Retief.

Thursday, February 7th, 1901.

I am forming further plans for an advance on the line Amsterdam-Piet Retief. The Boers will then have to chuck it or go into Swaziland. I wish I could hem them up against the Zulu border!

Saturday, February 9th, 1901.

We got some news telegrams this morning. I learn from one that the post at Modderfontein (S. of Krugersdorp) has

¹ Major (afterwards Major-Genl.) M. F. Rimington, 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons.

been rushed in the night and captured. This can only have been due to carelessness and very bad fortification.

Very satisfactory news from Smith-Dorrien this afternoon. His mounted troops have captured a convoy with 50 wagons and several prisoners.

Sunday, February 10th, 1901.

Cecil Lowndes¹ who I had sent with a small escort to take despatches returned at 1 to-day, having been captured by the Boers. . . . Cecil, when captured, behaved very well and instead of handing over his despatches gave them 2 or 3 leaves of his pocket book! As none of them knew English they were quite satisfied and let him go. Of the two scouts ('French's') who were sent 1 was wounded and 1 had his horse shot.

Dartnell² wires me that as he doesn't expect his supplies till night of 12th he is grinding mealies and making biltong!³ I have got two or three wires from Lord K. He seems very pleased with all we've done and with my future plans.

Tuesday, February 12th, 1901.

Smuts' farm was seized and dealt with, Mrs. Smuts and her family being removed on the wagons. . . . The ridge in front of us was held by a strong rear guard which it took Pulteney some time to dislodge. In this operation the flank was very brilliantly turned by the Inniskillings under Rimington. They charged the enemy with great vigour, gallantly repulsing them with considerable loss. . . . Large captures made of prisoners, cattle, trek oxen, sheep, wagons and ammunition.

Friday, February 15th, 1901.

To-day is the first anniversary of our Relief of Kimberley.

Tuesday, February 19th, 1901.

By the 23rd we shall be completely out of supplies and reduced altogether to mealies and meat. The matter is rather serious. But I hope it may not come to that yet.

Wednesday, February 20th, 1901.

This horrible weather still continues. It rained hard all last night and has been pouring all to-day. The roads and

¹ Mr. Cecil Selby-Lowndes, a nephew of Genl. French who had been farming in the Free State and was now serving on his Staff.

² Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir John) Dartnell.

³ Dried meat.

drifts are in a terrible state, rendering the arrival of our convoy more precarious than ever! We are already very short of biscuit and groceries and the forage for the horses is nearly run out.

The total results of the operations of this force since Jan. 27 are as follows (up to 15th inst. when we entered Piet Retief) —282 Boers killed and wounded in action (these we *know of* but there are really many more): 239 prisoners: one 15 P'r gun: 462 rifles: 160,000 S.A.A.: 3,502 horses: 74 mules: 3,528 trek oxen: 18,720 head of cattle: 155,388 sheep: 1,070 wagons: besides enormous quantities of mealies, oat-hay and crops captured or destroyed. . . .

Thursday, February 21, 1901.

I heard from Smith-Dorrien early this morning saying he could not possibly carry out his move to-day owing to swollen rivers and floods. It appears that Burn-Murdoch¹ can't manage to get on at all. He was reported as at least 12 miles from Luneburg at 5 yesterday evening with a river (Pongola) 300 yards wide to cross. The Assegai is impassable for wagons and so is the Intombi which is said to be 50 yards wide. The worst of it is there is a shortage of even *mealies* in the country. . . . I am sending men round to hunt up the Kaffir Kraals for mealies. They are sure to have lots of them hidden away and I am offering £1 a sack for them, or a fat beast for 5 sacks. . . . Fortunately we have very few sick and plenty of medical comforts in hand. The men are taking all this exposure and hardship right well.

I am reading a lately published *Life of Wellington*. It is most interesting to see how history repeats itself. One realises how all the difficulties we have fought against in this long campaign were just the same at that time. Probably a good deal worse.

Friday, February 22nd, 1901.

It poured hard all night and the country is now simply a vast deluge of wet and mud. The rivers have risen considerably. We are now absolutely on mealies and meat. All our supplies are finished. Transport cannot even get along the roads! There is now nothing for it but to wait till this infernal weather

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major-Genl.) J. F. Burn-Murdoch, 1st (Royal) Dragoons, commanding supply column of which Genl. French's Force was so urgently in need.

changes. I hope for good results from routing out the Kaffir kraals.

I had a talk with Knox and Pulteney this morning. They are arranging to fix up boilers in the camps and make plenty of soup. It is very fortunate we have got lots of cattle. We can get no more news of Rimington or Burn-Murdoch. It is very unfortunate that the columns were not properly provided with regular pontoon equipment before coming to operate in such a country as this. We are pretty secure from attack for the same reason as prevents one taking the offensive.

It is said that the Swaziland Commando are anxious to surrender and are only waiting for the river to fall to get across. I rather doubt it. But this weather undoubtedly takes the 'go' out of the Boers.

A letter has come in addressed to the Chief from the Swazi Queen, asking for mounted troops to assist her in kicking the Boers out of her land. I have sent a short reply and the original on to K. but there is no communication open yet.

Saturday, February 23rd, 1901.

Our raid on the kraals has produced a fair quantity of mealies and we can now get on very well for a few days. It is very satisfactory to find we *can* live on the country for a few days without injury to the health of the men.

Sunday, February 24th, 1901.

This morning I got a short despatch from Burn-Murdoch. He is still at Elandsburg and not likely at present to get much further! A wire was forwarded to me from the Chief dated 22nd, asking as to our whereabouts and telling me he was in much anxiety about us. A message also arrived from Hildyard¹ from which I learn there are plenty of supplies available at Vryheid. This is excellent news. Rimington has done very good work. He has bridged the Chaka Spruit and the Pongola and we hear some of the convoy are now past Luneburg on their way here. Rivers and spruits are falling everywhere. . . . I have sent a wire all round expressing high appreciation of the conduct of troops at this trying time. . . . I have just heard to my sorrow that 2 men of the Scots Guards were drowned in the Assegai River this afternoon. This makes 3 in the whole force.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Henry) Hildyard.

Monday, February 25th, 1901.

. . . To our great surprise and pleasure "the Snail"¹ and Reggie Ward suddenly turned up this afternoon. . . .

Tuesday, February 26th, 1901.

A small part of the long expected convoy reached here to-day with groceries and biscuit.

Wednesday, February 27th, 1901.

There is a great change in the weather. It has become quite hot. . . . I have just got a very nice wire from the Chief expressing great satisfaction with the work we have done and approving my proposed future operations. He is at Middleburg waiting to meet Louis Botha who has expressed a desire to see him with a view to putting an end to the war. The Chief is kind enough to say that if this comes off it will be in great measure due to our recent operations.

De Wet has been heavily defeated in Free State. His guns and pom-poms captured.

Sunday, March 3rd, 1901.

The guns² are found. Great credit is due to Ridout,³ R.E., for this. This makes a total capture of 7 guns since we began the trek. We have heard nothing of the 'Middleburg Conference' but are still in hopes of peace.

Tuesday, March 5th, 1901.

Bullock⁴ with the convoy has reached and crossed the Assegai. We are getting everything in now.

Saturday, March 9th, 1901.

Campbell has returned to his camp. He reports 15 Boers have surrendered to him. They say they are flying from the Swazis who have attacked them at night and killed 15 of their number.

Tuesday, March 12th, 1901.

I got a wire from Chief to-day asking me to accelerate operations in S.E. much as possible as troops were wanted North. This doesn't look much like peace!

¹ Captain Milbanke, returning from leave.

² Guns which had been buried by the Boers.

³ Captain (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Dudley) Ridout.

⁴ Colonel (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir George) Bullock.

Wednesday, March 13th, 1901.

Got a very nice wire from Chief saying he highly appreciated conduct of troops in trying circumstances. . . . I have sent a strong letter to Swazi Queen warning against practice of barbarities towards Boers and theft from white residents.

Wednesday, March 20th, 1901.

I had a wire from Chief this afternoon saying that Botha had '*refused all terms*' and telling me to finish up here and get troops back as quickly as possible. I fear our hopes of peace are at an end for some time! It is earnestly to be hoped that real stern uncompromising measures will now be adopted.

Thursday, March 21st, 1901.

I hear that both Lord Roberts and Sir G. White¹ have treated me very kindly in their despatches.

Saturday, March 30th, 1901.

We are putting up for the night in old Mr. Emmet's farm. He is the father of the 5 Emmets now against us. They are direct descendants of the Irish patriot.

Sunday, March 31st, 1901.

A party of the enemy were headed back S. of the Pongola by Allenby, and in the operation he captured 1 15 p'r gun and 2 pom-poms. This makes 10 guns we have captured since leaving Springs.

Monday, April 1st, 1901.

I went down to Pulteney's camp at 6 a.m. and said good-bye to his troops. The Scots Guards were paraded and I said a few words to them. They are a splendid Battalion and have done excellent service.

Tuesday, April 2nd, 1901.

A runner arrived this morning from Dartnell dated 31st March, 5.20 p.m. He tells me he started North on the 30th and reached Smalldeal on morning of 31st where he found Emmet², Henderson³ and Grobelaar with 1,000 to 1,200 posted in a strong position. After 3 hours fighting they took to precipitate

¹ Lieut.-Genl, (afterwards Field Marshal) Sir George White, G.O.C. the forces in Natal on the outbreak of war.

² Boer leader.

³ Boer leader.

flight and left all their wagons, an ambulance, several thousand cattle and 5,000 sheep, all of which Dartnell got. They retired East.

Saturday, April 6th, 1901.

Summary of news says S.A. war medal is to carry 24 clasps.

Sunday, April 7th, 1901. (Easter Day.)

The Natal Government are still howling about our mission to Zululand. The civil magistrates in Zululand are not playing up at all.

Friday, April 12th, 1901.

Grobelaar is reported to be with his Commando about Babanango, S. of Berthasdrorp. The magistrates in Zululand say he intends (with Transvaal natives!) to cross into Zululand and ravage district there. I can't believe this!

Monday, April 15th, 1901.

We left Blood River about 6 and reached Japes Drift (Buffalo River) about 9. After an absence of a year and a quarter we find ourselves once more on British territory!¹ . . . got into Dundee about 3.30. I was much interested in viewing the 'Talana Hill' battlefield and the spot where Symons² fell.

Tuesday, April 16th, 1901.

As soon as I got into the train at Dundee I was seized with a bad attack of malarial fever. I was in bed at Johannesburg (a nurse in attendance) till *Saturday, May 3rd*, on which day I left by train for Cape Town.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

MOUNT NELSON HOTEL,

CAPETOWN,

May 10th, 1901.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

I received a most kind wire from you before leaving Johannesburg asking after my health. It was most kind of you to think of me.

The sea air of Capetown is making me all right again. It was rather a sharp attack of malaria which I must have caught down on the Zulu frontier the other day. It is rather prevalent there at this time of year. I shall be in the field again in two or three weeks.

¹ Natal.

² Major-Genl. Sir W. Penn Symons, died of wounds received at the battle of Talana Hill when commanding the British forces engaged.

Will you allow me Sir to take this opportunity of saying how deeply I feel your great and generous kindness in the expressions you have used in your despatches.

No words can express how much I shall treasure and value them to the end of my life.

Yours very truly
Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Thursday, May 23rd, 1901.

I have now reported myself to Kitchener as fit for duty. A great deal of progress has been made in the last 6 weeks towards reducing the Boer resistance.

Wednesday, May 29th, 1901.

General Schumann has been killed at Pretoria by the accidental explosion of a 4.7 shell. I liberated him twice from Boer prisons. He was my opponent throughout the operations at Colesburg.

Friday, May 31st, 1901.

Lunched with the Governor¹ and Lady H. H. at Newlands. A very pleasant afternoon. Her Ladyship is charming and very clever.

Saturday, June 1st, 1901.

I got a wire from the Chief this morning telling me I was to take charge of all field operations in Cape Colony and go up there as soon as I was fit. I am arranging to start on Wednesday night.

Thursday, June 6th, 1901.

We left Cape Town by mail train at 9 last night. We expect to reach De-Aar at 2 a.m. to-morrow and Middleburg about 6. I have wired to Haig to meet me there.

Friday, June 7th, 1901.

We reached here (Middleburg C.C.) at 9 a.m. I found Haig at the station and all the troops in the town were turned out to receive us. As Haig's operations are, I think, about to

¹ Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Governor of Cape Colony.

culminate in a great success and his dispositions are thoroughly sound I am not going to take over the command till he has had a fair chance to complete them. . . . Scobell has had a fight with some of Kritzinger's¹ men and has captured 20 prisoners and 165 horses besides a quantity of rifle ammunition etc. Wyndham, with 17th Lancers, made a night march and captured a picquet of Van Renan's² Commando of 22 men (all Cape rebels) and 30 horses.

I have reported my arrival to C-in-C and he has replied approving of my arrangements as to taking over.

Saturday, June 8th, 1901.

The main body of Boers in the Colony (under Kritzinger, Fouché³, and Myburg⁴) are being hustled about by Gorringer⁵, Scobell and White between Lady Grey and Barkly East. Scheepers⁶ appears to be moving North.

Van Renan and Lartigan⁷ are now North of Steynsburg and appear to be making for the Orange River. Malan⁸ is in the neighbourhood (West) of Fish River station. . . . A second wire from the Chief impresses on me the necessity of severity in dealing with captured rebels.

Monday, June 10th, 1901.

Col. Doran⁹, who is to be president of the standing Court Martial at Steynsburg, came to see me to-day. I have explained to him that it is necessary to proceed against the rebel prisoners with the utmost rigour.

Friday, June 14th, 1901.

It is stated that Botha's Military Secretary (De Wet) and Smuts (late State Attorney) are at Standerton communicating with Kruger to whom Mrs. Botha has also gone from London.

Monday, June 17th, 1901.

A strong patrol of Doran's¹⁰ column has been captured and 50 of Scheepers' men made a pretty successful raid on Murraysburg, taking £120 from the bank and looting stores. I am reorganising the troops down there.

¹ Boer leader.

² Boer leader.

³ Boer leader.

⁴ Boer leader.

⁵ Captain (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir George) Gorringer, R.E., commanding flying column.

⁶ Boer leader.

⁷ Boer leader.

⁸ Boer leader.

⁹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) W. R. B. Doran, Royal Irish Regt.

¹⁰ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major-Genl.) B. J. C. Doran, Royal Irish Regt.

Tuesday, June 18th, 1901.

We have moved to-day into Capt. Middlemass' house. He is a brother of my old naval pal. . . . The Secretary of State for War¹ has laid down the lines upon which the Chief is to deal with rebels. He says the death sentence should be executed only in certain selected cases when it can be proved that the prisoner has joined in attacks on trains or has been sniping, or has been guilty of other 'mutinous' conduct.

Wednesday, June 19th, 1901.

Crabbe² and Monro³ engaged Commandos under Kritzinger, Lotter⁴, Myburg, Erasmus⁵ and Van Renan on 17th. They drove enemy South towards Tarkastad with a loss of 5 killed, about 30 wounded, 8 prisoners, 25 horses killed, 50 captured. . . . We attended a ball to-night given by locals to garrison.

Friday, June 21st, 1901.

We heard this morning that a patrol of 60 men of M.M.R. (MacAndrew's⁶ column) had been captured by Kritzinger's force about half-way between Cradock and Graff-Rennet. The Captain and 3 men were killed and others wounded.

Saturday, June 22nd, 1901. Graff-Rennet.

Arrived here about 3.30 p.m. after an uneventful journey. The country between here and Middleburg is awful. I have seen no worse for the movement of troops since I've been in S.A.

Sunday, June 23rd, 1901.

We started this morning and ascended a steep mountain very like *Coleskop*. It was a hard climb but from a point near the summit I got an excellent view of the Aberdeen district and the country to the North of it. I can well understand the difficulty of dislodging Scheepers. . . .

The Chief wishes me to see Smitherman who is a spy in our employ. He is now at Colesburg engaged in work in connection with Kritzinger. He has lately obtained some valuable information with reference to negotiations which are going on amongst the Boer leaders with a view to a general surrender.

¹ The Rt. Hon. St. John Brodrick (afterwards 9th Viscount Midleton).

² Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) E. M. S. Crabbe, Grenadier Guards.

³ Major (afterwards Genl. Sir Charles) Monro, The Queens (Royal West Surrey Regt.)

⁴ Boer leader.

⁵ Boer leader.

⁶ Captain (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Harry) MacAndrew, Indian Staff Corps.

Wednesday, June 26th, 1901.

Richmond was heavily attacked yesterday by Malan with 300 men. The garrison held out very gallantly. The Boers fled on hearing of Lund's¹ approach.

Lund arrived at Richmond this morning. He reports that he is waiting there as garrison is so weak and he has not yet discovered direction of Malan's retreat. I have ordered him to start in pursuit at once. . . . I had a visit to-day from Capt. Smitherman of the Intelligence Dept. He has some idea of being able to enlist the services of the Dutch (other than 'loyal') on our side. He will canvass the Colesburg district and report to me in 10 days.

Saturday, June 29th, 1901.

News came late last night that Lund had engaged Malan, Breedt,² and Smit³, who took up a strong position S.W. of Hanover. After 2½ hours' fighting he dislodged them and they retired in 3 directions. We had 10 Brabant's Horse wounded. Enemy suffered loss—2 killed known. . . . Crewe⁴ reports that Lotter was seriously wounded on the 24th.

Friday, July 5th, 1901.

St. Clair⁵ arrived to-day about the rebel prisoners' trials, etc. Chief has confirmed death sentences in two of them who were in Scobell's captures and tried at Dordrecht. They are to be executed here and at Cradock respectively, as they belong to these districts.

Sunday, July 7th, 1901.

I have a letter from the Chief saying he is pleased with the progress we are making in the Colony. . . . Chetwode⁶ arrived to-day. I have sent him to Cape Town for a few days rest.

Monday, July 8th, 1901.

A train was heavily fired into North of Boroda this morning, so Kritzingen is probably in that neighbourhood. . . . I saw a deputation this evening consisting of De-Vaal, Plessis

¹ Major F. T. Lund, 9th Lancers.

² Boer leader.

³ Boer leader.

⁴ Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl. Sir Charles) Crewe, commanding column.

⁵ Colonel J. L. C. St. Clair, Deputy Judge Advocate-General.

⁶ Major (afterwards F. M. Sir Philip) Chetwode, 19th Hussars.

and Pretorius (the two latter members for Middleburg). They wanted a mitigation of the death sentence on the two men who are to be hanged this week. I heard their arguments which were very vague and weak, and told them I couldn't accede to their wishes.

Tuesday, July 9th, 1901.

The finding and sentence of the court on Marais (the man who is to be hanged here to-morrow morning) were read in public in the market square this morning in the presence of the troops and all the "suspect" Dutch. The prisoner was also present.

Wednesday, July 10th, 1901.

The rebel Marais was hanged here this morning. This has made a great impression on the Dutch. The Chief has ordered me to erect a line of block houses along the railway from De-Aar to Steynsburg. They are to be 1,600 yards apart and garrisoned by 7 men each. The Chief has given me the Coldstream from Naaupoort for this purpose.

Tuesday, July 16th, 1901.

The Chief arrived here this morning at 8.30 quite unexpectedly. He left again at 3 for Pretoria. I was very glad to see him and got his consent to all my arrangements. He tells me of a big move to be made by De La Rey and De Wet into the Colony. He is going to send me the 10th Hussars and 12th Lancers and another infantry battn. with which to extend the line of blockhouses thro' De-Aar to Orange River. . . . In the N.E. Fouché and Myburg attacked the Rangers M.I. under Moore at — (N. of Jamestown) on the 14th. They were driven off with loss and retired West. The Rangers lost 7 men killed, 4 officers and several men wounded.

Thursday, July 18th, 1901.

Crabbe found Kritzingar posted in Gantlands Kloof and attacked him. K. retired. Crabbe (who has some slight loss) is following him to-day.

Friday, July 19th, 1901.

At 5 p.m. I had an interview with Messrs. De-Vaal, Theron, Plessis, and Pretorius. They have drawn up an excellent manifesto which I hope may be successful in bringing in some of the rebels.

Sunday, July 21st, 1901.

. . . he (Scheepers) held up and burnt a train near Nels-Poort, killing 3 and wounding 19 men who were in the train. . . . Chief has placed all troops in N. of Colony directly under me.

Monday, July 22nd, 1901.

There was some excitement at Cradock this morning on the report that Crabbe was surrounded by Kritzinger. The facts are that he followed K. with some 300 men into the mountains, sending his guns and transport into Cradock. On the morning of the 21st, having got South of Kritzinger, he was about to move off when he was fired upon on all sides and 200 of his horses stampeded. The fight went on all day. K. twice called on him to surrender, and under cover of darkness Crabbe withdrew his force into Mortimer with a loss of 1 officer and 5 men wounded. The Boers are reported to have suffered heavily. The enemy must have got most of the lost horses.

Tuesday, July 23rd, 1901.

. . . He (Lund) engaged Smit's Commando on 19th and drove them North with loss. Rundle¹ of Carabiniers (commanding Brabant's Horse) was dangerously wounded in the head.

Lukin's operations resulted in completely surprising Lartigan. He captured 10 prisoners (including Field Cornet Buys), 105 horses, 70 saddles and all their blankets. He killed and wounded many and Lartigan's force retired S. and S.W., a great many of them dismounted.

Wednesday, July 24th, 1901.

I hear to-day from Chief that the threatened move South is unlikely to come off at present. I have wired to ask him to let me undertake a big sweep to the South.

Friday, July 26th, 1901.

I made all arrangements for Southern move. . . . The Chief wires consent to my big movement.

Sunday, July 28th, 1901.

The Secretary of State for War has asked for my reasons for compelling the attendance of disloyal Dutch at the exe-

¹ This was the same officer who had three horses shot under him during a previous engagement.

cutions. I have replied. There appears to be a fuss at home about it. Smitherman came to see me to-day. He says there are still numbers of horses about in the farms, and suggests the formation of a 'horse clearing' corps.

Monday, July 29th, 1901.

I saw the 9th Lancers and C.M.R.¹ on parade this morning and addressed both corps.

Wednesday, July 31st, 1901.

The big sweep South by all the columns in line commenced yesterday. To-night they are in line, as follows—Atherton² at Shrib-Kuil (E. of Brespas Poort station)—Lund at Allunans Poort—Wyndham at Klip Kraal—Doran at Hartebeest Vlagli—Alexander at Compass-Bury—Hunter-Weston at Roodhoogte—Scobell at Conway and Kavanagh³ at Kalkheuvel.

A line of posts from S. of Maraisburg thro' Tarkastad, Pringles Kop, Daggahoers Nek, to Somerset East and Pearston is held by 17th Lancers and local troops of Nos. 1-2-4 and 8 Areas. This prevents any breaking of the enemy N.E.—E.—or S.E.

Saturday, August 3rd, 1901.

Gorringe has hunted Commando under Myburg and Wessels⁴ S.W. The enemy after separating united again at Kissenburg where G. surrounded them on 2nd. The enemy ran the gauntlet and broke away under a heavy fire. They suffered severely and some prisoners and 84 horses with saddles fell in to G's hands.

Monday, August 5th, 1901.

. . . He (Scheepers) has pushed a detachment of some 40 or 50 to — Poort where they burnt the gaol and looted a store at 10 last night. They then proceeded to Fetherstonhaugh Farm which they burnt. We sent 15 A.T.⁵ down there and it moved on that line about 4 this morning.

Friday, August 30th, 1901.

In the South they are in a great state of alarm! The most extravagant reports are flying about.

¹ The famous South African regular corps, the Cape Mounted Riflemen, now unfortunately non-existent.

² Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Colonel) T. J. Atherton, 12th Lancers.

³ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Charles) Kavanagh, 10th Hussars.

⁴ Boer leader.

⁵ Armoured train No. 15.

Sunday, September 1st, 1901.

I fear it is confirmed that some 80 or 100 of the enemy have managed to cross the Orange River through the block-houses between Bethulie and Aliwal North. . . . Monro is now engaged in blocking all the passes leading into the Transkei against the return of the 250 who have crossed them.

Wednesday, September 4th, 1901.

It appears that Lotter managed somehow to break through MacAndrew's cordon and moved S.W. by Magford (S. of Petersburg). Scobell got well after him this morning and after a long chase turned him North again. . . . I went to Naau-poort this morning to meet Lord Milner but he didn't arrive on the special but went round by East London. He wires that he wishes to see me so I shall go there again to-night or to-morrow.

Thursday, September 5th, 1901.

Having heard nothing more from Lord Milner I started late last night to catch up his train at Rosmead and follow on to Naaupoort. I saw him at N. at 8.30 this morning and had a long talk with him. He is anxious for a reorganization of the forces in the Colony, and to form new Areas. . . . Scobell has scored a grand success. He wires as follows, "Sept. 5th—Hearing soon after leaving Flack Fontein morn that Lotter's Commando was at Bowers Hoek I marched across mountains to Petersburg with object of getting at them from direction they would least suspect (stop) Luckily our march was masked by dense mist and rain (stop) We left Petersburg soon after midnight and getting on top of mountains again made for Bowers Hoek (stop) Operation resulted in complete surprise of Lotter's Commando (stop) 12 Boers were killed and 103 captured of which 46 were wounded (stop) well over 200 horses, 25,000 rounds of ammunition in fact everything they had (stop) Amongst prisoners is Lotter, Field Cornets J. Kruger and W. Kruger, Comdt. Breedts and Lt. Schoeman (stop) Both Vesters, notorious rebels, were amongst killed (stop) Our casualties were 10 killed and 8 wounded including Lt. Burgess C.M.R. seriously (stop) I consider Captain Lord Douglas Compton,¹ Lt. Wynn and Lt. Milson behaved with the greatest gallantry (stop) The squadron led by Douglas Compton dashed up to where Boers

¹ Captain (afterwards Colonel) Lord Douglas Compton, 9th Lancers.

were laagered and suffered heavily but was mainly instrumental in capture of prisoners (stop) Capt. Purcell¹ of C.M.R. also greatly distinguished himself (stop) Lotter tells me we have all his men except two patrols amounting to 19 men who were away (stop)"

I have informed Chief who has wired his great satisfaction.

Wednesday, September 11th, 1901.

For the last two days Kavanagh has been in pursuit of Theron² and drove him across the Gueritz River at Otter Kraal. He has captured 52 horses, 42 saddles and all their blankets and cooking pots besides 1,000 rounds of ammunition. He picked up one Boer killed. . . . Crabbe has scored a great success against Scheepers. It appears that the Commando separated at Buffalo Vlei, Scheepers himself going S.W. to Plats Huis and Van der Meurs³ North. V. der M. ran into Crabbe who was moving East of Seven Weeks Poort at Dorefontein. Crabbe attacked him at dawn yesterday. V. der M. and 1 other man were killed, several wounded and 37 prisoners were captured including Field Cornet De Plessis. Our casualties Lt. Harper and 2 men killed, 1 officer and 2 men wounded. Several of the enemy's horses were killed—11 horses, 20 rifles and 1,000 rounds ammunition captured.

Saturday, September 14th, 1901.

In the South Theron, after his defeat by Kavanagh, moved to Heidelberg which he attacked yesterday afternoon. The Boers were driven off by Burke and 30 West Yorks who occupied the hotel and defended it. . . .

Tuesday, September 17th, 1901.

It appears that a strong patrol of the enemy have managed to get down to a point some 12 miles N. of Reit Siding where they have surrounded and captured a patrol of Grenadier Guards, killing Lt. Rebow⁴ and 1 man, wounding 3 and capturing 4.

Wednesday, September 18th, 1901.

In Tarkastad district Boers surprised and tried to rush Sandeman's⁵ squadron of 17th Lancers who were posted

¹ Captain (afterwards Major) J. F. Purcell, Cape Mounted Riflemen.

² Boer leader.

³ Boer leader.

⁴ M. Gurdon-Rebow, Lieut. 3rd Bn. Grenadier Guards.

⁵ Captain V. S. Sandeman, 17th Lancers.

at Modderfontein to hold the Southern exit from Elands Poort and a pass . . . N.E. of it called Tongue Poort. The enemy was dressed exactly like our men and deceived the picquet on outpost duty, seizing the hill commanding the camp at once. They (300 strong) rushed the camp which was most gallantly defended. Our losses were 3 officers (Sheridan, Russell and —) and 30 men killed; Sandeman, 1 other officer and 25 men wounded. On Nickall's¹ squadron arriving to support, the Boers retreated in haste and confusion in a N.E. direction, leaving a number of their dead on the field and taking more away in carts. They also had many wounded. Not a single man surrendered.

Saturday, September 21st, 1901.

Late last night I got information that Murray's camp (Hart's Force) had been rushed at Zandfontein in the O.R.C. Murray and his Adjutant and 30 men were killed, and many wounded. In consequence of this I immediately ordered — to return to Aliwal and report himself to Hart.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS]

MIDDLEBURG,
CAPE COLONY,
Sept. 22nd, 1901.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

In your letter of Aug. 16th you say "I wish you would put down the officers who have been commanding columns and regiments under you in the order you estimate their qualities as soldiers."

I now enclose this list which I have compiled to the best of my judgment. I take it that you refer only to the period since Lord Kitchener assumed command in South Africa. I have put the names down in the order in which I would select them if I was asked to choose men to serve with me in the field, having regard also to their relative *age, service, and experience*.

It has been a very busy week since last mail and I have had to be away from here a great deal but I have tried to give this matter careful thought and your Lordship will of course understand that I have "placed" these officers according to my judgment alone which is quite likely to be incorrect or inaccurate.

I think affairs are looking brighter in the Colony now altho' we continue to be terribly hampered by the deep-rooted hostility of the Dutch population who assist the enemy with untiring activity but with the closest secrecy.

¹ Captain N. T. Nickalls, 17th Lancers.

There can be no doubt that the 17th Lancers (1 squadron) who were surprised the other day were entirely misled by the enemy being dressed *exactly* like our own men. This squadron behaved with great gallantry and the enemy's losses were heavy.

Yours truly,

Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[The list referred to includes the names of many officers who subsequently achieved high rank and distinction, as for example:

Colonel (afterwards Field Marshal Viscount) Allenby:

Major-General (afterwards General Sir Charles) Douglas:

Colonel (afterwards Field Marshal Earl) Haig:

Colonel (afterwards Lieut. General Sir William) Pulteney:

Major-General (afterwards General Sir Horace) Smith-Dorrien,
etc., etc.

The names have been placed in alphabetical order.]

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR
DIARIES.]

Thursday, September 25th, 1901.

Monro wires from Ross—(15 miles N. of Barkly) that he engaged Myburg's Commando on the 23rd pursuing towards Rhodes. . . . He recaptured 21 prisoners who had been taken by Myburg some 3 weeks ago and kept because they would not bind themselves to neutrality. . . . On the night of the 23rd Lt. Grant¹ was in charge of escort Atherton's baggage and came suddenly on a picquet of 30 men. He saw Scheepers' laager to right of road. He gave orders to his Sergt. Major to form up wagons and hold Nek behind him with one troop. He dashed thro' the picquet thinking the 2nd troop was following him, but his orders were not explicit enough as he had told them to line Nek if they heard firing in front. He sent orders back for troops to follow him. Order miscarried. He stopped on road on far side of picquet and held up all Boers retreating. Three surrendered and three refused. He shot 2 dead and wounded three and was then surrounded and captured and taken to house. Boers were much excited and much firing took place amongst themselves. One Boer shot dead, several wounded. They retired hurriedly at midnight, leaving him sleeping in a house. Next morning he brought on his convoy in safety.

¹ A. Grant, 2nd Lieut. 12th Lancers (afterwards Lieut.-Col. Sir Arthur Grant).

Friday, September 27th, 1901.

Another prisoner was taken by Gorrington yesterday and being dressed in Khaki was tried by summary Court Martial and shot immediately for personating our uniform.

Saturday, September 28th, 1901.

Smuts is moving South with a rapidity and staying power which is quite extraordinary. His force, however, seems to be splitting up.

Wednesday, October 23rd, 1901.

I had a wire from C-in-C to-day saying that I had been appointed by the King to command the 1st Army Corps at Aldershot vice Buller.

Saturday, October 26th, 1901.

We left Beaufort West early this morning and reached—Poort about 9. Here we found Scobell who had made a night march from Victoria Road. Just before he (S) got in, the enemy made an attempt to cross railway at this point, but was heavily repulsed by Scobell's guns which had reached there with his baggage. . . .

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

MIDDLEBURG,
CAPE COLONY.

Oct. 27, 1901.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

It is impossible for me to find words to tell you properly how deeply I feel the great kindness and confidence you have shown towards me in selecting me for the command at Aldershot.

I hope you will believe that the one endeavour of my life will be to justify your generous trust in so far as I possibly can.

Yours,

Sir,

Most truly and gratefully,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Sunday, November 3rd, 1901.

He (Comdt. No. 6 Area) says a fugitive D.M.I. has arrived at — saying that Maritz¹ has 1,000 men and is moving South. This is absurd.

¹ Boer leader.

Monday, November 4th, 1901.

The Boers supposed to have been seen East of Venterstad turn out to have been natives collecting horses! So much for the D.M.I. reports!

Thursday, November 7th, 1901.

Doran has been wounded when in pursuit of Malan in a skirmish about 20 miles N.E. of Kluerstroom.

Friday, November 8th, 1901.

I have sent Col. W. Doran¹ to take over B. Doran's column and till he arrives Edwards,² 20th Hussars, commands.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

MIDDLEBURG,
CAPE COLONY.

Nov. 10th, 1901.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

I think the situation in the Colony is certainly improving. About 400 rebels and Free Staters are in the N.E. corner between Barkly East and Rhodes. Many of them are unarmed. We hold Barkly East strongly and two columns are pushing the enemy in that direction. Another strong column under Scobell is moving to re-inforce them and I hope that part of the country will be clear very shortly.

With this exception the whole Colony is now clear to the East of the Western railway from Orange River to Capetown.

A week ago I could have told you that the line of clearance might be drawn from Beaufort West through Sutherland and Clan William but during the last few days two small Commandos under Maritz and Theron have succeeded in slipping back thro' columns which have driven them North of the line Lamberts Bay—Clan William and they are now once more on the Burg River. The columns have turned back South after the enemy and I have sent two more columns round to the Malmesbury district to push them from the South. I have ridden all over that country and know it to be very open and favourable to us so I am in hopes that Maritz and Theron may be enclosed between the Northern and Southern columns and have a rough time as the Oliphants River mountains to the East are very difficult to cross and there is only the sea to the West.

The rest of the enemy are now entirely in the district and number from 1,200 to 1,500. They are scattered about in Commandos

¹ Younger brother of Col. B. Doran.

² Major (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) G. T. G. Edwards, 20th Hussars.

(varying from 100 to 300) between a line drawn thro' Sutherland and Clan William on the South and the Orange River on the North.

I hope before you receive this letter these columns will have cleared the country North to the line Van Rhyn's Dorp . . . and have established connection with others now near Sutherland which will then be on the line . . . Fraserburg.

The Block House system has proved most effective and we are extending it along the Western railway as far as Beaufort West. This will be a bar to any break East and I am trying to arrange for a line of posts (a B.H. line if possible) between Beaufort West, Sutherland and Clan William which will prevent any incursion to the South. This will confine the enemy in country which is least favourable to him. A great part of it is nothing but desert and nearly everywhere water is scarce and bad. Compared to other parts of South Africa it is very thinly populated.

Whilst there can be no doubt that all the Dutch in the Colony (proper) hate us as bitterly as ever, I feel quite sure they are thoroughly convinced of the futility of further resistance to our rule and of the hopelessness of their cause. So long as the enemy is kept away from them they will remain perfectly quiet. Peace is now what they want before everything.

I have read very carefully an authentic account of the action in which poor Brown was killed. You may remember my march from Machadadorp by Ermelo and Bethel to Heidelberg and Pretoria in October and early November of last year. The Boers attacked us several times in much the same kind of ground. One of these which took place West of Lake Crissie on the way to Ermelo was almost exactly similar.

I attribute the comparatively slight losses we incurred entirely to the mounted attacks made by the Inniskillings and Greys. This was repeated by other regiments on different occasions and had a great moral effect on the enemy. They never attempted to come on (in anything like open ground) with the dash and vigour they display now when the cavalry, being deprived of their weapons for mounted attack, have always to get off their horses and resort to their fire-arms.

One of my fights took place quite close to where Brown was attacked.

You have often, Sir, been kind enough to ask my opinion on these subjects and invite me to write freely to you. I do so with much diffidence but I feel sure you will wish me to say exactly what I think.

I fear I have trespassed on your Lordship's time and patience at too great length.

Yours very truly,

Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Monday, November 11th, 1901.

The usual alarmist reports are flying about freely!

Thursday, November 14th, 1901.

Stephenson¹ reports that Crabbe was in action with 200 Boers under Maritz N. of Dorling yesterday morning. He killed 1 Boer, wounded 2, took 20 horses and 20 mules and several wagons containing new clothes. . . . Kavanagh engaged Theron about 8 a.m. on 13th N. of Reibeckhust. Theron retired East in direction of Maritz and on crossing railway was heavily fired on by armoured train and Berkshires. In action with Kavanagh Theron lost 2 killed and several wounded and dropped many horses. Armoured train reports that many saddles were emptied by their fire.

Saturday, November 16th, 1901.

Callwell² moved out from Sutherland on 13th after Nesor's³ Commando and drove him 30 miles N. Nesor was then joined by other Commandos raising number of Boers to 500. Callwell had to retire and Boers followed. They harassed his retreat but he reached Sutherland on 16th, having had 1 man killed and Capt. Chatterton and 5 men wounded. A few 5th Lancers on rear guard were cut off and captured.

Thursday, November 21st, 1901.

. . . Stanford⁴ reports that a detachment of his under Capt. Elliott got into that (Wessels') Commando on the Eastern foot of the mountains (Drakensburg) and drove them back with a loss to the Boers of 6 killed and several wounded, 50 horses being captured with saddles etc.

Elliott was killed, 2 officers and 1 man were wounded.

I saw Wynne⁵ again this morning and afterwards the Prime Minister. With their consent I have proposed to Chief that Lukin should take over all the country East of the Eastern

¹ Major-Genl. T. E. Stephenson.

² Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major.-Genl. Sir Charles) Callwell, R.A. commanding mobile column.

³ Boer leader.

⁴ Colonel (afterwards Sir Walter) Stanford.

⁵ Major.-Genl. (afterwards Genl. Sir Arthur) Wynne, G.O.C. Cape Town.

railway and that I should hand over to him the Kaffrarian Rifles, M.M.R. and Queensland Volunteers. This is to be carried out as soon as Myburg and Fouché are cleared out of the Colony.

Friday, November 22nd, 1901.

I had an interview with the Governor at 11.30 and discussed situation with him. We then sent telegrams in identical terms to Chamberlain¹ and Brodrick (mine thro' Lord K.) with full account of situation. These were called for from home.

[TO GENERAL SIR REDVERS BULLER, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE BRITISH FORCES IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE BOER WAR (1899-1902).]

MOUNT NELSON HOTEL,

CAPETOWN.

Nov. 23rd, 1901.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I feel sure you do not require to be assured of my inalienable devotion and loyalty to you as my joint Commander in War and in peace. But if you did, you have only to read the letters of "congratulation" I receive from the friends who know me well. They are full of condolence at the terrible task before me in following you at Aldershot.

I have had time to think things over well and I have come to the conclusion that it may be as well that things are as they are so far as you are concerned. I do not think you should fill any subordinate position in the Army, and I am *full of hope* that I shall live to raise a ringing cheer when you hoist your flag in Pall Mall as Commander-in-Chief.

May I tell you one thing? I was not offered the Aldershot Command. The first intimation I had was that "The King" had "appointed" me.

I can never hope to fill your place, but you may be sure I shall leave no stone unturned to profit by your lessons and follow in your footsteps.

Yours, Sir,

Always as ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[Sir Redvers Buller was commanding at Aldershot at the outbreak of the Boer War, and resumed command there on his return from South Africa.]

¹ The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary.

[EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL FRENCH'S SOUTH AFRICAN WAR DIARIES.]

Friday, November 29th, 1901.

Col. Salmond (Comdt. Stormberg) took an officer and 19 men to patrol country East of Stormberg on 29th. The party were surrounded by a party of Boers stated to be 100. Some of our people were killed and wounded and 5 captured. I do not believe this party of Boers was other than the 30 who crossed from Tarkastad district some weeks ago. But they may have been formed by a detachment from Fouché's Commando. . . . I have sent a confidential wire to Chief to-day telling him a revision of commands is absolutely necessary in the Colony.

Saturday, November 30th, 1901.

Monro reports dated Wepener (19 miles S. of Lady Grey) 29th Nov. On the night of the 28th his column divided into 3 parts made a night march on Drizzly Hill and Kumul Spruit. They converged on former place and surprised Myburg's Commando in laager. Result of action 3 killed, 2 wounded, 14 prisoners, 60 rifles, 1,000 rounds S.A.A., 101 horses killed and captured also a lot of saddles and kit. Boers fled S.W., Monro in pursuit. Wessels was with Myburg and his Lt. of Scouts (Watson) and Myburg's Secretary were amongst the prisoners. Our casualties nil.

Monday, December 2nd, 1901.

We reached here (De-Aar) about 4 a.m. and at 8.15 a.m. I went on with Settle¹ to inspect spot on blockhouse line near — where Boers crossed on night of Nov. 29th. There has evidently been a good deal of listless carelessness on the part of the officers, and no attempt had been made to improve the defences.

I have suspended — and am reporting the matter to Chief.

Tuesday, December 3rd, 1901.

We reached here (Naaupoort) early this morning. The Chief arrived about 6.45 and I have been with him all day till we left at 5 for Middleburg. He has now arranged to send Wynne home and put Settle in his place. I shall practically have command of all the troops in the Colony.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) Sir Henry Settle.



Sir James
Gordon

Sir John French

Sir Horace
Smith-Dorrien

General
Alexandra

King Edward VII

Lady
Smith-Dorrien

Photo, Gale & Polden

KING EDWARD VII AND QUEEN ALEXANDRA AT ALDERSHOT, 1908



Sunday, December 8th, 1901.

Maritz is said to be severely wounded in the chest.

Wednesday, December 11th, 1901.

Capper¹ wires more fully as to his action with Theron, 8th. He says enemy made a stout resistance and he had some difficulty in turning them out.

Thursday, December 12th, 1901.

Stanford reports that Fouché and Myburg are both West of Rhodes and trying to force their way thro' the passes of the Drakensburg to Kokstad country. He has also reported that some of his native levies under Capt. Maynard were attacked on the night of the 11th in — pass by Scobell who took them for Boers, 4 natives were killed and 7 wounded.

Monro sends a report dated Dec. 8th, saying that he had attacked Fouché in the mountains. . . .

Saturday, December 14th, 1901.

He (Monro) says that in his fight with Fouché on 8th he captured 2 prisoners and over 200 horses, besides 500 rounds S.A.A.

Tuesday, December 17th, 1901.

Kritzinger's Commando made a vigorous attack on the B.H. line at Frary Kop (West of Hanover Rd.) at 7.30 p.m. on the night of the 16th.

The Commando succeeded in cutting wire and crossing but with very heavy loss. Kritzinger and another are severely wounded and prisoners, also K's Adjutant, another Adjutant and 3 other prisoners. Over 80 horses were captured or killed. Many men of Commando were seen to fall wounded but were got away.

Bentinck's column started in pursuit from Taarbosch at 11 p.m. Doran's column started this afternoon from Hanover Road after getting remounts from Naaupoort. Latest reports say Boers are moving S.W. and have reached Stryfontein (on Richmond Road) to-night. I have sent orders to Wormald at Victoria Rd. to move on Richmond and join in the pursuit.

Wednesday, December 18th, 1901.

I have sent 120 mounted men (Staff details and others) to Willens under Ward to head enemy if he comes East or S.E.

¹ Major (afterwards Major.-Genl. Sir John) Capper, R.E.

We have now 11 prisoners of the Commando in our hands. Wessels (2nd in Comd.) is lying wounded badly somewhere in a farm and there are wounded with the Commando as they have sent in for dressings.

Thursday, December 19th, 1901.

Kritzinger's men have apparently gone South from Middlemount. They were reported to be at Zeit Valley to-day, Doran and Bentinck in pursuit. Enemy said to have no spare horses. All their horses tired and footsore.

Sunday, December 22nd, 1901.

I have further news from Monro. Continuing his pursuit of Fouché he came up with him on afternoon of 21st at Roodenek, dislodging him from that rather strong position after some hours' fighting and a loss to himself of 3 men wounded and some 20 horses killed and wounded. Monro captured some prisoners, 19 horses, some arms and ammunition. . . . Crabbe's column, after leaving Clanwilliam on 19th, allowed 4 wagons (with weak mules) to get behind. These were attacked by Smit's Commando of 200. Wyndham was coming up to support Crabbe and part of his advanced guard went up to assist wagon escort. It appears only some 30 of our men were engaged but they drove off the attack. We lost, however, 3 killed and 9 wounded including 2 officers.

Friday, December 27th, 1901.

Crabbe and Wyndham had some pretty severe fighting on road to Calvinia. On the 22nd the two columns and convoy were at Koedmeasfontein, 40 miles N.E. of Clanwilliam at 3.30 a.m.

Enemy attacked Wyndham's column which covered rear of convoy from 4.30 a.m. to 1.15 p.m. Attack heavy. Well repulsed by Wyndham. Numbers of enemy 370 under Theron and S. Pypers.¹

Others opposed Crabbe's advance but all were got rid of by 1 p.m. Enemy's casualties 2 killed and 18 wounded known. On the 23rd Wyndham's column leading was heavily opposed by enemy in — on high ridge to right front. Ridge was rushed and cleared by 16th Lancers supported by 1 gun. 16th Lancers during charge sustained 4 casualties including Lt. Younger killed.

¹ Boer leader.

Monday, January 13th, 1902.

Col. Henderson¹ is here and we have had a long discussion about the History of the War.

Saturday, January 25th, 1902.

L. Wessels moved East and at 2 a.m. this morning he crossed the G.R. railway at Bethesda Road where he set fire to the station buildings. He then went East on Cradock road. Vaughan² is following in pursuit.

In the West Stephenson reports that the enemy is showing much activity about Sutherland and Fraserburg. He is arranging for a general advance to clear them North of B.H. line.

Sunday, January 26th, 1902.

Stephenson reports that Capper reached Sutherland on evening of 24th. Passing thro' — Kloof on 23rd he was attacked by Van der Venter³ and Pypers and lost one man wounded. Proceeding on the 24th he found them strongly intrenched at Jackalsfontein. Attacking them he drove them back towards Hottentotsfontein. He lost 2 killed and 5 wounded. Enemy fought stubbornly and often at close quarters. Capper is repairing line to Sutherland, and has orders to follow Boers.

Thursday, January 30th, 1902.

Price attacked P. Wessels⁴ at Daybreak to-day at Kluarfontein (30 miles N. of Tarkastad). Field Cornet Van Kyl was killed and 2 prisoners captured. . . . Enemy fled South but afterwards doubled back. . . . I have determined to try to enclose them between the mountains and blockhouses.

Friday, January 31st, 1902.

L. Wessels has moved S.E. from Paardekraal and is to-night 12 miles N.E. of Cradock. He has sent a flag of truce into Cradock to ask if it is true that Scheepers has been shot.

Saturday, February 1st, 1902.

There was a bad collision between Nos. 6 and 15 armoured trains 8 miles South of Burghersdorp at 12 last night. It

¹ Lieut.-Col. G. F. R. Henderson, York and Lancaster Regt., Director of Intelligence.

² Captain (afterwards Major.-Genl.) J. Vaughan, 7th Hussars.

³ Boer leader.

⁴ Boer leader.

has been reported that No. 6 was making its way to Stormburg when it was attacked by rifle fire on both sides of the line. Col. Salmond was dangerously wounded and Major Myburgh (in charge of No. 6) being unable with a bad engine to ascend the hill to Stormburg returned to Burghersdorp whence No. 15 was travelling with 'clear line' to Stormburg. The two trains collided. Ten men are killed and 16 wounded.

The whole affair (particularly the first attack on No. 6) demands careful enquiry. . . .

At 2 a.m. this morning the Commando under L. Wessels held up a supply train and after making some captures burnt most of it. The armoured train arrived just after. The engine and 4 trucks were saved. . . . I came here (Steynsburg) to-day to meet the Governor and met him at the station at 4. We went through the 'ceremonies' with him and afterwards dined in his carriage.

Sunday, February 2nd, 1902.

We arrived here (Middleburg) at 1 to-day. Kritzinger was brought up from Graff-Renet and I had a long interview with him. He impressed me very favourably.

Monday, February 3rd, 1902.

I interviewed L. Wessels' Flag of truce this morning: afterwards he had an interview with Kritzinger, Tennant¹ being present. I then saw him again in the presence of Shute and Tennant and officially communicated to him Chief's reply to Wessel's message. Kritzinger has sent a letter to Wessels asking him and Commando to surrender. Macdonald (Flag of truce) has promised to deliver it and do all he can. I don't think much will come of it.

Tuesday, February 4th, 1902.

Stephenson wires that Crabbe was met on 2nd by largely superior force of enemy at Watervaal, 20 miles E. of Fraserburg. He was obliged to retire some 10 miles on Reitfontein where he took up a defensive position. . . . Intelligence reports say that there is a concentration of enemy against Crabbe consisting of Commandos under Smit, Van Renan, Hugo,² J. Botha³ and Nande⁴—Malan in chief command. Numbers probably 700 armed and 200 unarmed.

¹ Mr. Hercules Tennant, Secretary to the Law Dept. of the Transvaal Govt., 1901-1908.

² Boer leader.

³ Boer leader.

⁴ Boer leader.

Wednesday, February 5th, 1902.

P. Wessels' Commando (about 120 to 130) recrossed line at 11 last night about 6 miles North of Molteno. Blockhouses killed one Boer and wounded two. A Court of Inquiry is being held to ascertain why they effected so little damage.

Thursday, February 6th, 1902.

News has now come in from Stephenson that the donkey convoy moving behind Crabbe has been captured. It appears that the Boers moving past Crabbe attacked the convoy (which was escorted by 100 infantry of East Surrey Regt. and 50 D.M.I.) at midnight on 4th. The fight lasted till 4 a.m. or 5 when escort, having exhausted ammunition, surrendered. Major Crofton, commanding, was killed and 15 were wounded. The rifles were all broken up before surrender. The enemy took away 12 wagons and burnt the rest of the convoy. The prisoners were released. About 6 a.m. Crabbe arrived on the spot and seeing Boers retiring North endeavoured to attack them and retake wagons. But they were so superior to him in numbers that he was obliged to retire on Modderpoort where he was joined by Capper and Lund.

The three columns then advanced once more to the attack and drove the enemy several miles North. The enemy was seen to be burning the wagons he had taken away. Fighting is reported by scouts to be going on to-day but we have no details. There is no report as to our casualties but I fear we have a good many. The enemy has suffered heavily. 24 killed and 47 wounded have been seen and admitted but there are probably many more.

Saturday, February 8th, 1902.

I have decided to reinforce Stephenson and have therefore ordered (besides B. Doran's column) Nickalls and Tasmanians from Stormburg to be trained round to Three Sisters.

W. Doran wires from Middlepoort (dated Feb. 6th) that a detachment of 100 men which he had sent to De Hoof against — found a large force and were roughly handled, the enemy burning all their wagons. He marched to their assistance and finding he had no food and very little ammunition he decided to retire on Calvinia thro' De Hoof (where he said he would find supplies).

He lost 2 officers and 7 men killed and 17 men wounded. He says enemy's losses were heavy.

Friday, February 14th, 1902.

In extreme West Haig wires that Kavanagh surprised Bower's Commando at Kranz Farm (20 miles N. of Clanwilliam) and captured 10 prisoners, wounded 2 Boers. . . . He pursued hard and drove enemy North of Windhoek. . . .

I went by train with Stephenson to see the place where L. Wessells crossed the line North of Three Sisters. It is within 200 yards of a B.H. but at a place where there is no wire entanglement but only 4 single strands. Indications show that they must have had some wounded, but none have been heard of.

Wednesday, February 19th, 1902.

Smit and Hugo retiring North from Capper were engaged yesterday by B. Doran and driven further North. Several Boers were killed and wounded. Comdts. Hugo and Van Hurdan (a noted rebel) fell into our hands dangerously wounded.

Saturday, February 22nd, 1902.

200 under Malan have broken back before Doran's advance and on the night of 20th-21st they succeeded in crossing the line from West to East North of —. The crossing took place within 200 yards of a native B.H. As they only fired one shot it is very probable that they may have been 'squared.'

It is almost certain also that Smit with another 200 was driven North and crossed the new B.H. line on the night of the 21st as the wire to Carnarvon was cut early on 22nd and Smit was known to be near.

Stephenson reports the remainder (about another 200) has been driven N.W. by Capper and Crabbe. The 'concentration' has undoubtedly broken up.

Hugo has died of his wounds. . . . Settle and I went together to see the Prime Minister at 11. We had a stormy meeting as we both protested strongly against the attitude taken up by the Cape Ministry with regard to the Military Commanders and the operations in the Colony. I went out to Newlands and lunched with the Governor and went with him in the afternoon to see Rhodes.

Thursday, February 27th, 1902.

Haig reports that in the fight which Cape Police had with Boers at Windhoek 7 Boers were killed and 14 wounded. Van der Venter was very badly wounded and Bowers slightly. A good many police were captured.

Thursday, March 6th, 1902.

Van der Venter is dangerously wounded in 3 places. He and other wounded are lying at Van Rhynsdorp. Boers in that neighbourhood appear to have lost heavily lately.

Monday, March 10th, 1902.

Price attacked 250 of Fouché's Commando to-day at Buffelshoek driving them to ——. Commandant Odenthal, Field Cornet Van der Walt and 1 rebel were killed and several wounded got away.

Tuesday, March 11th, 1902.

Doran had a fight with Malan on 10th East of Middlemount. Comdt. Rudolph (successor to Hugo) was badly wounded and captured. Several other Boers were wounded but got away.

Sunday, March 16th, 1902.

I unveiled 2 memorial tablets in the church here (Graff-Reinet) to-day. One was in memory of the 9th Lancers and C.M.R. who fell in the capture of Lotter's Commando and has been put up by some of the inhabitants of Graff-Reinet, and the other was in memory of the killed in 2nd Batt. Coldstream Guards during the campaign and was put up by Henniker¹ and the battalion.

It was a very nice service.

Friday, May 9th, 1902.

I have sent orders to B. Doran to get touch with Fouché and Malan at once. They are moving North to the West of Blauwater. He is to stick to them and hunt them about the country.

Saturday, May 10th, 1902.

I had information to-day that a party of some 50 to 60 D.M.I. from Middleburg had been surrounded and captured by Fouché and Malan at the Willows. I am very much annoyed with ——— that he did not go after them quicker as he got the order two days ago.

Monday, May 12th, 1902.

In the recent operations round — the enemy lost 22 killed and 57 wounded. Some of their own men were killed from dynamite explosions.

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major-Genl.) the Hon. A. H. Henniker-Major, 2nd Bn. Coldstream Guards.

Wednesday, May 14th, 1902.

Conroy¹ and his Field Cornet have come into Britstown saying they have been ordered by De Wet to attend Peace Conference.

I have detained them as rebels, pending Chief's instructions.

Thursday, May 15th, 1902.

The Boer Peace Conference at Vereeniging commenced to-day.

Monday, May 19th, 1902.

Fouché, Malan and Van Kurdan² moved S. with all their forces yesterday evening.

120 of their number under these three leaders attacked Aberdeen at 11 p.m. yesterday. They cut the wires and penetrated into the S. side of the town but were repulsed with heavy loss. Van Kurdan was killed and 2 mortally wounded Boers fell into our hands. They had many men wounded who got away and a number of their horses were shot. Enemy retired East of Aberdeen.

Friday, May 23rd, 1902.

All the Boers in Stephenson's area are moving North and some have crossed Orange River. It is said they have got orders from De Wet and Botha to move North into the Transvaal and "molest no one as they go."

This is not confirmed however.

Wednesday, May 28th, 1902.

Yesterday after Malan and Fouché had passed B——laagte they turned back, probably thinking that Collett's D.M.I. were isolated and hoping to capture them. Collett stumbled upon them at 400 yards' distance and was soon surrounded. He held his ground, however, and fought well. In this engagement Malan was dangerously wounded in the stomach. The arrival of Lovat³ after the fight had lasted some 2 hours put enemy to flight.

Malan was taken in a farm house and is now in our hands.

Sunday, June 1st, 1902.

I received a wire from the Chief this morning saying that peace was signed at Pretoria last night.

¹ Boer leader.

² Boer leader.

³ Major (afterwards Major-Genl.) Lord Lovat.

Acting on further instructions a Flag of Truce has been sent to all Commandos in the West conveying a message from Gen. Smuts, ordering them to abstain from any acts of hostility and to move into positions near the railway where he would meet them and explain everything and arrange for laying down arms.

A similar message from De Wet has been sent to Eastern Commandos (Fouché, B—— and Odenthal). Gen. Hertzog¹ is going out to meet these Commandos.

Monday, June 2nd, 1902.

Fouché has apparently gone into Paling Kloof with about half his Commandos and the other half under Rensburg² has moved West to Waterval where this morning they captured one of Doran's yeomanry patrols consisting of 20 men. 2 were killed, 5 wounded, 8 taken prisoners and 5 escaped. . . .

Orders have been sent to all columns in Colony that they are not to engage in any acts of hostility but act only on defensive.

Tuesday, June 3rd, 1902.

Hostilities have now practically ceased.

I got wires from Chief that Generals Smuts and Hertzog were coming to me to assist, and directing me in conjunction with them to effect the surrender of the Boer forces in the Colony. Gen. Smuts arrived here (Middleburg) this evening and just before he came I got word that Fouché with 14 men had come into Cradock. Smuts has therefore started for Cradock to-night to see Fouché and arrange for the surrender of his Commandos.

I have appointed Bewicke-Copley³ to represent me at that place.

Wednesday, June 4th, 1902.

Smuts returned here from Cradock to-day and brought Fouché with him. It is arranged that Fouché is to arrange the surrender of all Commandos East of Western railway. Smuts brought me letters from Chief enclosing the terms under which the Boers are to come in.

¹ Afterwards Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa.

² Boer leader.

³ Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl. Sir Robert) Bewicke-Copley, commanding mobile column.

Transvaalers and Free Staters are to lay down their arms and to be sent to their homes by nearest way. They are to retain their horses and Officers are to retain their arms.

Rebels are to become prisoners and to be brought before a Magistrate who will, however, only inflict the punishment of disfranchisement for life on their signing a declaration of guilt.

Duly appointed rebel Commandants and J. P.'s or Field Cornets under Colonial Government will be tried for High Treason.

Rebels are to be allowed to keep their horses (if bona fide their own property) and all their personal property.

Smuts has asked me to allow Transvaalers and Free Staters to go to their friends in the Colony if they so desire. I have conceded this subject to approval by Chief.

Thursday, June 5th, 1902.

219 rebels and 44 Republicans came in to Graff-Reinet and surrendered to-day.

Peace messages have been received by all the Western Commandos who are arranging to come in and meet Gen. Smuts.

I got a wire from Chief this morning saying that when surrenders are completed I may proceed home.

Friday, June 6th, 1902.

I have been asked by Mayor of Kimberley to visit that place on 12th and have accepted invitation.

Our only apparent difficulties now will be with Lartigan and Van Renan, from neither of whom have we received any message.

Saturday, June 7th, 1902.

Fouché was again brought to me to-day on his way to Aliwal North. Richards came in to interpret. He complained about his men not being allowed horses. I have made an arrangement with him that every Republican is to be allowed 2 horses, and I have promised him that he shall keep 3 himself. He expressed himself as very grateful and said he would now be a loyal subject of the King.

52 Transvaalers and Free Staters and 341 rebels came into Hopetown to-day and laid down their arms.

Smuts has gone out to Britstown to find Conroy's Commando.

Sunday, June 8th, 1902.

A reply has come in from Golding¹, who is 20 miles N. of Sutherland, saying that he cannot accept any message except from one of his own generals. I have asked him to come in with Flag of Truce either to Beaufort West or Langeburg and meet Smuts. Van der Venter has also sent him a written order to surrender.

. . . The Chief² has been made a Viscount and full General with a grant of £50,000.

Wednesday, June 11th, 1902.

A heavy fall of snow (it is said to be quite unprecedented) has stopped communications both by rail and telegraph everywhere.

I got a message off to Kimberley this morning, acquainting the Mayor with the state of things and saying I would start as soon as I possibly could.

Thursday, June 12th, 1902.

Conroy's Commando (under F. C. De Vos) surrendered to Hickman³ at Britstown to-day. 2 Field Cornets and 228 rebels.

Friday, June 13th, 1902. Kimberley.

I arrived here at 12 noon and was met by the Mayor and Corporation and a very smart guard of honour of the Munsters.

We then went up to the Sanatorium and lunched with the De Beers directors.

At 3 p.m. we went to a public reception at the Town Hall where I was presented with a very handsome and costly sword of honour, and casket. We afterwards went with Mr. Williams (Gen. Manager) to the works of the De Beers Co. and saw a very interesting process in connection with the working up of diamonds. There was a big dinner in the evening.

I met Admiral Moore⁴ who commands in the Cape and who has rendered us much assistance.

Monday, June 16th, 1902.

Van der Venter's Commandos — consisting 485 rebels and 176 Burghers surrendered at — to Haig to-day.

Total surrenders in Colony up to date, 1,544.

¹ Boer leader. ² Lord Kitchener.

³ Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) T. E. Hickman, column commander

⁴ Admiral Sir Arthur Moore, Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope and West Africa Station, 1901-4.

Tuesday, June 17th, 1902.

I rode to Rosmead this morning and said good-bye to the Greys and 5th Lancers. In the afternoon I went to the court house to receive a testimonial of an inkstand which the inhabitants of Middleburg have given me. There were several speeches made—a very good one by Mr. Van Neukirk, the Dutch Minister. I replied and thanked them all.

Wednesday, June 18th, 1902.

We took our final departure from Middleburg at 9 this morning. There was a guard of honour of the Coldstream and lots of people at the station.

I got a cheer from the railway people at Naaupoort in passing. We got to Victoria Road at 7 and there I met both Stephenson and Hickman.

Thursday, June 19th, 1902. Beaufort West.

We reached here at 3 this morning. Bowers' Commando consisting of 95 rebels and 47 Burghers surrendered at — yesterday.

Friday, June 20th, 1902.

I got a wire from Chief this morning saying he wished me to give up our passages in the *Walmer Castle* and go home with him in the *Oratava*, and telling me to hand over to Settle at once. We therefore left here at 12 for Cape Town.

Saturday, June 21st, 1902. Cape Town.

We reached here at 8 this morning. I have been engaged most of the day handing over to Settle.

Sunday, June 22nd, 1902.

Finally relinquished my command in Cape Colony. Douglas Haig arrived this morning.

Monday, June 23rd, 1902.

The Chief and H'd Q. Staff arrived at 11. I found him at the Castle at 1 and drove to lunch with the Mayor when we had some farewell speech-making. We drove to the docks at 3 and embarked in the *Oratava*. We sailed at 3.30.

This concludes my campaign in South Africa.

J. D. P. FRENCH.

CHAPTER III
ALDERSHOT

(1902-1907)

[TO GENERAL SIR REDVERS BULLER.]

5, LOWNDES STREET,
S.W.

July 15th, 1902.

MY DEAR DEAR GENERAL,

You must know how I value any kind word from you and therefore what pleasure your letter gave me.

To say what one knows to be the truth about you is not likely to be harmful, but whether it is or not I shall always *say* it and *stick* to it.

"Lookers on" see most of the game, dear General. You have the heartfelt love of every true soldier who has ever served with you and any of them would go anywhere for you to-morrow.

I have constantly told my great pals and friends that I would like to end my life by being shot when serving under you. Lots of others think the same.

How many other men can inspire this feeling?

Yours always, dear General,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LADY AUDREY BULLER.]

5, LOWNDES STREET,
S.W.

July 15th, 1902.

DEAR LADY AUDREY,

Your most kind letter of the 10th July reached me.

Many many thanks for all you say. The letter I wrote to Sir Redvers and to which you have been kind enough to refer was written from my heart and was only the expression of my earnest conviction.

Believe me I have never hesitated—either in public or private—to let my views be known or to express those feelings of loyalty, devotion and admiration which I ever have and ever shall entertain for my great leader from whom I have learnt so much and who possesses *above all* that marvellous power—unfortunately so

rare—of instilling in his subordinates the burning desire to succeed in obeying his orders simply because they are *his* orders.

Please rest assured I understand your letter perfectly.

Once more thanking you for your kind expressions.

Yours very sincerely,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS]

THE ROYAL PAVILION,
ALDERSHOT.

July 18, 1903.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

Your letter of the 15th has been forwarded to me.

I think considering all things *Paget*¹ and his division did very well. He and all his officers are very keen and take a great deal of trouble. They enter upon their work with a will.

Of *Paget's* officers I think *Col. Lloyd*² of the 1st Grenadiers—commanding the Guards Brigade—showed perhaps to the best advantage. *Alderson*³ did very well but he hadn't so difficult a task. *Scott-Kerr*⁴ (Major)—(Lloyd's 2nd-in-command of 1st Grenads.) in temporary command of the Battn. is an excellent officer.

I have also formed a good opinion of *Surtees*⁵ (1st Coldstream)—*McClintock*⁶ (Berkshires) and *Inglefield*⁷ (East Yorkshires) as C.O.'s.

Of the Staff *Murray*⁸ and *Gordon* of the Divisional Staff are both good. *Lowther*⁹ (Scots Guards) is an excellent Brigade Major.

Speaking generally the instruction all round is too superficial. Unless troops are blazing at one another 300 or 400 yards apart it is difficult to keep the interest of young officers, N.C. officers and men. There is not half enough *individual* instruction going on whilst the scheme is being carried out.

It's the old story!

But I think they all see what is wanted and I know their hearts are in their work.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards General the Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur) Paget, commanding 1st Division.

² Afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Francis Lloyd.

³ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Edwin) Alderson, commanding 2nd Infantry Brigade.

⁴ Major (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) R. Scott-Kerr, 1st Bn. Grenadier Guards.

⁵ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) H. C. Surtees, 1st Bn. Coldstream Guards.

⁶ Major (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) W. K. McClintock, 2nd Bn. Berkshire Regt.

⁷ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major-Genl.) F. S. Inglefield, 2nd Bn. East Yorkshire Regt.

⁸ Colonel (afterwards General Sir Archibald) Murray (Chief of Staff to Sir John French, August, 1914).

⁹ Major (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Cecil) Lowther (Military Secretary to Sir John French, 1915).

I have heard nothing whatever about officers having to pay for maps for N.C. officers.

I'll make enquiries and let you know.

Your Lordship will kindly remember that I am holding the same kind of inspection of the 2nd Division on the 28th and 29th. It would do much good if you could be present at any part of it. . . .

Yours very truly,

Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

WINDSOR CASTLE.

Jan. 31, 1904.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

. Many thanks, Sir, for your letter about the method of carrying the rifle. You may remember our conversation at Woking last winter on this subject. I always tell you exactly what I think about these things as you have always been so extremely kind and forbearing in allowing me to advance views of my own even if they do not agree with your own infinitely greater and riper experience. You have I am sure quite understood that once your decision has been taken your wishes have been closely adhered to on all points.

I will pay great attention to this new equipment when it arrives and report fully upon it.

Yours sincerely,

Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]¹

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

FARNBOROUGH,

HANTS.

Feb. 21st, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

It is most kind of you to write as you do.

Personally I feel most strongly and can't repeat too often that we are under the deepest obligation to you. The Army has never found a truer friend. . . . I am very glad my action is approved by His Majesty (King Edward). I shall of course be informed as to the day and time the King wishes to see me and I am sure it would be a great advantage if I could be allowed to report

¹. Viscount Esher, Chairman War Office Reconstitution Committee 1904, and permanent member of the Committee of Imperial Defence.

SOME WAR DIARIES

personally to him sometimes as our Commander-in-Chief as well as our Sovereign. . . .

Yours very sincerely,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

ALDERSHOT.

May 10th, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Many thanks for your note from Windsor on Saturday. Fortunately the day was fine and the Field Day went off very well. I think the King was pleased. He has promised me to come down again when I hope to take him further afield.

I thought H.M. was looking wonderfully well—*Far* better than for a long time.

I hope much to see you soon.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

FARNBOROUGH,

HANTS.

4th June, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Please see enclosed from Amery.¹ You will see that he was himself the writer of the article. Perhaps it would be better to wait and see what he produces in the next article which he speaks of. What do you think?

Would you kindly return me the letter as I am waiting to answer it till I hear from you.

It is intolerable to think that the press has such power, and that a man without any previous training is thus able to guide public opinion in a wrong direction.

I have got the official information that the Prince of Wales² is coming, and I am glad of it. . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH

I will gladly go to any trouble or do anything to influence Amery in a right direction. Could we see him together at any time?

[The article referred to appeared in *The Times* on June 2nd, 1904, under the heading "The New Cavalry Training" (from a correspondent). After alluding to a new cavalry drill book which Lord Roberts proposed introducing, the author proceeded to take up the cudgels on behalf of what he described as "a revolution in cavalry tactics."

¹ Mr. (afterwards the Right Hon.) L. S. Amery, on *The Times* editorial staff 1899-1909.

² Afterwards King George V.

Briefly the new idea was to replace the cavalry carbine with the rifle and to look upon the latter as the cavalryman's principal weapon, whilst regarding steel weapons, such as the lance and sword, as of secondary importance. This amounted to saying that the cavalry of the future would be used principally for dismounted action, and it was this to which Sir John French not unnaturally objected with all the strength at his command. He agreed as to the desirability of an improved fire-arm for the cavalry, but what he vigorously protested against was any suggestion of turning them into mounted infantry.

In his endeavour to make out a case for the new proposals, the author of the article in question wrote:

"In a country¹ peculiarly suited to the evolutions of horsemen our cavalry found themselves almost helpless till they discarded the old methods and adopted entirely new ones."

Surely he had entirely forgotten the battle of Elandslaagte—one of the first actions of the Boer War—and the famous charge of the 5th Lancers, to mention but one of many instances in that campaign of the decisive effect of "shock tactics"!]

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

FARNBOROUGH,

HANTS.

8th June, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Many thanks for your letters.

I was afraid you would find Amery a little stubborn on this point. However, I will do what I can with him, and I have asked him to come and stay here next Monday. I wonder if there is any chance of your coming too? I fear not.

... Don't say I told you but Maurice's² chestnut got away with him this morning. The boy rode him *well* and pulled him up after a mile or two but I don't think he's a very safe *charger*.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[On the day after this letter was written, a second article appeared in *The Times* under the same heading. In this, doubtless in consequence of Sir John French's communication with the author, certain qualifications and explanations were embodied.

For instance referring to those who were against the new proposals the author wrote: "Their views are based on genuine conclusions from experience, and it would be a serious loss to the

¹ South Africa.

² The Hon. (afterwards Lieut.-Col. the Hon.) Maurice Brett, second son of Viscount Esher, A.D.C. to Sir John French.

efficiency of the Army if they were compelled to carry out a system of training which they were really and immovably convinced was based on entirely false principles."

The article continues: "Fortunately, however, there is no great danger of such a conflict of opinions asserting itself, at any rate in permanence. The reason is that the difference between the reformers led by Lord Roberts, and the objectors, of whom Sir John French at home and Colonel Douglas Haig in India are generally believed to be the leading representatives, is to no small extent due to a confusion of language. . . ."

The author seemed anxious to correct any impression which might have been gained from his first article that the proposed reforms aimed at the abolition of cavalry *as* cavalry, and to show that the intentions were really to train the cavalryman of the future to rely upon the rifle rather than upon the sword or lance, and to regard charges in close order as unlikely to be effectual against modern fire-arms.

Sir John French and his followers, however, fearing that these suggestions if acted upon would be only the thin end of the wedge and a preliminary towards the ultimate conversion of the cavalry into mounted infantry, opposed them in the strongest possible manner.]

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.
13th June, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Thank you very much for sending me the enclosed interesting letter, and also for the clearly expressed views you sent me in yours of the 11th.

I wish you could come over, but I see it is impossible.

I have asked Harry Scobell to come this evening and meet Amery, but I will have a go at him (Amery) by myself first of all. . . . I shall use your arguments in conjunction with my own when talking to him, for I absolutely agree in everything you say. . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.
June 19th, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I am so sorry I couldn't go over to you this afternoon but I was obliged to ride round the ground at Kingsclere and Highclere

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where I am going to inspect the Cavalry Brigades on 28th, 29th and 30th. There was no other day I could do it as I have to go to Oxford this week to be made a D.C.L.!!! It is really very kind and generous of them for I have done nothing to deserve it. . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

I have a very *nice* letter from Amery, but he is still obstinate.

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

23rd June, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Thank you very much for what you tell me and I shall be very anxious to hear how things are going on. . . . If we don't watch it I believe we shall be caught napping and have a few more 'Colenso' experiences!

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

19th August, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I went up yesterday and saw Lyttelton.¹ Plumer² and Miles³ were with him, and in fact it was a meeting of the only available members of the Army Council (Miles is acting for Douglas⁴) They have fully assented to the principle that the First Army Corps should be on quite a different footing to the other Commands, and that the Staff I work with in peace shall be the Staff which I take to War. . . . Although I cannot help having an uncomfortable sort of feeling that they make some irritating alterations before they finally send the letter, they certainly, when I left them promised to meet my proposals in any way. . . . they have, it seems quite determined to limit what they call the 'striking' force to four battalions of Guards, and eight battalions of foreign service troops, with the proper proportion of cavalry and artillery, really about 15,000 men.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. Sir Neville Lyttelton, Chief of the General Staff.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal Viscount) Plumer. Quartermaster General to the Forces.

³ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Herbert) Miles, Director of Recruiting and Organisation.

⁴ Major-Genl. (afterwards Genl.) Sir Charles Douglas, Adjutant General to the Forces.

It is much to be deplored that they cannot give us another four foreign service battalions, and thus make two complete Divisions for the 'striking' force. . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

Draft

[FROM THE HON. MAURICE BRETT.]

THE ROMAN CAMP,

CALLANDER,
N.B.

21st August, 1904.

. . . My father has pressed upon Gen. Lyttelton the necessity of leaving to you as free a hand as possible, merely reporting from time to time to the W.O. what you are doing. There is no doubt that you will be hampered in details as you say in your letter, but as the A.C.¹ never know their own minds two days running, and as you know yours perfectly, my father thinks that if you stand firm you are sure to get your own way.

[This refers to Sir John French's plans for re-organisation.]

[TO LORD ESHER, DURING MANŒUVRES.]

"BLUE FORCE,"

COLCHESTER.

8th Sept., 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . Now *both these fellows*² did much harm in Roberts' time. . . . They are now *trying it on again* and, if the Army Council are to retain the confidence of the army, these two young gentlemen must have their wings clipped. Their chance is in the weakness of others and I find I am not alone in thinking that they are getting round A.F.³ . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER, DURING MANŒUVRES.]

GRAND HOTEL,

CLACTON-ON-SEA.

13th September, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . There will then remain the very important decision—What is to be done when war breaks out?

¹ Army Council.

² Colonel Sir Henry (afterwards General Lord) Rawlinson, Commandant Staff College, and Colonel (afterwards Field Marshal Sir Henry) Wilson, A.A.G. Army Headquarters.

³ The Rt. Hon. H. O. Arnold-Forster, Secretary of State for War.

This, as you say, is a personal matter, and will be far better settled by a discussion between Douglas, Lyttelton, and me.

I shall go as hard as I can for my original idea, viz.—that the Administrative General of the First Army Corps shall become the Chief of the Staff in war.

The duties of the Chief of the Staff in war are very largely administrative, and are not mixed up with those of the General Staff.

In other words, I, as commanding an army in the field, determine on a certain course of action. It is the business of my Chief of the Staff to see that I am supplied with everything requisite for my purpose.

If the Aldershot Command is indeed to remain a 'field army,' and go into the field under its peace Commander, a Chief of the Staff must be provided for war, and surely it would be ridiculous to appoint anyone to that post with whom the General was not thoroughly familiar, when such a one is already at his elbow in the person of the Administrative General. . . .

. . . I think Crabbe¹ is made of iron.

Yours ever,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

20th September, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . If this absurd regulation about the Staff College is adhered to, the army will be deprived of the services of many most valuable men whom I know. A certain Major Chetwode² served on my Staff throughout the manœuvres as an acting D.A.Q.M.G. Of course I knew him well before in South Africa, where he qualified over and over again for service on the Staff. He has never been put on the list, and so, according to this rule, his services can never be utilised. My estimate of his abilities is confirmed on all sides. I only mention his name as a case in point.

I am very glad to hear you have urged the removal of the young officer we have discussed from the War Office. He is full of intrigue, and such men ought not to be allowed to stand in the way of reform. . . . By the way, I got your wire this morning and answered it. They are apparently all trying to lay violent hands on the troops of the First Army Corps.

I believe Methuen³ is trying to get hold of our 6th Brigade (Colchester), in order to form an Army Corps in his own command.

¹ Brig.-Genl. E. M. S. Crabbe, in charge of Administration, First Army Corps.

² Major (afterwards Field Marshal Sir Philip) Chetwode, 19th Hussars.

³ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal) Lord Methuen, G.O.C.-in-Chief Eastern Command.

SOME WAR DIARIES

I hope this won't be allowed. The fact is everyone is trying to run his own show. It is lamentable that there is no strong man to over-rule all these disjointed and rather self-seeking efforts!

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

24th September, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I think your interview with A.F. most satisfactory. These assurances are really all I ask for, and if the development of the scheme is going to be delayed for so long, I think some sterner and more pressing elements will, in the meantime, have entered into the solution of the problem. . . . As these arrangements have nearly all been already sanctioned you will be in a position to put everything before the King by Oct. 1st. . . . To go to London now would be the very last thing I should desire and I agree with you that N.L. should certainly remain where he is.

I expect any C.G.S. would have trouble with A.F. for a time!

I start for Constantinople (etc.) on Saturday, Oct. 1st, and shall be away till the end of the month. . . .

Yours always,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

PAU.

Nov. 23rd, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I am very glad to hear the King is asserting his authority about this new Army Order and I sincerely hope he may be successful in modifying it. . . . They'll go on in this same kind of halting, stupid, small-minded way as long as they hold their appointments. . . . I am glad to hear the D. of Connaught is so friendly and helpful. . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

ARMY & NAVY CLUB,
PALL MALL, S.W.

December 16th, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I return enclosed at once as you may want to refer to it. The others you sent me I will also return in a day or two. I agree

with every word of the memo on India, which is excellent. Of course old K. is expecting to repeat his Egyptian performances in the East.

Is there anything serious in the recommendation (one of many others) of the 'Westminster' (which you sent me) that K. should be made S. of S. under the coming Liberal Govt.?

I hope to see you at Aldershot soon.

I am just off there.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

Dec. 18th, 1904.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Something must be done about this intolerable interference by Hutchinson¹ & Co., and I want to approach the King as our Commander-in-Chief and Military Head.

If *he* approves I have nothing more to say but if not, I will not stand it.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

20, PARK MANSIONS,
ALBERT GATE.

Feb. 11th, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I have just had what I think is a very satisfactory interview with Knollys.²

I have urged all the salient points in the case³ and he is quite prepared to place them all before the King, either this evening or to-morrow.

I am holding myself in readiness all to-morrow and Monday to go at once to the Palace if H.M. wants to see me. But this may not be necessary. . . .

I shall fight it now for all I am worth! . . . I have impressed on Knollys strongly—

¹ Major.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) H. D. Hutchinson, Director of Staff Duties, War Office.

² Lord (afterwards Viscount) Knollys, Private Secretary to King Edward VII.

³ Sir John French's application for the Hon. Maurice Brett to be permanently attached to his Staff.

SOME WAR DIARIES

- (1) The injustice being done to me in refusing me the services of an A.D.C. I had already *fully tried*.
- (2) The great hardship it was to Maurice to prejudice his career in the army on frivolous pretexts.
- (3) That the action ——— taken was altogether detrimental to the interests of the service, (a) in holding back capable officers (I mean of *tried* capability) and (b) in demonstrating to young officers of the Guards generally that their chances of getting on in the service are likely to be curtailed and adding another potent reason to those which now exist to deter young men from joining the Guards. . . .

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

Feb. 18th, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I have written a line to Knollys expressing my deep gratitude to the King and to him.

You owe me no thanks—quite the other way on. We soldiers owe more to you than we can ever repay.

Apart from that I know enough of Maurice now to value his help and services.

Maurice brought me the papers to read. That on the Afghan Frontier seems very sound, but I don't think Russia will now attempt aggression quite so far from home!

The 'Bombs' are what they have to attend to now.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

ALDERSHOT.

Ap. 10th, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . I wanted very much to have seen you about these recent promotions of Maj. Generals to Lt. General. The selections were *not ours* and we are insisting that this shall be made public.

If things like these are done the army will lose all confidence.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

May 29th, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Many thanks for letting me see enclosed which is most interesting. A — Smith is a real good man and worth listening to. This presents the Jap officer in quite a new light. I had no idea they *ever* drank. If they really are taking that line they'll soon lose all their power as traders. . . .

Yours ever,
J. D. P. FRENCH.[FROM THE RT. HON. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER, SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR WAR.]2, ABBEY GARDENS,
WESTMINSTER,

12th July, 1905.

Personal.

DEAR SIR JOHN FRENCH,

You have given me good advice and encouragement on many occasions, and this encourages me to ask your counsel on a matter which gives me considerable concern. Before long the formation of the new General Staff will have to be undertaken seriously; the future welfare of the army depends in a large measure upon whether correct principles are adopted, and those principles wisely applied. In my opinion there is no chance of success unless the whole operation is directed by a soldier of great experience, knowing the subject, knowing where he wants to get to and by what road he desires to travel. If it should be necessary at any time to make a special appointment for the purposes I have referred to, I must know who is the man, who in the opinion of leading soldiers, is best qualified. You will do me a favour if you will tell me your own view. The officer selected should be of high rank, wide experience, great intelligence and with a somewhat special knowledge of Staff work.

Not an easy combination to find I admit. But if you could help me to find it, I should be most grateful.

Believe me,

Yours truly,

H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER.

[TO THE RT. HON. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

16th July, 1905.

DEAR MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER,

I have thought carefully over your letter of the 12th inst. I quite agree with you that the future welfare of the army depends in a large measure upon the creation of a properly organised General Staff, and upon the principles adopted and applied in its formation.

I also agree that the operation of creating such an organisation should (of course under the supervision of the Chief of the General Staff of the army) be directed by a soldier of rank, experience, intelligence and a special knowledge of Staff work.

You are kind enough to ask my advice in this matter, and I am fortunately in a position to be able to give it to you without any doubt or hesitation.

My conviction is that you should find other employment for General Hutchinson, the present Director of Staff Duties, and put in his place Major-General Douglas Haig, now Inspector-General of Cavalry in India.

I have my own reasons for thinking that General Hutchinson would be quite unfit for such a task. For one thing although he may understand the Indian Army very well, I do not think he has any adequate knowledge of the British Army, of which, indeed, he has had but little experience.

General Haig, on the other hand, is intimately acquainted with the British Army, and has a good knowledge of the Indian Army as well. His rank is sufficient; he has had wide experience both in war and peace; he is possessed of a very high order of intelligence, and no one in the army that I know of has greater Staff capacity.

The combination you mention is, as you say, not easy to find, but in General Haig you have the nearest possible approach to it. In my opinion he does combine all the qualities you mention.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[Major-Genl. Haig became Director of Staff Duties in 1907.]

[TO LORD ESHER.]

PETWORTH HOUSE,
PETWORTH.

Aug. 2nd, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I had a talk with the King yesterday at Goodwood. He is very anxious that Haig should get Hutchinson's place before his



Sir John French

HEADQUARTERS STAFF, FIRST ARMY CORPS, ALDERSHOT, 1905

Photo, Gals & Padden



leave expires and has told me to see A.F. and try to push the matter with him.

I've written to A.F. to make an appointment and will do all I can. I should like to be able to consult you first as I am not quite sure whether A.F. knows that it is the P.M.'s wish to send an officer to Japan. I shall therefore say nothing about this, altho' the King told me of it and gave me leave to report the substance of my conversation with him to A.F. . . .

Yours ever,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.
Dec. 18th, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I've roughed out a few notes on the 'Belgian' situation which Maurice will show you. Of course they'll be more or less modified by discussion, etc. I've simply put down what is in my mind.

I see Nicholson¹ is appointed.

"When the child was alive I fasted and wept, etc. etc."

As the blow has fallen I will try to get accustomed to him and hope for the best!

I had a very interesting letter from Douglas Haig by this mail which I should like to show you. . . .

Yours ever,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

17, PARK MANSIONS,
KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
S.W.
Dec. 20th, 1905.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I'm *afraid* I can't manage this as I have to go to one of these infernal 'Family' New Year parties, but I will if at all possible.

What you say is very annoying and makes me feel rather hopeless.

I am going to stay the night at 18 Upper Grosvenor Street but I shall be here between 10 and 1 to-morrow. . . . I'm very deep in the Battle of Mukden.

Yours ever,
J.F.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. Sir William (afterwards Field Marshal Lord) Nicholson, appointed Quartermaster General to the Forces.

SOME WAR DIARIES

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Dec. 25th, 1905.

. . . I wanted to see you to ask if you would lunch one day at the Carlton to meet the French Military Attaché (if he's in London).

He has written to me to ask about how we work our artillery here and I could make it an excuse for both of us to perhaps extract some information out of him. . . . I want also to show you how far we've got in providing the required 'information.' On further thought I've arrived at the conclusion that such 'separation' as would be brought about by the 'Baltic' plan would *not* be too dangerous.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

17, PARK MANSIONS,
KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
S.W.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Jan. 1st, 1906.

. . . I met old 'Nick' at dinner last night and had a good talk with him. I must say I liked him better than I've liked him before but a part of our conversation so entirely bore out what I've often told you that I will tell you the substance of it when we meet.

Of course I'll get him down to Aldershot later on.

Best wishes for New Year.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

My 'reports' for Defence Committee are now quite ready.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

Jan. 18th, 1906.

MY DEAR ESHER,

I quite understand the French plan now. It is the best disposition they could adopt and if carefully and skilfully worked should go far to frustrate a German invasion.

I'll explain my views when we meet.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

17, PARK MANSIONS,
KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
S.W.

24th March, 1906.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . I took the full report in the Guards case to Douglas this morning with my own summary and recommendations. I will send you a copy of my letter if you care to see it. It is, as you say, very necessary to be careful and make no mistakes.

Cuthbert is too good a man to lose without a struggle.

I have advised that he be 'censured' for want of judgment but allowed to retain his command.

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[This refers to a subaltern's 'ragging' case in the 1st Bn. Scots Guards, commanded by Colonel (afterwards Major-General) G. J. Cuthbert.]

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

June 2nd, 1906.

MY DEAR ESHER,

In case I don't see you, I write a line by Maurice to say I have yours of 1 June directing me to go to Windsor on Tuesday. I hadn't heard of any difficulties arising in S.A. such as you allude to. Nicholson was born to be a damned nuisance to everyone!

Yours ever,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

I must get hold of D.H. somehow.

[To LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.

14th October, 1906.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . I shall arrange to meet the Generals and Commanding Officers on October 31st or November 1st for the first of my two lectures and I shall feel it a great help and support if you can be

present. The first lecture will be explanatory of my first memorandum on the teaching of 'grand tactics' or 'strategy.'

I shall prepare my second lecture and second pamphlet during my stay in France. This will have reference to 'minor tactics' or what we now call 'tactics' . . . I am so glad you are going to give us a lecture. . . . I've just looked into Evelyn Wood's¹ book—amusing probably, altho' a little egotistic.

I am much interested to hear what you say about Germany and ourselves, particularly Haldane's² opinion. I wonder what has made him change.

By the way, there are tremendous disclosures of State secrets in Berlin! . . .

Yours ever,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

LA MAISON BRULÉE,
LA BOUILLE,
SEINE-INFÉRIEURE.
Nov. 12th, 1906.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . I am wondering much how things are going on at Headquarters. *Methuen* has sent me copies of a lot of correspondence which has been going on between the Duke and Haldane and also his account of another interview they had on Nov. 7th. Have you seen all this? I suppose so, if not had I better send it all to you?

I gather that the air in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall (and *Whitehall* also!) is full of 'compromise' and weakness!

It seems as if the whole affair will end in smoke and that things will go on in much the same way as before until another 'fiasco' supervenes. I have told *Methuen* that *my vote* is entirely in favour of getting rid of the A.C. from the Selection Board altogether, that whatever 'compromise' is made they can never be a strength but always a weakness.

Now that Grenfell³ has got over the 'knocking down' and 'punching heads' stage he seems also reverting to a weak attitude.

M. has sent me copies of two of his letters which rather surprised me. . . .

Yours ever,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[This was written whilst Sir John French was staying in a remote part of France studying the language.]

¹ Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood.

² The Rt. Hon. R. B. (afterwards Viscount) Haldane, Secretary of State for War.

³ General (afterwards F.M.) Lord Grenfell, G.O.C.-in-Chief the Forces in Ireland.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH,
HANTS.*June 20th, 1907.*

MY DEAR ESHER,

Remember you *must* come and meet these French Generals. I am relying on you. I think Clemenceau¹ is going to score over this 'Southern Napoleon' who has risen suddenly.

Yours always,

J.F.

[FROM LORD ESHER.]

THE ROMAN CAMP,
CALLANDER,
N.B.*25th Aug., 1907.*

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I hope you will come up here. The change will do you good. Maurice will explain to you that you will be quite independent. No dress clothes. Absolute freedom. You can rise at 5 and walk for ever and go to bed at 10.

I hope this sounds tempting.

I have written to Fisher² rather strongly about the attitude of the Admiralty towards the C.I.D.³ I think he will climb down.

I hope all your Cavalry work has pleased you.

Yours ever,

ESHER.

¹ M. Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France.² Admiral of the Fleet Sir John (afterwards Lord) Fisher.³ Committee of Imperial Defence.

CHAPTER IV

HORSE GUARDS AND WAR OFFICE

(1907-1914)

[ADDRESS TO THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD ON THE OCCASION
OF THE ANNUAL INSPECTION IN 1909.]

You have done me great honour in asking me to hold this inspection to-day, and it gives me very great pleasure to make the acquaintance on parade of the Yeomen of the Guard, and to be associated with you, though only for this short half-hour.

Not only do you enjoy the supreme distinction of acting as body-guard to the Sovereign, but it may be said that as a Corps you are unique in the military organisation of this or any other country.

It is a fact that you are the oldest military body in the world. Your history as a Guard extends over an unbroken record of 424 years. You have the privilege of being the only constituted military body in the Kingdom which is entitled to bear arms without an Act of Parliament, and what is perhaps more remarkable and of greater interest than all is the fact that you come out for inspection to-day, as a Corps, in the same uniform and on the same ground as you stood on parade over 400 years ago.

You have indeed good reason to be proud of your record and the tradition of your Corps. The Yeomen of the Guard have acted as body-guard to the most famous Sovereigns in the world, in campaigns and battles which have become familiar and glorious to Englishmen as great victories.

It is needless to say that a Corps of such distinction has ever drawn to its ranks leaders whose names shine out in English History as great soldiers, and followers of marked bravery and skill in war, from the time when they earned the praise and gratitude of King Henry VIIIth as his body-guard on Bosworth Field.

Although the Yeomen of the Guard no longer accompany armies in the field you, whom I have inspected to-day, are worthy

followers and representatives of those who have gone before you. I think I am right in saying that almost every war medal and decoration which has been conferred during the last 70 years is to be found on the breast of one or other of the Guard.

Speaking personally, it has given me the keenest pleasure to recognise old friends and comrades both in war and peace amongst your ranks, and I rejoice to think that after their arduous service they have found so fitting a termination to their service.

I wish particularly to draw your attention to the fact that only men of the highest character find a place in your ranks. Notwithstanding the numerous marks of military distinction and valour which glitter with such profusion in your ranks I consider this test of worth and character the most important qualification for the Yeomen of the Guard.

When one recalls the length of time through which this blameless record must be earned, the turmoil and stress of the life through which those who have acquired such character have passed, and the temptations to which they have been exposed, it is evidence of the strength of mind, stability of disposition, and power of self-control which it is right and fitting should be possessed by those who aspire to act as the personal guards of their Sovereign.

[ADDRESS ON THE OCCASION OF SIR JOHN FRENCH'S VISIT OF INSPECTION TO THE CANADIAN FORCES IN 1910.]

I have joined for duty with the Canadian forces under circumstances which are sad and painful, for we are mourning the loss of the great ruler¹ who did more than any one in the world has ever done to unify and consolidate the great Empire over which he ruled and in all parts of which he was so much beloved.

I have often heard His late Majesty express the deep interest which he always felt in those portions of his Imperial Army which were serving him in his Dominions beyond the seas. His satisfaction and pride in the deeds of his soldiers from Canada in South Africa was very great.

I am sure we can pay no greater honour and respect to his memory than in striving to the utmost of our power to profit by the ideas and lessons which, as our Imperial Master, he strove to inculcate in us.

¹ King Edward VII.

His Majesty King George, our present Sovereign, is no stranger to Canada. The day before I left England I had the honour of being received by him, and His Majesty spoke with deep interest of Canada and of the great pleasure it had given him to visit you on two occasions. His Majesty spoke much to me with reference to my coming tour in Canada, and directed me to report fully to him on my return.

I am anxious that you should clearly understand my position amongst you in this country. You may be aware that, during the recent Imperial Defence Conference in London, one of the most important resolutions arrived at and adopted is that there should be a constant interchange of officers between all parts of the Empire and I cannot define my position amongst you more clearly than by saying that I and the Staff officers who accompany me are, in this way, interchanged for the time being, that we form part of the Canadian Army, and that my chiefs for the time being are the same as yours, viz: His Majesty's Canadian Government, and I should like to take this opportunity of saying how deeply grateful we are for the kindly and warm welcome we have everywhere received, a welcome which has clearly shown us that those bonds of mutual confidence, affection and regard which were established ten years ago on the battlefields of South Africa have in no degree relaxed, but have become stronger with the lapse of time and the closer intercourse between the Canadian and Home contingents of the Imperial Army.

It affords the greatest pleasure to us to know that a Canadian contingent will, this year, take part in our annual manœuvres, and it is needless for me to assure them of the warm welcome they will receive.

I should like to take this opportunity of telling all Canadian officers that, under this system of interchange, the warmest welcome will always be extended to them by their brethren in the United Kingdom, whether they come to the Staff College or other educational establishments, or to act temporarily on the staff, or to serve with troops.

Since landing on the 20th of last month I have been constantly on the move, and have visited many places in Eastern Canada.

Although there has been no opportunity of testing to any appreciable extent the war training of the troops, I have been greatly struck by their smart appearance, physique, turn out, and their appearance on parade. They have given

ample evidence that the same soldierlike spirit which actuated them in the last great war is growing with their growth and increasing with their strength.

A day which impressed me very much was June 2nd last, when I inspected the Royal Military College at Kingston and afterwards was present at a most workmanlike and well-conducted manœuvre, carried out by the two horse artillery batteries of the permanent force.

I consider the existence of the Royal Military College, the excellent methods adopted there and the state of the institution generally as the corner stone of your national defence. There is a union of general education with special military training and instruction which is invaluable to the youth of Canada.

Owing to the rapid development of the country it is necessary that the best of its brain power should be directed towards pursuits which tend to its advancement and improvement, but the necessity for properly securing the advantages which that development will certainly bring about is to some important extent provided for by the sound system of early military training established at the Royal Military College.

As regards the horse Artillery, I think I put them to a very fair test. They were called upon to manœuvre at a great pace over very bad rough ground, and I was immensely struck by their riding, driving and training. I impressed upon those excellent horse gunners that all their riding and driving would be useless unless they were able to shoot and to hit, and I have every reason to believe that they are as efficient in this respect as in others.

Wherever I go in Canada I find something to remind me of the great military traditions which belong to the Canadian Militia.

Quebec, Montreal and the Niagara Peninsula, each has its proud story to tell of great deeds done in the past by English and French, first as chivalrous enemies and then as fast friends and allies. Nova Scotia has also its Louisburg and other traditions where the same splendid qualities were everywhere displayed. To my mind no tie can unite either nations or individuals, who have once settled their differences, so closely as does the recollection that they have learned to regard one another with the true respect which is engendered between brave and chivalrous enemies. No thought of political differences or political expediency should ever enter into the minds and calculations of soldiers when in pursuance and practice of their military work. Like the knights of old, they should

honour and respect brave foes as they do comrades who fight by their side, and I feel sure that no one will re-echo these sentiments more heartily than the statesman and politician who is our host to-night.

I want to say a word to you as to the task which lies before you. We are living in days in which science has effected enormous improvements in the range and power of firearms of all descriptions. This, combined with the fact that war is made to-day by whole armed nationalities instead of by small highly-paid armies, has made war far more difficult and caused the extent of modern battlefields to become enormously augmented. Waterloo was confined to a front of some three or four miles, Mukden had a front of nearly 100. All this makes far greater demands upon the scientific knowledge of officers and upon the intelligence of the men. You cannot even rest content with the knowledge that the prowess which you evinced in the late war in South Africa will suffice to carry you through what may be before you.

At least some elementary knowledge of strategy or the principles upon which troops are moved in a theatre of war is absolutely essential for all leaders small and great, because under modern conditions situations change with incredible swiftness and it is necessary for leaders of all grades to be able to appreciate them.

A knowledge of the great principles upon which troops are fought when they are brought into tactical contact is also necessary to all.

Add to this, close study of the principal part played by the special arm, cavalry, artillery, engineers or infantry, to which you may belong, and you have a task before you which may well appear impossible. But if you only display the same unselfish spirit which animated you in the past, and devote yourselves to the attainment of these standards, you will find that they are not so impossible as they appear, and that if you really set yourself to work resolutely, with the fine material you possess, success will attend your efforts, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that, through your efforts, your country is safe from external attack, and you are in a position to render the same effective help to the Empire in the future as you have in the past.

No one who carefully studies the present condition and progress of the Canadian Militia can fail to be struck with the advance which has been made within the last few years. On

all sides I have found but one opinion expressed, namely appreciation of the work done by the Minister of Militia, Sir Frederick Borden.

I believe it is said in some countries that Prime Ministers find the most difficulty in filling up the post of War Minister, for of all administrators his is the most difficult and thankless task. We soldiers may form great ideas and entertain fine conceptions from our own military point of view, but it is the Minister who has to harmonise our ideas and bring them into line with the general policy and the good of the country and eventually it falls upon him to give them practical effect by finding the money. By what logical or even sound arguments they support their ideas I have never been able to understand, but the fact remains that in every community, there exists a large class of people who resolutely oppose the smallest expenditure upon national defence, and I have often wondered if they ever insure their goods, houses and other property against fire or any other constantly recurring human calamity. However, it is always a task of great magnitude which a War Minister has to face, and I do not think the Minister of Militia in this country is any exception to the rule. If I may be allowed to say so, I think the energy, skill and determination which Sir Frederick Borden has brought to bear on this most difficult task is the finest example which those under his control can follow, and were I a Canadian officer I should feel his presence as the chief administrator of the Canadian Militia to be the best guarantee and encouragement I could possibly have, that all the efforts I could make to assist him would be work well done in the interests of my country. I am sure it is our most earnest wish that he may have health and strength to complete the good work which he has so ably commenced and carried out.

[ADDRESS TO CADETS OF THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE,
KINGSTON, CANADA, ON THE OCCASION OF AN INSPECTION BY
SIR JOHN FRENCH IN 1910.]

The R.M.C. of Kingston has earned a just celebrity throughout the Empire, not only on account of the good work it has achieved in Canada, but also owing to the distinguished officers it has furnished for His Majesty's regular army. I have heard much of this excellent institution, and for a long time I have been anxious to see it.

How to secure an adequate supply of officers has long been one of the most difficult problems confronting the military administrators in all countries, and the question is of greater importance now than it ever was before, owing to the supreme necessity of securing the highest measure of intelligence, knowledge and education amongst those who have, in any capacity, high or low, to lead troops in war as it is carried on to-day.

The character and capability of the officer is the corner stone of all real military efficiency. The officer is to the rank and file as the guiding power is to the machine, or as the soul is to the inanimate body. Whilst this great principle is borne out by all we find in the annals of military history of the world, it is an undoubted fact that the relative importance of the officer has gone on steadily increasing with the greater range and precision of modern firearms and with the continually increasing extent of modern battlefields.

The more complicated the machine, and the more extensive its scope, the greater becomes the necessity of efficient direction and control. The constitution of the R.M.C. indicates the main intention of its founders. A few graduates are chosen every year for service with the regular army, whilst graduates of the College mostly officer the permanent Canadian forces. The great majority of Cadets however, do not adopt soldiering as their principal business or calling in life. They become Reserve Officers and constitute a body, which, owing to the fine preliminary training which they have received, should be a pillar of strength to national and Imperial defence. There is a feature of modern war which must never be lost sight of. It is not made now, as formerly, by kings or emperors or governments. It is made by the people and it is waged between armed nationalities. It is not carried on only by the professional soldier or the highly-paid mercenary, but it is the clash of nations in arms. Under its conditions, the labourer, the artisan, the clerk, must leave his civil calling and take up arms at the sound of alarm, whilst the highly educated graduate of the University, the statesman, the lawyer, or the man of business must be prepared to meet it. Therefore it is that the requirements and the necessary standard of efficiency for leaders in war as it is to-day, should appeal so forcibly to you to whom I am talking. A country which, like Canada, has adopted the principle of giving to a goodly proportion of its brain power of military training and education, has thus

provided in the best way for its national defence, for it is in some position to obtain an adequate supply of efficient leaders in a crisis, while it does not hamper its best citizens in pursuing their several avocations, which lead to national advancement and national development.

I wish to urge these views particularly upon those cadets who are not destined for a military life. If you wish to serve the great Empire to which you belong and for which you entertain such feelings of loyalty and devotion, here is the best opportunity you could have to do so. Turn this military training which you receive here to the best account. Endeavour to master thoroughly the great principles of the military art, and when you leave here make it your business to keep that knowledge always bright and up-to-date, so as to be able to take your places as leaders in the field, should the occasion arise, and thus render the best services you can to your country and the Empire.

The military leaders of Canada have left great traditions, and these traditions are now in your keeping. History teaches us that some of the greatest leaders have been drawn from the ranks of men employed in civil pursuits. You have only to recall the performances of leaders in the war of Secession on the American continent, to be assured of this, and in our own experience, we know what good leaders the South African Republics produced in the hour of their national danger.

The fact is, that modern inventions have made war a far more intricate science than it ever was before. In the words of Sir Edward Hamley, "they offer on both sides additional opportunities to skill and talent and additional embarrassment to incapacity."

I wish now to say a word to those whom I am addressing who will shortly take service with the permanent forces of Canada. The object of their maintenance is to set up a standard, constitute a training and instruction nucleus, and provide an efficient staff for the Canadian military forces. I urge you then, to take up this work with a deep sense of its vital importance.

The value and efficiency of the forces of the Dominion, the safety of your country, and the degree of help you can bring to Imperial defence, is largely dependent upon the zeal, energy, thought and care you bring to bear on this great work.

Talking to Cadets belonging to such an institution as this, it is quite unnecessary for me to go into detail as to the manner and method by which you are all and severally to prepare

yourselves to carry out your respective rôles, but, in recommending to you the closest study of all branches of your profession, let me remind you of what I have said as to the increased range of modern firearms and the extent of modern battlefields, and therefore the extreme probability that leaders of even the smallest units may be called upon to make important moves and come to momentous decisions, without anyone near to guide them, and having only their own instinctive military knowledge to rely upon. I do not think any more words of mine are necessary to show you the necessity for exhaustive study by those who would prepare themselves to lead the smallest portion of their fellow men in warfare.

[ADDRESS TO CADETS OF THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH, ON THE OCCASION OF AN INSPECTION IN 1910.]

I am glad to be able to congratulate you upon the manner in which you have carried out your parade movements, and upon your smart and soldierlike appearance.

The Report which has just been read states that the discipline and conduct of the gentlemen cadets has been very good, and other points touched upon seem to be quite satisfactory.

There is every indication that good progress is being made in this institution, which, with the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, may be said to constitute the foundation upon which we raise the structure of all military efficiency.

Many of you whom I am addressing are about to leave this Academy, and take up your duties as officers of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers.

The change which science has brought about in the conduct of war has perhaps affected no arms of the service more than those of the Gunner and the Sapper.

The value of artillery in modern war is now so greatly enhanced that there is ground for the assertion made by some acute students and observers of the Russo-Japanese War that the value of gun-fire and rifle-fire on the battlefield is now almost equal.

Without entering into the merits of this contention, it may be taken as certain that great as the responsibilities of Artillery officers have always been they are much greater now than formerly.

A larger and more extensive knowledge of war and greater powers as trainers and instructors are demanded of them.

This can be easily understood when it is realised that the range, accuracy, and destructive power of modern guns is at least one hundred-fold greater than formerly.

The more complicated the machine, and the more extensive its scope, the greater becomes the necessity for efficient and skilful direction and control.

I feel sure no efforts have been spared in this institution to bring home this important fact to your minds and I only wish to urge you to remember always the important rôles, first as trainers and instructors, and then as teachers and directors, you are called upon to fulfil.

If those Cadets who are about to take service with the Royal Engineers are up to date in the reading of their military history there is little need for me to remind them of what they have to train and prepare for in war.

Arduous and glorious as the military engineer's rôle has ever been it is more than ever so now, when skilful intrenchment and concealment is one of the necessary elements of success; when the battlefield is a network of field telegraphs and telephones; when the balloon and perhaps the aeroplane are important engines of war; and when the Sapper is required to practice his art under the hottest fire in the leading lines of an infantry attack.

I have been fortunate enough to have been much associated both in peace and war with these two splendid arms of the service, which you are about to join, and I can assure you from my own knowledge of them, that it will tax your utmost energies to attain the degree of efficiency and uphold the magnificent traditions which are the proud possessions of your future Corps.

There is one point I would particularly urge you to remember, viz. the necessity of studying war as a whole, and the part played in it by the other arms.

One of the most important elements which conduce to success in modern battles is the close co-operation of all arms.

Only when a complete mutual understanding is established between them can each develop its full power and bring an action to a successful conclusion.

I would urge upon you then, the necessity for mixing as much as you possibly can with your comrades of all arms of the service, and of endeavouring to take as wide and comprehensive a view as possible of the life's work which lies before you.

Artillery officers are now able to be much more together than formerly, as great efforts have been made in the last few years to bring artillery brigades in closer union.

But officers of the Royal Engineers, owing to the peculiar nature of the services they have to perform in peace, are often more isolated. They will, however, always find comrades in other arms of the service in their neighbourhood.

Finally, I want to remind you of the great Imperial Army which is gradually taking shape and form in all parts of the Empire, and that it is to you, Regular officers of the 1st Line, that they will look for example and guidance, and to set up the standard to which they should strive to attain.

This is a great responsibility which rests upon you all, and I trust you will always be mindful of it.

[SPEECH IN REPLY TO THE TOAST OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES
AT THE GUILDHALL IN 1910.]

MY LORD MAYOR, MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

The kind words in which this Toast has been proposed, and the manner in which it has been received, will, I feel sure, be hailed with grateful delight and pleasure by all ranks of His Majesty's Forces throughout this great and world-wide Empire.

We have in the great Statesman¹ who administers those Forces, and whose absence to-night I much regret, one who has taught us many valuable lessons. One of the chief of those lessons has lain in the example he has shown us of keeping stedfastly in view what we conceive to be our true ideals, aims and objects, regardless of slanderous tongues and ignorant criticisms.

I trust we have all learned that lesson, and, sure of ourselves, will look with equanimity on the unscrupulous attempts which have recently been made in this country to discredit the leaders, officers, and men of our First Line, based generally upon the unfounded statements made and false conclusions drawn by a German ex-officer who, I understand, acted as the accredited correspondent of at least one of our daily journals. My Lord, I should have refrained from referring to this matter in spite of the wide publicity and ready credulous acceptance with which this man's writing has been received,

¹ The Rt. Hon. R. B. (afterwards Viscount) Haldane, Secretary of State for War.

were it not for the fact that I consider myself to be in the best position to refute the calumnious charges of inefficiency and incompetence which have been unwarrantably levelled against the officers and men of His Majesty's Army by people who are utterly irresponsible and absolutely ignorant of the subjects upon which they attempt to criticize.

I speak as I do also because the best opportunity is afforded me of standing up in defence of my comrades when I find myself on an occasion like this in the Guildhall of the City of London, the great centre of our vast Empire. And, My Lord, I have still another object in view, which is to convey, if possible by this means, to our military brethren of the great German Empire our assurances that we are very far from thinking that the sentiments expressed about us by the military correspondent to whom I have referred in any way reflect their sentiments and opinion in regard to us.

British and German soldiers have always been, and I hope will always be on terms of the utmost friendship, cordiality and mutual esteem. The warmest welcome is always afforded to British Officers at German manœuvres, and I am sure nothing but the kindest and most friendly feeling inspires either one or the other.

My Lord, I claim that the average ability of officers in the British Army is quite equal to that of any civilized army in the world. And I claim further for them that they possess many qualifications as soldiers which are not to be generally found amongst some of our foreign contemporaries.

I claim that the sum total of brains, energy, and devoted self-sacrifice which they bring to their several tasks compares favourably with any nation in the world, and in the junior ranks, where it is quite as prominent as anywhere else, it is out of all proportion to the emoluments they receive.

I claim lastly that their work has been, and is, in the highest degree effective: that in point of efficiency and training the First Line of our army is second to none in the world; and I say without hesitation that I should confidently and gladly rely upon them to meet forces in the field superior in numbers to themselves, and to hold their own with credit and advantage.

If I may be allowed to turn for a moment to a more pleasant and congenial topic, I should like to say how much we of the British Army have appreciated the presence this year in our midst of our Canadian brother soldiers, and I feel sure I am echoing the heart-felt wish of all soldiers in this country when

I express the earnest hope that such interchange of troops may become more frequent.

As Inspector-General of the Forces, at the invitation of the Dominion Government I made an inspection this year of the military forces of Canada, and words fail me to express how highly I esteem the splendid energy and high Imperial spirit which was everywhere apparent amongst them.

[ADDRESS TO THE CADETS OF THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST, ON THE OCCASION OF AN INSPECTION IN 1911.]

For the fourth summer in succession on the occasion of my inspection of the Gentlemen Cadets of the Royal Military College I am glad to listen to the reading of a very satisfactory Report.

The discipline, conduct, zeal, and smartness which the Commandant brings forward so prominently are most creditable to all concerned, and I entirely agree with Colonel Stopford¹ in thinking that such a state of things argues well for the future of His Majesty's Army.

I have been much interested to hear of the system which has just been initiated by the Commandant of establishing a "Champion Company at Arms." I feel sure this experiment will be attended with the best results and will have the effect of fostering that spirit of esprit-de-corps which is of such vital importance in any military body.

I am glad to say that the Inspector of Cavalry again reports to me satisfactorily on the riding of the Gentlemen Cadets.

I join with the Commandant in regretting the departure from the College of the officers he has mentioned in his Report, and I heartily congratulate them upon the good work they have done here.

The Report is a most satisfactory one, and reflects much credit upon the Commandant and all those who have assisted him to attain such results.

I wish once more to remind you of the enormous importance of the future work you are all here preparing yourselves to do, and which many of you whom I am now addressing are actually about to commence.

You are being educated to fulfil a double rôle—to train the men over whom you will be placed, in peace, and to lead and direct them in war.

¹ Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Lionel) Stopford, Commandant Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

Now I think if most uninitiated people were asked which of these two rôles was the most important, nine out of ten of them would say that work in war was much more important than work in peace. Do not believe this for one moment—it is the constant cry of the false economist. Spend no money, make no preparation till war is certainly upon us!

In my own mind I feel perfectly sure that the one rôle is just as important as the other.

To understand this it is absolutely necessary that you should realise the conditions of war as they exist to-day,—the enormous size of modern armies—the destructive power of modern weapons—the scientific knowledge necessary to ensure attaining the fullest and best effect from their use—the expense of war and the dislocation of trade and business which is inseparable from war.

All these conditions, and many others, indicate that war of to-day on a large scale must be short, sharp and decisive. There would be no time to correct mistakes—to change faulty organisation or to make good defective training and instruction.

The army which takes the field best prepared, best trained, and best organised will have an incalculable advantage.

Remember then that the result of the next campaign will be actually affected in a greater or less degree by the amount of skill, energy and perseverance which you bring to bear on the work of peace preparation for war.

Every good and efficient day's work in which sound war training and instruction has been imparted or acquired will affect the value of the fighting machine as a whole.

It is no less necessary to bear in mind that whilst training your men you must also train yourself. The responsibility of even the most junior grade of officer when leading his men in war has become infinitely greater.

In war as it is to-day leaders of even the smallest units may be called upon to make important moves and even to give important decisions without anyone near to guide them and having only their own intuitive military knowledge to rely upon.

Now do not for one moment suppose that I suggest that you should be anything in the nature of bookworms. On the contrary, I urge you to give full play to that which fortunately is the natural bent of every young Englishman—viz. : indulgence in every kind of sport.

All I recommend you to do is to train your mind and your body simultaneously.

We have the most brilliant examples in our midst to prove that this is possible. How often do we hear of a distinguished Statesman, or Lawyer, or Churchman as having gained the greatest distinction in the field of sport, and so, let us hope, it will always be.

In conclusion, I want to say one word to you on the subject of discipline.

I hold that the first and most important duty and responsibility of every soldier is to sink his own individuality and to acquire a spirit of discipline in himself, and not only individually but collectively—a spirit which shall refuse to countenance, and indeed which severely condemns, any action or speech on the part of any individual which is in the least subversive of discipline.

Discipline is at the root of all military efficiency. All training and instruction is valueless unless it is based on the soundest system of discipline. Any fighting force in the world is absolutely useless without it.

Since it has been part of my duty to inspect the Royal Military College there has been absolutely no fault to find in this most important respect. On the contrary the very best spirit has always prevailed, and I sincerely hope and believe this will continue.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

HORSE GUARDS,
WHITEHALL, S.W.
Aug. 23rd, /11.

DEAR LORD ROBERTS,

Thank you so much for your most kind letter. It will give me the greatest pleasure to go to you at any time and place you appoint.

I leave for France early on Friday to attend some manoeuvres at the camp at Mailly and expect to be back about the 6 or 7 of September.

I had a most interesting time at the German cavalry manoeuvres last month. Our mutual friend—*Von Rodern*—was there, commanding the Cuirassier Brigade of the Guard.

I had arranged for him to come and stay at Trinity College for the manoeuvres in order to meet you again, but unfortunately that is off now.

Yours sincerely,
Sir,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[SPEECH AT THE NAVY CLUB IN 1911.]

I have to thank you for the kind words you have spoken, and for the great honour you have done me in asking me to be your guest this evening.

I know it is your custom to honour the army by often asking its principal officers to these entertainments, and we all deeply feel your kindness and cordiality. But as regards myself, I must say that it is my personal love and regard for the great service in which I learnt my first lesson in the art of war which gives me the keenest and most heartfelt pleasure in attending any naval gathering or being present anywhere under the White Ensign.

I feel sure that there must be some members of the Navy Club present here to-night with whom I was in the old *Britannia* as a cadet in 1866-67. At any rate there are many who remember it about that time, and I feel sure I shall have their cordial sympathy when I say what deep pleasure it gives me to recall those early days—perhaps the happiest days of my life. What a glorious irresponsible, happy time it was! The hard-fought water competitions of various kinds, the cricket matches! The life we led in those days often comes vividly back to my memory.

Since that time I have done a good deal of hunting and cross-country riding, but I have never charged a fence or leaped a ditch with such vigour as when, flying our ten toes, we were hotly pursued by one of those eagle-eyed Ship's Corporals who had nearly run a party of us to ground in some "out of bounds" farmhouse. Nor shall I forget the penalty attached to capture and conviction, and the subsequent discipline dealt out to us by that splendid old Naval Commander, the late Admiral Randolph, whom we all loved and respected.

During my subsequent service as a Midshipman in the old *Warrior* I never had the good fortune to see any active service afloat, and the event most indelibly impressed upon my memory is that fatal 17th September, 1870, when we followed close in the wake of the ill-fated *Captain* when she capsized. I remember that I was on watch at the time, and it was calculated that she could not have been more than two or three hundred yards away from us when she went down in the darkness of the night.

During my service in the army I have had the great and good fortune to be associated with the Naval Brigade on several occasions, and I never remember my service in Egypt and the Soudan without recalling the memory of my old friend, the late Admiral Montgomery, known in the navy as the "Strong Man." I was in constant touch with him and his men during the Nile campaign of 1884-85.

I shall never forget, or cease to be indebted to Captain, now Admiral Bearcroft, for the invaluable help which he rendered me with his Heavy Battery in the actions which culminated in the capture of Barberton during the South African War.

When directing operations in Cape Colony in 1901-02 I remember well how the present distinguished Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, Admiral Sir Arthur Moore, generously responded to all my calls for help, and the great value of his ready and skilful co-operation.

My last official work with the navy was when I was associated with our gallant Chairman in what are known as Tactical Manœuvres. I think the navy and army have never been brought into closer touch in recent years in peace time than on that occasion. It is an experience I shall not easily forget.

This leads me to say one word in conclusion upon what I consider to be the enormous value of these joint operations between the two services.

I spoke of Sir Arthur Moore just now. I remember hearing him on one occasion return thanks for the navy at a public dinner, when he expressed the hope that in the near future this toast would be responded to for both services by the senior officer of either service who happened to be present. In other words, he desired to see the two services thought of and treated as one and the same. I have often re-echoed that wish with all my heart.

I feel sure that the utmost possible success can only be achieved in war when this union between the services is absolute and complete. The one is absolutely essential to the other, and neither can do any work of real lasting value without the full co-operation of the other. Therefore I hold it to be of the utmost importance that the General Staff of the two services should be in constant and close communication, and that the war plans of one should not only be thoroughly known to the other, but that they each should form part and parcel of the same combined scheme.

Once more let me thank you for the kind way in which you have received me here to-night, and express the pleasure it has given me to be present.

[TO LORD ESHER]

THE MANOR HOUSE,
WALTHAM CROSS,
HERTS.

Jan. 21st, 1912.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . We had a very interesting Staff Conference at the Staff College lasting from last Sunday till Thursday. Representatives of the G.S. from everywhere, even from India.

I was surprised and delighted to hear the discussions which went on, and the concise and lucid manner in which they all expressed their views on the subjects raised.

Old "Nick"¹ never came at all, which was a great pity, but Murray² conducted the proceedings and was admirable.

There is quite a reunion now of the navy and army. It is really a great advance and will make for much increased war efficiency. Winston³ is doing admirably.

I hope you had a good time in Scotland and have recruited strength. You were badly wanted! I feel sure ugly times are ahead.

Yours always,
dear Esher,
J.F.

[ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS OF THE STAFF COLLEGE IN 1912.]

I congratulate the Commandant and Staff on the excellent state of the College and I am anxious to take this the first opportunity I have had of saying before you all how much we at Headquarters have appreciated the splendid work done by Major-General Sir William Robertson⁴ during his time as Commandant. I have the advantage and privilege of an intimate acquaintance with his successor, your present Com-

¹ Field Marshal Lord Nicholson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards General) Sir Archibald Murray, Director of Military Training.

³ The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty.

⁴ Afterwards Field Marshal Sir William Robertson.

mandant, and feel sure the traditions of the Staff College will be well maintained and its work kept thoroughly abreast of the time by General Kiggell¹.

Not being a graduate of this Institution myself I find some difficulty in addressing you to any useful purpose, for I have to do so from an entirely different standpoint, but that mere fact in itself impels me to repeat again to-day a small item of advice I ventured to give you last year.

Such knowledge as it has been necessary for me to possess to fill the appointments for which I have been selected I have had to acquire myself, and no one knows better than I do the infinite labour entailed in a process of self-instruction without any special facilities and when ordinary work has to be performed as well. My own experience, therefore, forces me to urge you to make the most of every moment of your time here.

The greater your standard of knowledge and efficiency and the higher you have attained to that standard the more you will find you want to know and the most valuable and abiding knowledge is that which is grounded on the surest foundation.

A mathematician may forget a formula or the classic a quotation and easily refresh his memory by study and reference to books. The science of the soldier is of an entirely different order for it must be instinctive, a part of his flesh and blood, and its principles as familiar to him as the letters of his own name.

I would earnestly recommend you to inculcate in yourselves at the very start the invaluable habit of taking the widest possible view of everything. Whilst in the future when you leave here you will, of course, have to concentrate on one particular branch of Staff work, it is necessary that you should always regard such work in its relation to the whole structure of which it forms a part. Now you can only do that if your mind is trained to a large extensive outlook.

As the best example of what I mean, apply this principle to the great Empire, members of whose Imperial Staff you are now preparing to become.

As the future brain of this great Imperial Army, you must try to grasp the problem of Imperial Defence in its widest aspect.

Under study, the subject will of course divide itself into many problems, each calling for solution under totally different

¹ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Launcelot) Kiggell.

conditions, but whilst you concentrate on the study of one, have ever in your minds the existence of those others and the certainty that in the changes and chances of foreign policy your point of concentration may at any moment be suddenly changed, perhaps again to be as quickly brought back.

As a concrete example I will take the subject of home defence. Well, when we consider this subject it seems to me that many people quite unconsciously conceive the idea that these little islands in which we live are the centre of the whole universe and that every country in the world is meditating an onslaught upon them. We are apt, if we are not careful, to overlook the fact that under very possible and easily conceived conditions the British Empire might be brought to ruin without a single man landing on our shores.

Again, when you come to the question of war organization, numbers, etc., remember that you are training to be Staff officers of a great Imperial force. It is not a question of 150 or 200 thousand regular soldiers divided almost entirely between the United Kingdom and India. These are only the nucleus around which the great citizen army at home and in the great Oversea Dominions will have to rally.

It is necessary you should make a constant study of their conditions, organization, efficiency and training. It is useless to stop at futile discussions as to the conditions under which they serve or their necessary degrees of efficiency. You must take them as you find them, make the best of them, and fit them into their proper places in the Imperial order of battle. If you are dissatisfied with the conditions of service, look forward with courage and hope to a time when the Empire will realize its necessities. In other words, in this sphere, as in the strategic sphere, take the widest, most broadminded and practical view of the situation.

I do not wish to elaborate the subject any further, but I hope I have said enough to explain my meaning, and I urge this wide outlook upon you.

There are one or two other points of importance I wish to mention very briefly. I want you to bear in mind that selections for the Staff are made in the interests of the service and not that of individuals, and that the name of every officer who qualifies here receives the most exhaustive consideration.

You learn here the principles of Staff work, but there is a difference between principles and practice, and sometimes

in the latter many difficulties present themselves. Devote your thoughts now, while you are quiet and are surrounded by an atmosphere of study, to those difficulties. Most of them can be easily overcome if you endeavour to comprehend clearly the definite line of demarkation which exists between the functions of the commander and the functions of the Staff. It is the duty of the Staff to present all the facts of a situation to a commander with perfect accuracy and impartiality and then to take the necessary measures for carrying his decision into effect. A Staff officer must have sufficient knowledge of the art of war to enable him to understand rightly the plans and intentions of the commander. He must possess the ability to work quickly and accurately and be willing to work hard and continuously.

It is important that he should be in touch with the regimental officers and their men and that he should understand their prejudices and their sympathies. He must above all things avoid any affectation of superior knowledge which would tend to alienate those sympathies. Staff officers in the past have not always tried to avoid this danger. The rôle of the Staff officer is one of self-effacement and unselfishness.

I think it is almost unnecessary for me to add the necessity of absolute loyalty to your superiors and to all constituted authority.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

WAR OFFICE,
28th November, 1912.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

It was very kind of you to send me this copy of your interesting speech.

I for one have never contended, either in public or in private, that in its present condition the Territorial Force was fit to take the field. All I have said has been to the effect that they might be fit to take up a certain rôle in war after six months' hard training under the very severe conditions which would certainly prevail at such a time of national tension.

I have an answer which I am sure will completely satisfy you, to make to the rest of your letter, but it is perhaps better that I should wait to explain this to you when we meet.

At the present moment it is necessary to think out and adopt every possible expedient to meet the situation which may arise at any moment and I believe will be upon us within two or three months.

I am most anxious to talk to you about this, and I am sure your advice and help will be invaluable.

I am writing this in type as my broken finger renders my handwriting very troublesome to read, but it is quite confidential.

Yours very sincerely,

Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

RATTON,

WILLINGDON,

SUSSEX.

Dec. 29, 12.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

It was very kind of you to write to me about Wilson¹. I have also thought a great deal of what to do for him. He really deserves all the advancement which can be made possible, and his promotion would be all in the interests of the service.

I will go into the subject again carefully and see what can be done.

May I also thank you for your kind Xmas wishes. Let me heartily reciprocate them.

I have indeed deeply felt all your kindness.

Yours very sincerely,

Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[FROM GENERAL COUNT PAAR, A.D.C. GENERAL TO THE
EMPEROR FRANCIS OF AUSTRIA.]

WIEN,

SCHOENBRUNN.

June 5th, 1913.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY,

THE CHIEF OF THE IMPERIAL GENL. STAFF,

FIELD MARSHAL SIR JOHN D. P. FRENCH,

WAR OFFICE, LONDON.

His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty having to his keenest pleasure been informed of your Excellency's appointment to the rank of a Field Marshal congratulates you very heartily on account of this promotion and forwards to your Excellency His most gracious greetings and sincerest wishes for your further satisfactory activity in the Glorious British Army.

By His Majesty's Command,

General Count Paar, A.D.C.

General.

¹ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal Sir Henry) Wilson.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

94 LANCASTER GATE,
Oct 1st, 1913.

MY DEAR ESHER,

... Many thanks for your letter. I am longing for a talk. The manoeuvres taught *us all* many lessons. I don't like Repington's¹ *tone*. He had just the same facilities as always. His remarks in yesterday's *Times* about a 'skeleton' enemy are *childish, stupid*, and inclined to be rancorous! . . .

Yours always, dear Escher,
J. F.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

94 LANCASTER GATE.
Oct. 19th, 1913.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Many thanks for your note of the 14th inst. You may not know that a very complete and satisfactory answer to Repington's criticisms appeared in the *M. Post* of Oct. 13th or 14th. The article was by Callwell² and is entitled 'Echoes of the Army Exercise' . . .

Yours always,
dear Escher,
J. F.

[TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

94, LANCASTER GATE,
W.
Dec. 24, 1913.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

Thank you so much for the book you have been kind enough to send me. I have had a very old edition of it for many years and I am very glad to have this. I have often studied the book.

I don't think, my dear Field Marshal, you quite know *how much importance* we attach now to that side of cavalry work which is so strongly advocated in this book. I assure you we have done all we can to inculcate these great principles in the minds of all cavalry officers and your teaching has not fallen upon deaf ears.

I have to be at Camberley for 3 or 4 days in the middle of January for the annual Staff conference and I hope you will let me motor

¹ Colonel Repington, Military Correspondent to *The Times*.² Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Charles) Callwell, a well-known military writer—gold medallist Royal United Service Institution.

over on one or two of the afternoons (which are fairly free) and talk things over with you.

Will you let me express my warmest New Year wishes for Her Ladyship and you and yours.

Believe me,

my dear Field Marshal,

Yours always sincerely and gratefully,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[SPEECH AT THE MERCERS HALL IN JANUARY, 1914.]

It is some 17 or 18 years since I last had the pleasure of dining in the hall of the Mercers Company. Then, as now, I came under the auspices of the gallant and distinguished soldier who now presides over your destinies.¹ I look back to that time with a somewhat jealous eye, for the thought bears on my mind that I am very much older whereas he appears to be as young as ever.

I remember sitting with him at the other end of the hall amidst much jovial frivolity which he was leading, and he appears to-day to be as full of the same spirit as ever he was.

It was that spirit, gentlemen, combined with other splendid qualifications which he inspired into those gallant defenders of Mafeking, and it was the same spirit which has brought into existence that wonderful world-wide organization through which we earnestly hope that the rising generation of the British Empire may learn the great lesson of which the present one shows itself to be so profoundly ignorant. That lesson is that to claim sonship of the British Empire entails responsibilities as well as privileges.

By the way, I believe I am talking rank heresy in suggesting for a moment that the Boy Scouts will ever lead to or grow into anything of the nature of a military organization. But, gentlemen, I know my old friend better than most people do, and in this matter I strongly suspect him of combining the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.

However, I am rambling on whilst I believe it rests with me to speak for the land forces of the Crown and to thank you for the kind way in which you have received this toast.

What can I possibly say on this subject which you do not already know? If I describe them as perfect you won't believe me; if I say they are not, you will ask me why I don't make them so.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. Sir Robert (afterwards Lord) Baden-Powell, founder of the scout movement.

I wonder if any of you have ever tried the experiment of attempting to pour a quart of liquid into a pint pot or of making 2 and 2 into 5. Have any of you ever tried to array yourselves in a very tight and uncomfortable coat, the sleeves of which do not properly cover your arms and a waistcoat which won't meet in front and trousers which hardly cover your knees. Supposing you did so and then you were further asked to walk down Piccadilly arm in arm with a man who was dressed in perfect fitting clothes, between whom and yourself an understanding existed that in the event of the one being attacked the other was to come to his assistance.

And yet our country asks us soldiers to do something very like that. It is an exhilarating process, and I think even my old friend with his power of resource and his aptitude for the solution of conundrums would be puzzled with some of ours.

All I can tell you is that we are doing our best with the means at our disposal.

Of course, if the Millennium has come it is all right, but I don't think it has. It is hard to believe that "peace on earth" is compatible with the aspect which Europe presents at this moment, which is a conglomeration of great hosts of nations in arms.

And if war is still an event to be reckoned with, what are we to say about the lack of military spirit and the apathy which is so apparent in this country?

The fault does not lie with the War Office or with the Government or with Parliament; it lies with the people themselves.

If in this parlous condition we are overtaken by critical times it is difficult to see the issue. And, as I said before, we can but do the best with the means at our disposal.

It is a great pity that those who are able to do it do not teach the people of the British Empire that which at present they do not in the least know, namely, that conditions have absolutely changed even in the last decade. To-day it is perfectly true to say that the British Empire might be ruined without the necessity of landing a single man on these shores.

The miner, the artisan, the ordinary working man are kept in profound ignorance of what would happen to them if this country ever found itself under the heel of a conqueror. This is proved by the idle, unpatriotic talk of some of their number. These would-be regenerators of the world don't seem in the least to understand that whereas they may now be earning 30 to 40 shillings a week which they are able to

spend on themselves and their families, supposing this country to be over-run as France was over-run in 1870 they would still be making the 30 to 40 shillings a week, but three parts of it would go to the conqueror as a war levy for the remainder of their natural lives.

Well, gentlemen, I have said enough, and perhaps you will think more than enough, and I would only say one word in conclusion.

The Mercers Company are at any rate doing their utmost. Their gallant and distinguished Master is the founder and Head of the best organization which recent effort has produced to remedy this national apathy, and I see in the papers that this Company with others in the City are giving him great help in providing funds to forward and develop his patriotic endeavours.

[To FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.]

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE,
CAMBERLEY,
SURREY.

Jan. 15, 1914.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

I quite agree with all you say about Colin Mackenzie¹. As to his qualifications I think just as you do and I had intended to get him into the W.O. as D.S.D. in succession to Kiggell, but the Colonial Office thought it wouldn't do at present as in that dept. he would be again brought into contact with Hughes.² His prospects are in no degree affected by what has happened in Canada. He will have to serve a year or two where he now is but will certainly get a regular division later.

I have taken Mackenzie's part vigorously throughout the whole controversy but the politicians as usual wanted to 'compromise' and not 'offend' Canada.

Mr. Borden³, the Premier, wrote me a very nice letter about Mackenzie.

Yours very sincerely,
Sir,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[To LORD ESHER.]

WAR OFFICE,

Feb. 19th, 1914.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Thank you so much for your nice note.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Colin) Mackenzie, formerly Chief of General Staff, Canada.

² Colonel (later Hon. Lieut.-Genl. Sir Sam) Hughes, Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence.

³ The Rt. Hon. (afterwards Sir) Robert Borden, Prime Minister of Canada.

My dear friend, I've never been angry with you in my life! I quite saw and understood your and A.J.B.'s¹ point of view and was glad to have (for once!) an opportunity of speaking out. It is so difficult to express one's views when the 1st Lord² and S. of S³. are for ever talking and arguing. . . .

Yours affectionately,

J. F.

[ADDRESS AT WESTERHAM IN 1914 ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNUAL CEREMONY COMMEMORATING THE BIRTH OF GENERAL WOLFE.]

COLONEL WARDE AND GENTLEMEN.—I have to thank you for the great honour you have done me in asking me to be present on this most interesting occasion and to join with you in the endeavour to perpetuate the memory of the great soldier whose name is so closely connected with Westerham.

It is indeed very natural and easily understood that your pride in the memory of General Wolfe should prompt you to celebrate his birthday every year, but I wish to remark that these annual gatherings have a wider and deeper significance in which the whole Empire participates, for they serve to keep alive in the minds of the rising generation the history of one of England's greatest heroes who illustrated in his own life and deeds the qualities which every aspirant to military fame should try to recognize, to study and, in so far as he is able to do so, to inculcate in himself.

I have always been an ardent advocate for the principle that youths and boys who are destined to become officers in the army should commence a special military training at the earliest possible age.

The principles of war have to be known and remembered and its practice conducted under very distracting conditions. The science of war therefore requires for its successful application to be instinctive. It must, so to speak, form part of our flesh and blood, and the earlier in life this knowledge is instilled and acquired the more instinctive, valuable, and lasting is it likely to be.

Moreover, if a youth commences such studies at the earliest possible age he is much more likely to be fit to assume high command, should it come in his way, at an age when his mental and physical development is at its highest and best.

¹ The Rt. Hon. A. J. (afterwards Earl) Balfour.

² The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty.

³ Col. the Rt. Hon. J. E. B. Seely (afterwards Major-Genl. the Rt. Hon. Lord Mottistone), Secretary of State for War.

Now I wonder how much Wolfe's very early training and his comparative youth, when the responsibility of high command fell upon him, had to do with those daring conceptions and brilliant exploits at Louisburg and Quebec.

It is narrated of him that, as a boy of 15 when playing in the gardens of Squerries with his friends, John and George Warde, he got information that he had been appointed to a commission in the 12th Foot. A year later he was Adjutant of his regiment, and mentioned for his gallantry at the battle of Dettingen. At the age of 20 he was a Brigade-Major on the staff in Scotland, serving in the army which, under the Duke of Cumberland, was fighting the Scottish Rebels. At 30 he was Quartermaster-General of the Forces in Ireland, having previously commanded a battalion for some years, and, as we know, he fell on the field at the age of 32 in command of an important expedition upon the success of which the fate of Canada depended.

The advocates of early military training and young commanders can certainly quote the life and career of Wolfe in strong proof of the truth of their contentions.

I believe I am right in thinking that not a few of the greatest military commanders the world has known have been distinguished by a certain grand simplicity of character. Indeed, this quality seems, if not essential, at any rate of very great value to a military commander because it is most likely to mean fixity and singleness of mind and purpose, power of concentration and a wise direction of thought.

Wolfe possessed it in a very remarkable degree. We see it in his published correspondence and particularly in those touching letters which he was in the habit of writing weekly to his mother, and we see it in his constancy in all the more private and intimate relations of life. The absence of pomp and circumstance surrounding his very name seems to imply it. We hear of no high-sounding titles, no long record of Orders, Decorations, Stars and Ribands but his name comes wafting to us with the simple prefix of his military rank across the Atlantic from the place where he lies buried under a simple monument in the place where he fell in that great Western continent whence other unadorned but imperishable names come also, and we learn to think of him as we think of those early warriors in the War of Secession, and later of Lee, of Stonewall Jackson, of Grant and of Sherman.

Another marked characteristic of this extraordinary man was his indomitable courage.

Possessing as he did that marvellous power of intuition which enabled him to divine his enemy's intention, he possessed the moral power, soul and spirit to plan the most daring exploits to frustrate them and the heart and energy to carry them through to a brilliant and successful conclusion.

Nor was his physical courage one whit less than his moral. I think perhaps the most touching pages of his history are those which recount the severe stroke of illness which laid him low in the very middle of his operations around Quebec, and perhaps more than all when he was struck down again just three days before the final assault, when he beseeched the doctors just to patch him up, regardless of consequences, so that he might finish his task with success, for he said, after that nothing mattered. Indeed, his wretched physical ailments would have broken down the courage of any ordinary man but it made no difference to him.

Readers of his history will also remember the time when he landed in Scotland after his successful campaign at Louisburg utterly broken down in health, and he had hardly settled down at Bath to recruit when orders reached him to go out again and undertake the capture of Quebec.

His correspondence with Pitt at this time well demonstrates the nature of the man. His life presents, indeed, one of the finest examples we could have of the triumph of soul and spirit over body.

As regards his military capacity, I have already referred to one great quality which he possessed in common with all the great commanders of the world's history—the power, as Wellington described it, of "Seeing behind a hill."

But what has struck me more than anything in reading his history has been the extraordinary fertility of his brain in the ingenious and varied forms of stratagem which he conceived to deceive his enemy and effect surprise.

His military genius comes out very strongly in his exploits at Louisville, but the consummate skill and daring of his surprise of the French on the morning of the 13th September, 1759, is unsurpassed in the annals of military history.

I feel sure the story has often been told in this room and is thoroughly well known by you all, and I will not repeat it.

But I have studied this battle on the actual ground. Historians are prone to exaggerate the difficulty of military

obstacles of ground. We often hear streams described as rivers and ordinary hills as mountain ranges, but no book that I know of has ever adequately brought home to the minds of its readers the bold and daring conception of Wolfe when he determined to scale and attack those precipitous heights which lie on the left bank of the St. Lawrence river for some eight miles to the west of Quebec.

Well we know how it all ended and we leave him there in all his glory, but I should like in conclusion to be allowed to congratulate Westerham on their patriotism and their appreciation of this great man's services in thus commemorating his birthday, and as a soldier speaking for soldiers, I should like to say how grateful we all feel that you at Westerham keep green and fresh the memory of his birth, his great life, and his glorious death.

[TO GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.]

94, LANCASTER GATE,

W.

MY DEAR HAMILTON,

July 30, 1914.

Thank you *much* for your kind letter.

That we should stand side by side again in war as we have stood before has always been one of the great desires of my life.

You may be sure that in so far as it may lie in my power to bring it about I shall do it.

I never have and never shall forget that glorious and successful little battle we fought together at Elandslaagte.

Yours ever,

J. F.

CHAPTER V
GREAT WAR

FOREIGN SERVICE (1914)

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Friday, August 14th, 1914.

I left Dover in H.M. Cruiser *Sentinel* at 3.30. Murray,¹ Robertson,² Wilson,³ Lambton,⁴ Wake, Huguet,⁵ and Brinsley Fitzgerald⁶ were with me.

I thought the officers and men of the cruiser looked tired and rather worn out by their 10 days' vigil in the Channel.

We landed at Boulogne at 5.30 p.m. and I was received by the Prefect and some French Reserve officers who were on duty there. The people gave us a great reception.

We drove out to the Rest Camps where I saw the arrival of the 5th and 8th Brigades of Infantry. The men looked well and cheery. The camps were good and everything seemed to be going satisfactorily. We left Boulogne at 7.30 and reached Amiens at 9. I was met there by the Mil. Governor of Amiens—General Robert and his Staff—the Prefect and other officials. Robb⁷ and the L. of C. Staff were there also.

We stayed the night at Amiens.

Saturday, August 15th, 1914.

In the morning I went out to see the aircraft camp which was about 3 miles from the town. David Henderson⁸ and

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards General) Sir Archibald Murray, Chief of General Staff.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal Sir William) Robertson, Quartermaster General.

³ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal Sir Henry) Wilson, Sub-Chief of General Staff.

⁴ Colonel the Hon. (afterwards Major-Genl. the Hon. Sir William) Lambton, Military Secretary.

⁵ Colonel Huguet, Chief of French Military Mission.

⁶ Lieut.-Col. Brinsley Fitzgerald, Private Secretary.

⁷ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Robb, G.O.C. Lines of Communication.

⁸ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir David) Henderson, Director Genl. of Military Aeronautics.

Sykes¹ were there with 3 squadrons of aeroplanes. The 4th had not yet arrived from Dover, but was coming in. It is feared one machine has been lost not having been heard of since the morning of the 12th. I was much impressed with the general efficiency of the aircraft force. I saw the Squadron Commanders and told them so.

I had a talk with Robb before leaving. He was fairly satisfied with the arrangements but expressed fears as to the sanitary conditions of Amiens and said the doctors insisted on the men being put into tents.

We left for Paris at 11 and reached the Nord Station at 12.45.

We had a great reception from the people of Paris. The Ambassador,² and representatives of the Mil. Governor of Paris met us at the station besides other officials.

I drove with Sir F. Bertie to the Embassy where we lunched. Afterwards I went with Sir F.B. and paid an official visit to the President.³ . . .

The situation was fully discussed and the President expressed himself as well satisfied with the outlook. He said the attitude of the French nation was admirable. Everything was calm and determined.

I then left the President and accompanied the War Minister⁴ . . . to the War Office. Here maps were produced, the whole situation gone over, and arrangements made for me to meet Gen. Joffre (French C. in C.) to-morrow.

At Amiens I had previously sent an official report by telegram to the S. of S. for War announcing my arrival there and to-day I wrote a private letter to Lord K.⁵ telling him roughly my arrangements and generally how I found things over here.

I dined quietly at the Ritz with Brinsley. Met several Americans I knew (amongst them Judge and Mrs. Gracey).

The usual silly reports of French "reverses" were going about. All quite untrue!

Sunday, August 16th, 1914.

I left the British Embassy at 7 and reached Gen. Joffre's H'd.Qrs. at Vitry-le-François at 12. I had a long interview with him and his C. of S., Gen. Berthelot. They were very

¹ Major (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Frederick) Sykes, General Staff officer, 1st Grade.

² Sir Francis (afterwards Viscount) Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

³ M. Poincaré, President of the French Republic.

⁴ M. Alexandre Millerand.

⁵ Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War.

joyful on account of the capture of a German Flag which had just been brought in. I was much struck by the attitude and bearing which prevailed throughout the Staff. A complete absence of fuss and confusion and a calm deliberate confidence was manifest everywhere.

Gen. Joffre explained the general situation and the rôle he wished me to play in alternative circumstances. He handed me these views in writing with a short appreciation of the situation by the C. of the G.S.

I left his H'd.Qrs. about 2.30, reached Rheims about 4.30 where I spent the night.

Throughout the 2 days' travelling we noticed the crops half cut. Stooks of corn lying about and the fields deserted. Bertie told me there was an idea of employing Spanish labour to get the crops in.

The country seems entirely denuded of men.

Monday, August 17th, 1914.

. . . We lunched on the road and reached Le Cateau¹ about 4.30.

On arrival I received the sad news of poor dear Jimmy Grierson's² death. He will be a great loss to us all.

I wired home asking for *Plumer*³ to take his place.

A wire reached me from Ian Hamilton⁴ asking me to recommend him but I couldn't see my way to do this.

I had a wire from Lord K. asking for dispositions of the French West of the Meuse. I sent the information by letter.

[TO GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON, GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING-IN-CHIEF THE FORCES IN GREAT BRITAIN.]

HEADQUARTERS,

LE CATEAU.

Aug. 18, 1914.

MY DEAR HAMILTON,

I duly received your wire forwarded through the War Office. I appreciate very strongly your willingness to serve as an A.C. Commander. Having regard to the vast importance of your present command and the great necessity for the presence

¹ British General Headquarters.

² Lieut.-Genl. Sir James Grierson, G.O.C. Second Army Corps.

³ Lieut.-Genl. Sir Herbert (afterwards Field Marshal Viscount) Plumer, then G.O.C. Northern Command.

⁴ General Sir Ian Hamilton, Commander-in-Chief the Forces in Great Britain. He was considered by Sir John French too senior for the command of an Army Corps, vide letter dated Aug. 18th, 1914.

as C.-in-C. in England of a man of your rank and experience of war, I feel that it would not be exercising a due economy of command power to put you in the place of junior officers who are fit to command an Army Corps.

I remember the talks we have had and the letters which have passed between us, and I have the same fervent desire to secure your co-operation in the field as I have always had. As the war goes on the Forces here will expand and you will probably be wanted for a higher command than 2 Divisions (which is Pulteney's command as Major-General!) Whilst, in the meantime, if anything happens to me you ought to be sent to take my place.

Believe me, my dear old Friend, I am trying to recommend to the S. of S. what I honestly and truly think to be best for the service and if it is not exactly in accordance with your wishes, forgive me.

Yours ever sincerely,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

I have just heard of Smith-Dorrien's appt. This has been arranged at home and was not referred to me.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARY.]

Sunday, August 23rd, 1914.

. . . Our troops at the front have been more or less engaged all day with the enemy who are evidently trying hard to 'feel' our front all round. . . . We live here 'from hour to hour'! The most contradictory reports are circulated!

At 6 p.m. Macdonogh¹ brought me his appreciation of the situation well marked on a map, but an hour later Gen. Joffre sent in *his* which entirely altered our conceptions and rendered it necessary for me to radically change my dispositions for to-morrow. . . . The fog of war lies heavily over us! According to Joffre we may to-morrow be attacked in our present positions by 2½ Army Corps and 1 Cavalry Division. Our own reports and aeroplane reconnaissances do not tally with this.

The 2 Orleans Princes reported their arrival. They are to be attached to the 1st and 2nd Corps.

Thursday, August 27th, 1914.

. . . On the whole things didn't look quite so black! During the day I received a very handsome acknowledge-

¹ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir George) Macdonogh, Director of Intelligence.

ment of our services by wire from Gen. Joffre. I had it translated and sent to England where it appeared in the papers this morning.

Friday, August 28th, 1914.

It appears General Sordet¹ had been engaged with the enemy and had driven some German troops back on Cambrai—thus assisting and relieving the march of the 2nd Corps and 4th Division. It also appeared that Gen. d'Amade with the 61 and 62 Reserve Divisions had moved East from Arras and was North of our retiring troops. The V French army was close on our right. In these circumstances our retreat is quite secure and I spent my first quiet night for nearly a week!

Saturday, August 29th, 1914.

Perhaps the charm of war lies in its glorious uncertainty! We thought in the morning that we had really shaken off the enemy and could rest for a day or two in peace. About 12 the whole prospect changed! Five Army Corps were reported to be close to the French 7th A.C. on my left and my positions on the Oise.

Sunday, August 30th, 1914.

Saw P.M.O. about 9. He tells me over 2,000 wounded have already been collected and sent down to *Rouen*. They are still passing thro' here in driblets. The hospital train service is working well. . . . Uhlan patrols were reported to-day to be near this place.

Tuesday, September 1st, 1914.

The German Cavalry with some guns had penetrated between the troops and my headquarters. I feel sure they would have been beaten off by our Camerons!

Wednesday, September 2nd, 1914.

The anniversary of Sedan! All kinds of impossible feats of arms by the Germans were prophesied for to-day, but as a matter of fact it is one of the quietest days we have spent. Yesterday both the 2nd and 1st Corps and the Cavalry were engaged in rear-guard actions the Cavalry and 1st Army Corps were somewhat caught by surprise in the wooded country thro' which they were moving. The 1st Cavalry Brigade under Briggs² was surprised by some German Cavalry when watering

¹ Commanding French Cavalry Corps.

² Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Charles) Briggs.

horses. They lost a battery and several killed and wounded, amongst them being poor Ansell¹ of the 5 D.G.'s and Cawley,² Brigade-Major. I hear the Bays lost no less than 9 officers! With the help of some detachments from the 3rd Corps they not only recovered their own guns but captured 12 of the enemy. In the 1st Corps the 4th Guards Brigade suffered somewhat heavily. Poor Hubert Crichton³ was killed amongst others and Scott-Kerr,⁴ commanding Brigade, was wounded, but not very badly.

. . . The VI French army on my left and the V on my right are retiring on *Paris* and *Chateau-Thierry* respectively. The British Force moves at daybreak to take up a defensive position S. of the Marne to defend the river.

Thursday, September 3rd, 1914.

I have now received Joffre's full statement of his plans accompanied by a very nice and friendly letter from him. He proposes to delay the enemy on the Marne for a certain time and then retire on the Seine and take up a position from Pont-Sur — on the West thro' Nogent, Saron-sur-Aube, Brienne-le-Chateau to Joinville on the East. He asks me to retire on the line Melim-Juvisy on the Seine when I leave the Marne. He will fill up the gap between me and the V army by a large Corps of Cavalry. . . . Later information tells us that Chateau-Thierry is in the hands of the enemy and that the V army (French) (18th Corps on the left) is retiring South to the Seine.

Friday, September 4th, 1914.

. . . Wilson went to Bray-sur-Seine to meet Gen. d'Esperey, the new Commander of the V French army (Lanrezac⁵ has been put in arrest with four other Generals, and is to be tried, it is said, by court-martial) . . . The shortage of officers demoralises the men and a great deal of looting and irregularity is going on, particularly in the — Division. . . . This is all very unfortunate but it is a characteristic of war and things may, I hope, look better in two or three days.

¹ Lieut.-Col. G. K. Ansell, commanding 5th Dragoon Guards.

² Major J. S. Cawley, 20th Hussars.

³ Major Hubert Crichton, Irish Guards, formerly A.D.C. to Sir John French.

⁴ Brig.-Genl. R. Scott-Kerr.

⁵ General Lanrezac, original Commander of the V French army.

Saturday, September 5th, 1914.

About 7 a.m. Huguet arrived with some emissaries from Gen. Joffre. His plan is now to attack the enemy to-morrow—6th, and he asks me to participate with my left on the Marne, my right in touch with the VI army which will now be North of the Marne. They are to be on the R. Ourcq about 9 to-morrow morning.

I have agreed to this provided my troops can rest all day and commence their move (to get into position) to-morrow morning.

At 9 a.m. I received a visit from Gen. Maunoury (Comdr. VI French army). . . . He expressed his intention to attack "au fond" and asked for my best support which I promised to give him. . . .

Persistent and well authenticated reports continue to come in that the Germans are withdrawing considerable forces to the Russian frontier.

I had a visit to-day from General Joffre. . . . He was full of enthusiasm and is very hopeful if we all attack "au fond."

Monday, September 7th, 1914.

A nice letter arrived from Joffre very late last night in answer to my request for instructions as to my march to-day. He tells me the V army have made good progress owing largely to the pressure of the British Forces East on the enemy's right flank. . . . For ourselves, we have moved forward some ten miles in a N.E. direction. The Cavalry have been in front driving back the enemy's cavalry with great vigour. Campbell¹, commdg. 9th Lancers, has been slightly wounded.

Wednesday, September 9th, 1914.

The 1st and 2nd Corps marched as ordered and crossed the Marne without opposition. . . . I had the messages from Maunoury (comdg. VI French army) begging me to advance and take the pressure of the enemy's three Corps off him. Our advance has done this and late to-night the last air reports show that the enemy is retiring at all points.

Yesterday the 1st Corps buried 200 dead Germans in their front and made many prisoners, besides capturing 12 maxim

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards General Sir David) Campbell, wounded by a Uhlan lance.

guns. The 2nd Corps made 200 prisoners. I went across the Marne at Nogent in the afternoon, met the horses and rode out to the 5th Cavalry Brigade in front of Haig¹. I spoke to each of the regiments—12th Lancers—20th Hussars and Royal Scots Greys.

I saw a great deal of the troops. They looked well and in excellent spirits.

Returned to Hd. Qrs. about 7 and in the evening I got a very kind letter from the King and also the Prime Minister.

Thursday, September 10th, 1914.

Our daily casualty lists are still rather heavy. A train of 400 wounded was sent down last night and I have just visited another train load at the station of 200 to 300. Many of the wounds are slight but there are some very bad cases. Shrapnel wounds seem to predominate. The trains seem comfortable and arrangements good.

Saturday, September 12th, 1914.

Left Contommiers at 9 this morning and motored out to Hd. Qrs. of 3rd Corps. Found Pulteney at cross-roads two miles S. of Buzancy (S.E. of Soissons). The enemy was opposing the passage of the Aisne to the VI French army all along their line Westwards from Soissons, and the 4th Division was taking up a position on the ridges S.E. of Soissons to assist them. We watched the action for some time. . . . At nightfall the 3rd Corps was close to the Aisne, the bridges over which were destroyed. . . . The cavalry under Allenby did some very good work to-day in clearing the town of Braisne and the high ground beyond of strong hostile detachments. Allenby particularly mentions the work done by the Bays. . . .

They have given me authority to award the medal for distinguished conduct in the field and a very limited number of D.S.O.'s.

Sunday, September 13th, 1914.

Desultory fighting has gone on to-day all along the line. I went out this afternoon to the bridge over the Aisne at Venizel.

Two brigades of the 4th Division had crossed and were

¹ Lieut.-Genl. Sir Douglas (afterwards Field Marshal Earl) Haig, commanding 1st Army Corps.

occupying the high ground at Bucy-le-Long. Since then a 3rd Brigade and the artillery have crossed. The 19th Brigade remains S. of the river.

A good many shells of the enemy were falling all round behind us. They were evidently big guns firing explosive shells at very long range. Our artillery were replying. . . . The enemy has been disputing the passages vigorously all day all along the line. . . . I sent K. two special telegrams to-day, one about a paragraph which has been cut out of my despatch, the other about the necessity of sending us the best officers they can.

Monday, September 14th, 1914.

Our casualties to-day have been heavy—probably 1,500. Two or three C.O.'s have fallen, amongst them Bradford¹ of the Seaforths.

Tuesday, September 15th, 1914.

K. insists on sending the 7th and 8th Divisions as a 'Corps' in spite of my wish to the contrary. He is using up our 'reserves' to form the new Cavalry Division, so I shall probably have to make a depot of it when it comes.

Saturday, September 19th, 1914.

The trenches are much improved and are now fairly safe and comfortable. . . . It is reported that Rheims Cathedral has been set on fire by German shells and that the roof has fallen in.

Sunday, September 20th, 1914.

On my return to Hd. Qrs. I found Esher had arrived from Paris and I was delighted to see him.

I found the General Staff rather perturbed by reports received from the front that both the 1st and 2nd Divisions were being heavily shelled and attacked. The West Yorks on left of 18th Brigade were said to be driven out of their trenches. Subsequent reports however arrived to say that both attacks had been repulsed.

Tuesday, September 22nd, 1914.

This afternoon I motored out to the right front and met Allenby.

¹ Lieut.-Col. E. R. Bradford, Seaforth Highlanders, a soldier of outstanding ability and a fine cricketer.

'Black Maria'¹ was paying him and his neighbourhood a good deal of attention during my visit, and an active artillery duel was going on. I got an excellent view of Haig's position and trenches.

Thursday, September 24th, 1914.

I went out this morning to Fergusson's² headquarters and went with him up a hill which completely overlooks the position N. of the River.

I saw exactly his own position and that of the 3rd Corps on his left as well as the left of the 3rd Division trenches. The new howitzers have come up, two batteries are being given to Haig, and two to S.D.³ I visited the ground above Soissons after lunch and from there saw the howitzer shells (Haig's I think) bursting on the high ground near Chemin des Dames. S.D.'s howitzers shelled Condé fort and cleared out many German troops who were there.

In their flight the field guns got on to them and made some execution with shrapnel.

The whole force has nearly completed reorganisation and refitting. The ranks are filled up but we have a terrible paucity of officers, especially in the senior ranks. The young officers are generally very inexperienced and some of them quite untrained. This will prove a serious handicap. . . .

Friday, September 25th, 1914.

I have heard that very secret negotiations are going on between the Russian C.-in-C. and the French Govt. as to the extent to which Germany is to be 'reduced.'

Saturday, September 26th, 1914.

Messages from 1st A.C. this morning report considerable activity of enemy in front of 1st Division. It is said they are 'sapping up,' trying to establish trenches within 100 yards of our line.

Sunday, September 27th, 1914.

I discussed all this⁴ with Winston who entirely agreed and is, in fact, rather enthusiastic about it. He has promised to give my cavalry valuable support by sending some of his

¹ German shell.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) Sir Charles Fergusson, G.O.C. 5th Division.

³ Genl. Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, commanding 2nd Army Corps.

⁴ Sir John French's plan to move the B.E.F. to the left of the Allied line.

Dunkirk infantry in lorries to follow them and keep up with them. . . . The Portuguese have offered to give the Allied Forces 32 batteries of Creusot guns. We are going to ask for half of them.

I went to Bourg this morning and conferred D.S.O.'s and D.C.M.'s on some officers and men of the Cavalry Division and 1st Corps.

Monday, September 28th, 1914.

I have had some fears lately that desperate attempts may be made to break through our line at this point and so I went out this morning to see Haig and consult with him about it. I saw both Lomax¹ and Landon² who thoroughly explained the situation and their views. After this conference I feel humanly sure of the safety of the position, but I have placed one of the General Reserve brigades at Haig's disposal and have authorised him to call on the 1st Cavalry Division for whatever more support he wants. . . . Violent but very futile attacks have been made all along the line. The decisive point remains the Allied left flank where Castelnau³ is still striving to envelope the enemy's flank. But the Germans continue to bring down fresh troops from Cambrai and the N.W. and the result is still in doubt.

Tuesday, September 29th, 1914.

The fight on the extreme Allied left is very severe and the Germans are fighting like devils to keep Castelnau from enveloping their flank. The Corps are mixed up so much as to render identification almost impossible. Clive⁴ came in with his reports from Joffre. They are not taking very kindly to my suggestion to remove our troops to the left flank.

. . . I went out this morning to view what I could of the enemy's positions and reached B—— about 12. There I found Wing⁵—— Haig's C.R.A.—and accompanied him to his look-out post on the top of a rick! There was a good deal of shelling going on.

To-night there seems to be a strong movement towards the N.W. and an endeavour to strengthen the German right

¹ Major-Genl. S. H. Lomax, G.O.C. 1st Division.

² Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Major-Genl.) H. J. S. Landon, G.O.C. 3rd Infantry Brigade.

³ Genl. de Castelnau.

⁴ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Major-Genl.) G. S. Clive, Grenadier Guards, Liaison officer at French G.Q.G.

⁵ Major-Genl. F. D. V. Wing.

flank even at the risk of dangerously weakening the Aisne Front.

Wednesday, September 30th, 1914.

I fear nothing will move them (the Germans) but a determined united joint *vigorous* attack on the *crest* of the position. Joffre is no doubt waiting for Russian relief.

I had a meeting at Braisne with Army Corps and Cavalry Division Commanders. We agreed that "mentions in despatches" should now be made as at the end of a campaign. . . . Wilson came back with a favourable answer to my note addressed to Joffre. The move is agreed to but it must be gradual and not all at once. I have issued orders accordingly.

Thursday, October 1st, 1914.

I went early to the look-out post above Fergusson's Hd. Qrs. This has been discovered by enemy since I was there last and has been heavily shelled.

I saw nothing of importance but after a close observation arrived at the conclusion that the force in our front was much less and that Missy couldn't be held by the enemy whilst our troops held their present positions on the S. bank. . . . On my return at 4.30 I found a wire which purported to come from Joffre (but probably was sent by one of his staff) asking me to take up the ground occupied by the 45th Division on Pulteney's left. I replied that I could not do so in view of the progress made in carrying out the general move to the left flank which Joffre had already agreed to.

It was I think only a "scare" at Hd. Qrs. where the General Staff seem to have rather too much "to say"!

Friday, October 2nd, 1914.

I have told Army Corps Commanders that no notice is in future to be taken of the White Flag, which is to be always fired upon.¹ . . . On my return I found a long wire from K. saying that news had reached the Foreign Office that Antwerp was in great danger of falling. He asked me if my move North could be expedited or if Joffre intended to bring about a decisive action within the next few days. I am arranging to send Wilson to Joffre to-morrow morning and have sent

¹ This was in consequence of various instances of abuse of the White Flag by the Germans.

out to get hold of Bridges¹ (—) who knows the Belgians well. I also saw David Henderson and asked him to plan an air reconnaissance to Ghent or Bruges or even Antwerp itself to-morrow. . . .

I dispatched a letter to the King by Murray² (Eq. of D. of C.) the messenger on duty.

Saturday, October 3rd, 1914.

I was woken up at 5 this morning with a wire from S. of S. He said that messages had been received from British Minister at Antwerp that it had been decided to move the King, Queen and Govt. to Ostend to-day. . . . S. of S. asked for my movements. Bridges had arrived in the night. I sent for him and gave him instructions to go at once by motor to Bruges, to put himself in communication with the Belgian General Staff and endeavour to influence them in some way, promising support from us as soon as we could get to them.

. . . I also sent Sykes by aeroplane in the same direction to find out what he could and if possible bring me back a report from Bridges. I also sent Wilson off to French H'd. Qrs. to tell French C.-in-C. that I *must* be relieved from my intrenched positions at once. . . . Another wire arrived from K. saying that Winston Churchill was going to Antwerp to try to make them stand for a time and again asking what I can do.

I have replied fully.

Sunday, October 4th, 1914.

Early this morning two wires arrived from K. One said that Arthur Lee³ was coming out to report on transport arrangements and care of wounded. The other was about Antwerp.

The ultimate result has been that the 7th Division and Cavalry Division are going into Antwerp, a Naval Brigade is already there, and the French are sending 15,000 Territorial troops, some artillery and a Marine Brigade—a total reinforcement to the garrison of 53,000. It is hoped, therefore, that Antwerp will hold out until we can relieve it.

At K.'s request I am sending Rawlinson to command the

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir G.T.M.) Bridges, Head of British Mission with Belgian Army.

² Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Sir Malcolm Donald) Murray, Equerry and Comptroller of the Household to the Duke of Connaught.

³ Colonel (afterwards Sir Arthur) Lee.

British part of the expedition. . . . I have nothing from Bridges, but Sykes returned about 12 after a most successful air journey. He tells me that he saw the Belgian Chief of Staff in Antwerp. The situation is critical because the S.E. sector of the outer forts is broken through and the connecting trenches taken. But the Belgian Army (already supported by English Marines and Naval Brigade) hold the line of the Nethe River which is a strong position. The King, Govt. and Army had decided to remain for the present and no doubt the reinforcements coming to them will enable the fortress to hold out for some time longer.

Monday, October 5th, 1914.

Geoffrey Howard (M.P.)¹ arrived this morning from Dunkirk, bringing me two letters from Seely, and one from Winston Churchill. He also brought a report from Bridges to C.G.S. He confirmed generally what we already knew, but was rather pessimistic as to Antwerp holding out long enough to be relieved. He says the Germans have 16 inch mortars in position against the forts!

I have arranged with David Henderson to send an aeroplane every day to Antwerp to give messages and receive reports. . . . I have an official wire from S. of S. saying that 'for the present' the troops going to Antwerp will not form part of my force.

Tuesday, October 6th, 1914.

Gen. Foch has now taken command of the French left wing facing East, composed of Castelnau's and Maud'huy's² Armies. His intention is to hold the ground firmly in front and to turn the enemy's right flank. If he fails in this, that task will devolve on me. If he succeeds, I hope to be free to move at once to relief of Antwerp.

. . . . A message came from Rawlinson (at Ostend), thro' London, saying he heard situation at Antwerp was critical. That embarkation of 7th Division would commence at 4 this morning, that there were rumours of mines laid near landing place, and that investing forces were attacking Termonde.

About noon Capt. Sheppard, R.F.C.,³ whom I had sent into

¹ Captain the Hon. Geoffrey Howard, Vice-Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household.

² Genl. de Maud'huy.

³ Royal Flying Corps.

Antwerp yesterday, returned and reported. He had seen both Bridges and the 1st Lord¹, who was still there but was leaving for England to-day. They were more hopeful of garrison being able to hold out. . . .

The King of the Belgians sent me a message . . . He was anxious to avoid being a prisoner in hands of Germans!

Wednesday, October 7th, 1914.

On my return I found the airman who had been to Antwerp. He brought me an excellent report though it showed that the garrison of Antwerp was in a very bad way. The defences have been taken over by a Naval and Marine Brigade of 10,000. The enemy have captured the outer line of the fortress and are throwing shells into the city.

Rawlinson talked of marching from Bruges to its relief by 9th or 10th. This seems to me a very desperate and forlorn enterprise. About two German Corps D'Armes are attacking the place and German troops are marching on Ghent and Bruges. The 7th Division commenced landing at 4 yesterday morning.

The Naval Brigade are ordered to hold the inner defences to the last.

Friday, October 9th, 1914.

The Air Officer I sent yesterday towards Antwerp returned and reported the evacuation of that place and that there was much difficulty in withdrawing the Naval Brigade. He said the city was already being heavily shelled but that the 16-inch howitzer had not yet been brought up from the river. . . . I have formed a Cavalry Corps of the 2 divisions under Allenby.

Sunday, October 11th, 1914.

I distributed French decorations to the Flying Corps and some Hd. Qr. men this evening.

Monday, October 12th, 1914.

The enemy's aircraft dropped bombs on St. Omer² to-day killing and wounding some harmless civilians!

Tuesday, October 13th, 1914.

Went to S.D. (2nd Corps) at Bethune in the morning and heard his news. He wasn't making headway but holding his

¹ The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty.

² British G.H.Q. was established at St. Omer next day.

own. He thinks Fergusson should be relieved and I have asked for Morland¹ from home. I don't think S.D. has as much in front of him as he thinks! . . . Somewhat pessimistic messages from S.D. in the evening. I replied he must hold his own.

Wednesday, October 14th, 1914.

Poor Hubert Hamilton² was killed by a shell this morning which has grieved us all very much.

. . . There is curious news from Russia to-night. It seems they are not advancing so fast as we thought and it is very likely that their action will not affect events in this theatre for several weeks to come. It is quite possible that the Germans may send strong reinforcements here.

Thursday, October 15th, 1914.

I have told Rawlinson³ that whilst conforming to the general move East he must keep an eye to the enemy detachments reported to be at Bruges and Roulers. I will deal with them by moves of the 1st Corps.

I then motored up to some high ground about three miles N. of the Lys and East Bailleul from which I saw a good deal of the lie of country. I passed the 19th Brigade and other troops. They all looked well.

I found Gen. Hickman here when I got back. He has come over with reference to forming intrenched camps at Boulogne or Calais or both.

Friday, October 16th, 1914.

We have some interesting intercepted messages to-day.

Gen. V. Marwitz,⁴ comdg. 4th Cavalry Corps in wiring to Comdr. of VI Army comments on the weakness of the 2nd Corps attack. Another says the Hd. Qrs. of the IV Army are in the Cavalry Barracks, Ghent.

Sunday, October 18th, 1914.

Miss Violet Asquith⁵ passed through here this morning with her brother and sister-in-law. I had a few minutes' talk with her.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Thomas) Morland.

² Major-Genl. H. I. W. Hamilton, G.O.C. 3rd Division.

³ G.O.C. newly-formed 4th Army Corps.

⁴ General Oberst von der Marwitz, G.O.C. 4th German Cavalry Corps.

⁵ Daughter of the Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith, (afterwards Earl of Oxford and Asquith), Prime Minister.

I also had a talk with Arthur Lee who was on his way through. He is quite satisfied with all he has seen and considers all reports unjustified. . . . The "Battle of the Lys" (or Lille?) is progressing slowly but surely. Rawlinson did not push so much as I expected and our left was not sufficiently supported in consequence. 3rd Corps did very well. . . .

I went out to the Eastern side of Armentiers which was under a heavy shell fire by things looking very like our old friend the 'portmanteau'.¹

Monday, October 19th, 1914.

A message came from London to say two battle ships were waiting in Dover and could be dispatched to this coast within four hours. I am not certain if they would be of any use or not. They might bombard Ostend!

Rawlinson and Byng² have disappointed me. Yesterday the former failed to obey his orders and attack Menin. To-day the support which the cavalry require in that direction was entirely abandoned because the 7th Division executed a change of front to the left on an entirely inadequate hostile threat. . . . I think the whole army will have to dig in for a great part of the line it holds and take the offensive on our Northern flank.

[FROM KING GEORGE V.]

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

Oct. 29th, 1914.

MY DEAR FRENCH,

Nothing but press of work has prevented me from writing to you before to express my thanks for so kindly sending me the German Flag by Genl. Lambton. It will be a most interesting possession which I shall place in Windsor Castle and record the gratifying words in which it was sent to you by Genl. Joffre. We are now passing through some anxious and critical days and I follow with the keenest interest your daily telegrams.

I do indeed feel proud of my Army under your command, and I am certain that no troops in the world could do better. Their bravery, patience and endurance fill me with admiration, and I do appreciate to the utmost all that you are doing and the Generals under you, though the strain upon your powers must be very great. I am glad to think that the Indian Corps is now relieving the 2nd Army Corps who require rest and refit. That

¹ German shell.

² Major-Genl. The Hon. Julian (afterwards G-nl. Lord) Byng, G.O.C. 3rd Cavalry Division, then forming part of Rawlinson's 4th Corps.

success will ultimately be ours, I have no doubt. I deeply regret the heavy losses both in officers and men which we have sustained especially during the last fortnight, but the fighting spirit is splendidly maintained.

I grieve at the death of my cousin Maurice,¹ who I hear from all sides had done so well. I have seen great numbers of both the new army and the Territorials and they are shaping very well, some of the latter quite fit for the front now.

I look cheerfully ahead with every confidence in you.

Believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

GEORGE R.I.

[TELEGRAM TO LORD ROBERTS DATED GENERAL HEAD-
QUARTERS, FRANCE, 3rd. NOVEMBER, 1914.]

LORD ROBERTS,

ENGLEMERE, ASCOT.

I think it better that you should put off your visit here for at least seven days A A A even then it will be necessary for me to wire to you again A A A I have good reasons for this which it is impossible to explain here.

FRENCH.

[Ultimately Lord Roberts arrived at Sir John French's headquarters on November 11th. Three days later the great soldier died as he would have wished, in the Field.]

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]
Thursday, November 12th, 1914.

It is now conclusively proved that the enemy's violent attack yesterday has absolutely failed and that he lost far more heavily than we thought. More than 1,500 dead Germans have been found.

. . . The night attack directed to be made by the 1st Division at 1 this morning has failed and I fear reduced the unfortunate 1st Brigade to 5 or 6 officers and 400 men! Fitzclarence² and McMahon³ are both killed. . . .

The 1st Corps have found a document on a dead German officer showing that as all efforts had previously failed the Guard were specially ordered up to break through the line. We gather from this that the Germans made their greatest effort yesterday which failed. . . .

I presented French decorations to several officers and

¹ Prince Maurice of Battenburg, King's Royal Rifle Corps, killed in action near Ypres.

² Brig.-Genl. C. FitzClarence, G.O.C. 1st Infantry Brigade.

³ Lieut.-Col. N. R. McMahon, Royal Fusiliers.

N.C.O.'s of the cavalry to-day, including Bulkeley-Johnson¹ of the Greys.

I am trying to get the 2nd Corps North as quickly as possible to relieve the 1st and get Haig and Gough² and their troops and staff some rest after all their hard work.

Saturday, November 14th, 1914.

Lord Roberts was taken very ill last night and is still in an unconscious condition. We are very anxious about him.

Pulteney³ reports very good results attained by 9·2 guns. They have succeeded in knocking out several hostile 8" guns. It is a pity we haven't more ammunition for them.

Sunday, November 15th, 1914.

Lord Roberts died (still unconscious) at 8 yesterday evening. I have wired to the King, K. and Lady Roberts.

A gallant little attack was made at Veldhoek on front of 1st Corps at 5.30 this morning. Some stables which had been held by the Germans for some time were heavily shelled by a gun which was brought up to close range for the purpose, and then the farm was attacked by a storming party very gallantly led by C.S.M. Gibbons. The operation was entirely successful. I have awarded Gibbons a D.C.M.

Monday, November 16th, 1914.

The Prince of Wales⁴ joined my staff to-day.

Tuesday, November 17th, 1914.

The remains of Lord Roberts were sent to-day to Boulogne. Generals Foch and de Maud'huy of the French Army attended the parting ceremony which was very well carried out. The Indian Princes also attended and Pratap Singh⁵ accompanied the remains to Boulogne.

Saturday, November 21st, 1914.

The frost gets harder than ever and many men are suffering from frost bite in the trenches.

¹ Colonel C. B. Bulkeley-Johnson, 2nd Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys, afterwards killed in action.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Genl. Sir Hubert) Gough, G.O.C. 2nd Cavalry Division.

³ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut. Genl. Sir William) Pulteney, G.O.C. 3rd Army Corps.

⁴ Afterwards King Edward VIII.

⁵ Major-Genl. H. H. Sir Pratap Singh, Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.

Thursday, November 26th, 1914.

The Germans are apparently massing a lot of siege artillery on the coast west of Ostend which will probably prejudice any active support by the Fleet.

A rather bad tempered letter from K. to-day. He seems to be a good deal worried.

Friday, November 27th, 1914.

In view of their heavy defeats in Poland it seems almost incredible that the Germans can afford to keep so many troops on this side.

I strongly suspect that they are engaged in *bluffing* us: a game at which they are adepts.

Monday, November 30th, 1914.

H.M. the King arrived at my H'd. Qrs. at 5 p.m. to-day. The Indian Princes came in to meet him. I dined with H.M. this evening. He is very pessimistic about the war and greatly fears invasion. He thinks that the Germans have 250,000 men put by and ready for the express purpose of invasion!

He says we must absolutely break up the German Empire and they must give up all their Fleet!

He received an adverse wire from Military Attaché at — as regards the Servian situation.

I don't believe a word of all this. I hear Fisher¹ is spreading some of the rumours! . . . Rawlinson is getting some old-fashioned cannon balls and mortars out of French arsenals which he proposes to make into bombs: it seems a good idea. . . . There is a reported plot against the King of the Belgians instigated by Germany.

Tuesday, December 1st, 1914.

M. Poincaré (President) M. Viviani (Premier) and Gen. Joffre have arrived here to see the King and are meeting him at Merville. . . .

Gen. Joffre was received by the King this evening who presented him with the G.C.B. Poincaré and Viviani dined with the King. I was also asked.

I think H.M. has been induced to take a more optimistic view of things in general since he has been here.

¹ Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher, First Sea Lord of the Admiralty.

Wednesday, December 2nd, 1914.

The morning discussion turned chiefly on the amount of Reserves available in Russia.

It was suggested that since the Russo-Japanese War the Russian equipment in Russia had been allowed to get very low.

It is stated that Japan has sent a great number of guns and rifles (captured during their war) to assist Russia in this respect. . . .

Foch, Maud'huy, d'Urbal, Conneau, de Mitry, du Bois, Grosetti, M——, ———, and Huguët were presented by me to the King who decorated them (Foch G.C.B.: other Generals G.C.M.G.: Huguët C.B.).

Thursday, December 3rd, 1914.

H.M. attended the conference this morning with the Prince of Wales.

Friday, December 4th, 1914.

H.M. visited the H'd. Qrs. Staff Offices and those of the Q.M.G., also the French Mission where Huguët presented the members of the Mission to him. H.M. then went to Dunkirk to visit the King of the Belgians.

Saturday, December 5th, 1914.

H.M. lunched with us and left at 2 p.m. for home. . . .

Winston is rather unhappy about Bulgaria. They don't know exactly what line they will take. He arrived here on a visit to me this evening.

Monday, December 7th, 1914.

He [Churchill] is very keen to adopt my view of how to employ the British Forces in conjunction with the Belgians. I have explained the political difficulties which will have to be overcome but he doesn't regard these as insuperable. He is going to consult with the P.M. and K. about it all. I have written to K. to-night telling him this.

Tuesday, December 8th, 1914.

At Foch's request I went to see him at 11 to-day. I found Gen. d'Urbal with him.

He told me he had decided to direct the VIII French Army in attack on the line Hollebeke—Wytschaete on the morning of Friday 11th and asked me to co-operate.

He is also organising a powerful attack from a point N. of Arras and wishes to have the 21st Corps (Maud'huy's X Army) to co-operate. He therefore asked me if I could undertake *also* to extend my line to the right as far as the Lens-Bethune railway. . . .

I told Foch I could not undertake both the *attack* and the *relief*.

I did not consider myself strong enough, as I must have a good Reserve in hand to support the attack on Messines. But I agreed to do either one or the other, whichever he chose. He argued a great deal, and tried every form of persuasion to induce me to agree but I was firm in refusing. He then asked me to take over half the line, as far as Vermelles. This I also refused. Finally it was agreed that it was not to be understood that I was to extend the line at all, but that if I found I could easily spare a brigade or a few troops to help in this direction I would do so.

I further stipulated that the attack was to take place on the 12th (as I originally agreed to) and not the 11th. I told General d'Urbal that S.D. would meet him to-morrow and arrange all preliminaries. I then went on to a very good lookout hill (Scherpenberg) just N.W. of Kemmel. The light happened to be fairly good and we got a good view of the positions.

Thursday, December 10th, 1914.

The heavy rain has almost flooded the trenches, particularly in the neighbourhood of Ploegsteert. The Germans are suffering as much as we are!

The men in the trenches say the Saxons call across to them and say they've 'had enough of it'!

Friday, December 11th, 1914.

Foch came to see me at 6 this evening. . . . He mentioned the subject of armoured small craft for use on canals and I have written to Winston Churchill about it. . . .

Walter Long¹ arrived to-day. . . .

Saturday, December 12th, 1914.

There have been some bad cases of men 'sleeping on post' lately and I much fear an example may soon have to be made.

¹ The Rt. Hon. Walter (afterwards Viscount) Long.

. . . Germany is trying to 'get at' Sweden by representing hostile intentions of Russia against her in the North.

Sunday, December 13th, 1914.

Bridges came over with Admiral Hood¹ and saw Wilson and C.G.S. It was arranged that the advance from Nieuport on the 15th was to be supported by 2 battle ships, 3 monitors and 6 destroyers.

[TO COUNTESS ROBERTS, FORMERLY LADY AILEEN ROBERTS, DAUGHTER OF FIELD MARSHAL EARL ROBERTS WHOM SHE SUCCEEDED.]

HEAD-QUARTERS,
BRITISH ARMY,

Dec. 13, 1914.

MY DEAR LADY AILEEN,

I am addressing you in a most unconventional manner but I shall not err in this way again. It is because I want to write to you as you were here.

I am writing in the room (and at about the time—11 p.m.) where I last saw my beloved old Chief, and it is a place and time I shall never forget. I got him to remain with me for the nightly conference we always have, and I can hardly believe his bodily presence is not still here.

It was a beautiful life and a beautiful death. You and I talked that evening of *Hugh Dawnay*² and I remember in a lame kind of way (although I feel it all intensely) trying to explain certain theories I have formed as to the *intention* when young men and women like that—are called away.

I think our beloved Field Marshal had got on to a *still higher plane*, and was left here all those years to teach us how to live.

Thank you so much dear Lady Aileen for your letter.

Yours very sincerely,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Tuesday, December 15th, 1914.

I then went to Scherpenberg to see how the operations were progressing. I met there S.D. and Haldane³. The weather was terrible and the ground only a quagmire! There was a

¹ Rear-Admiral the Hon. Horace Hood, commanding at Dover, afterwards killed in action at Jutland.

² Major the Hon. Hugh Dawnay, 2nd Life Guards, killed in action.

³ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Aylmer) Haldane, G.O.C. 3rd Division.

desultory fire at all points of the line but nothing of any force, either infantry or artillery. The rain, the cold, and the awful holding ground seemed to damp down every energy.

The French, however, are entirely responsible for the delay. According to the joint plan we made, it is for them to *advance* and for us to *support* them. Until they move we can do nothing. . . .

The Russians say they have buried 'thousands' of Germans!

Wednesday, December 16th, 1914.

I inspected 7 men who have been sent out with drafts who were all over 50 and hadn't fired a shot since the Boer War! They have all got ill in the trenches and are being invalided home!

. . . I went to Scherpenberg this morning and there interviewed S.D. and Haldane. I asked S.D. if he has a complete understanding with Gen. Grosetti (comdr. 16th Corps) for mutual co-operation. He says he has tried his best but Grosetti is very 'difficult'. I have urged S.D. to put this right.

I have also directed him to move some light guns (his 'park' artillery) down close to the trenches, dig them in, and try then to get at the enemy's machine guns. . . .

. . . They all dwell (and with reason) on the necessity for more *high explosive* fire, particularly 4.5 howitzers.

Thursday, December 17th, 1914.

I am sending Lambton over to K. to-morrow morning. He is explaining my views on various subjects but chiefly about the *formation of Armies*, which I propose to undertake at once! (I have copy of my letter to him and the date.)

Friday, December 18th, 1914.

I have a wire from K. saying that the P.M. suggests my going home for two days to discuss the situation with the Cabinet and Defence Committee.

[FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.]

THE MANSION HOUSE,
LONDON.

December 19, 1914.

MY DEAR SIR JOHN FRENCH,

As Christmas is approaching, I write, in the name of the Citizens of London, to send their earnest good wishes to you and

the Officers and Men of the British Expeditionary Force and an expression of their gratitude for what that Force in conjunction with its gallant Allies, has already effected. The City of London entertains the confident hope and belief that, during the coming year, victory and success will crown their united efforts. I beg you to be assured that the Citizens of London have your splendid troops constantly in mind and are prepared to do all they can to promote their comfort and happiness.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

FIELD MARSHAL

SIR JOHN FRENCH, G.C.B., O.M.,
etc. etc. etc. etc.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Saturday, December 26th, 1914.

I had a long talk with Willcocks¹ this morning about the recent conduct of the Indian Corps. I saw him alone at first and said I blamed the Indian Comdrs. of units for embarking on an attack on trenches so far away from their own line without adequate support and knowing, as they must have, the condition of weariness and cold their men were in. At first he tried to combat this view but afterwards acknowledged that the operation had been mismanaged by some of the Brigade Commanders. He also thought that X was to a certain extent at fault.

I have now arranged to relieve X of his division and put in one or two new Brigade Commanders. The Corps will now be sent back into reserve for a time.

Sunday, December 27th, 1914.

I left Amiens in motor and reached Joffre's H'd Qrs. at Chantilly at 10 a.m. I was with him for about 3½ hours.

I told him what the Government wished me to communicate to him as to the possibility of a sufficient withdrawal of German troops from the Russian frontier to make them strong enough in this theatre to break our line and capture Paris, and what his plans were in that event.

He was much astonished to hear that such a view of the situation could be really and seriously entertained, but he

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards General) Sir James Willcocks, G.O.C. Indian Corps.



Sir John French

Marshal Joffre

SIR JOHN FRENCH AND HIS STAFF WITH MARSHAL JOFFRE IN THE FIELD

Photo, Daily Mirror



said the French G.S. had plans ready to meet every eventuality but the time was not now opportune for the discussion of such contingent possibilities.

. . . He told me of the success of the French "75" batteries in breaking down wire entanglements and other obstacles. He spoke of a new fuse now being fitted to heavy ammunition which gives much better results.

He says the French are now making only 1/10 of shrapnel the remainder being H.E. . . .

He hears from the French Foreign Office that Roumania and Bulgaria are now quite favourably inclined towards Entente and in that case he hoped, in a month or so, to be able to pass ammunition to Russia thro' Salonica.

Finally I arrived at a complete understanding as to future plans.

It is Joffre's intention to break thro' the enemy's line from the South at *Rheims* and from the West at *Arras*. He desires to mass as many French Corps as he possibly can behind these points. Therefore at all other parts of the line the rôle must be two-fold. (1) Economise troops as much as possible in the trenches so as to spare more for action at decisive points. (2) Organise good local reserves to keep the enemy in the front employed and prevent him sending troops to threatened points in the line.

In pursuance of this plan I have agreed to take over the whole line from La Bassée to the sea: but *gradually* and as troops become available.

Joffre consents to my working in with the Belgian army.

Monday, December 28th, 1914.

Bridges came in to see me to-day and I had a long talk over Belgian co-operation. I think it is very possible we might utilize the infantry (which numbers now about 60,000 men) if they were distributed in *brigades* all along our line at points which are less exposed and easier to hold.

It will probably be difficult to get the King to consent to this, but Bridges is going to put the proposal before him.

Wednesday, December 30th, 1914.

I had a talk with Sir E. Barrow¹ this morning. He thinks the Indian troops will come up to time all right with a little rest. He asked me to be lenient with X who is really a good

¹ General Sir Edmund Barrow, late Indian Army.

fellow. I told him I was quite inclined to be. I then saw X himself. He was very much upset and said he felt he was 'disgraced.' I reassured him and told him I quite recognized the good work he had done, particularly at first, and I hoped to see him out again before the end of the war.

. . . Two Spanish Officers have arrived here, the King of Spain having asked that they might be allowed to come.

Midleton¹ and Edmund Talbot² arrived to-day.

Hunter³ with six other officers has come out to 'look on.' I had some rather warm words over a 'message' he brought me from K. However, I gave him a piece of my mind!

Thursday, December 31st, 1914.

I hear that the Lys has risen violently and overflowed its banks, resulting in considerable inundation of the country.

Bridges came in to-day and told me the result of his interview with the King (Belgian). He thinks it possible H.M. may agree to my suggestions. . . .

They have now 50,000 rifles. 10,000 will be required to hold the inundated line. This will leave 40,000 which, intermingled with our troops, will pull the weight of 20,000 in the trenches.

If the King will consent to this, I shall ask Joffre to remove the 9th and 20th French Corps—one to Arras and the other to relieve the 1st Corps N. of La Bassée.

With this Belgian help I can then take over the whole line to the sea if Joffre will further consent to let the French Territorials remain and allow de Mitry⁴ to work with me.

. . . Spears⁵ tells me the Bavarians at Arras (1st Corps) in front of de Maud'huy are much inclined to fraternise with the French. We know they have shown very similar tendencies here.

¹ The Rt. Hon. Viscount Midleton.

² The Rt. Hon. Lord Edmund Talbot (afterwards Viscount FitzAlan).

³ General Sir Archibald Hunter.

⁴ French Cavalry Commander.

⁵ Captain (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) E. L. Spears, 11th Hussars, Liaison Officer with X French Army.

CHAPTER VI
GREAT WAR

FOREIGN SERVICE (1915)

[FROM LORD KITCHENER, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR,
JANUARY 1ST, 1915.]

SIR JOHN FRENCH,

My sincere wishes for the welfare and success in the New Year of you and the army in the field.

KITCHENER.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Friday, January 1st, 1915.

We had a very nice message from the King and Queen thanking us for New Year messages. At noon I inspected the 2nd Battn. of the Royal Irish and as their Col-in-Chief wished them a successful and happy New Year.

Saturday, January 2nd, 1915.

In the morning I had a long talk with Bridges, Murray, and Henry Wilson. The King of the Belgians is unable to fall in with my ideas but has promised to co-operate to the utmost of his power. I have therefore determined to urge that a lot more Territorials and some of the New Army be sent out at once. . . .

I have written a very important memo on the organisation of the reinforcements now being prepared in the country, and have condemned the idea of employing them in higher units than brigades. Murray will take this to show to K. (with his own explanation) on Tuesday.

I am also sending a copy to the P.M. . . .

This afternoon I had a long talk with Edmund Talbot and Middleton. I read the memo to them and I trust they will prove of some help.

Wednesday, January 6th, 1915.

When at Amiens late last night I got news of a great victory by the Russians over the Turks in the Caucasus on 22nd and 23rd December. A whole Army Corps (complete) surrendered and another was nearly annihilated.

The news came in a wire, addressed here to me by the Grand Duke Nicholas, to which I replied with our congratulations.

Thursday, January 7th, 1915.

Rumours came from the 3rd and 4th Corps that the Saxons opposite to them are still shewing marked signs of fraternisation. They called across the trenches to tell us that they are being relieved by 'Prussians on Monday' and telling our men to keep their fire for them: that the Saxons were our friends. . . . I got a letter from Kitchener to-day in which he takes exception to my having sent a draft of my memorandum direct to the P.M.

I have replied.

[FROM GENERAL DE MITRY, COMMANDING 2ND CAVALRY CORPS, FRENCH ARMY IN THE FIELD.]

2nd CAVALRY CORPS,
G.O.C.

Jan. 7th, 1915.

FIELD MARSHAL,

I beg to offer you my most sincere and respectful thanks for the charming souvenir which you have been good enough to send me to-day by Colonel Seely.

I was really touched by the kind thought, and by the proof of your regard for me.

I was particularly glad to be able to assist the noble British Army with my Cavalry Corps on various occasions, and I sincerely hope we shall have the opportunity to fight side by side on future occasions.

I beg you to accept my wholehearted devotion.

N. DE MITRY.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Friday, January 8th, 1915.

Admiral Bacon¹ arrived to-day. He told me of a certain

¹ Rear-Admiral (afterwards Admiral Sir Reginald) Bacon, commanded Howitzer Brigade with B.E.F., 1915.

work he is engaged on for breaking down the enemy's trenches. I sent him round to look at the character of the ground with Brinsley Fitzgerald.

He dined with us in the evening and I had a very interesting talk with him after dinner. He spoke of the 15-inch gun he is making and when he hoped it would be ready. We discussed the subject of long-range howitzers and their use and limit.

Sunday, January 10th, 1915.

Also that they (Foreign Office) hear great pressure is being brought to bear on Germany by financial and shipping interests to make peace, and therefore it is expected that desperate attempts will be made against the Allied positions here, so as to gain possession of the Channel ports.

[FROM GENERAL DE MAUD'HUY COMMANDING X FRENCH
ARMY.]
X ARMY.

Jan. 11th, 1915.

FIELD MARSHAL,

I was delighted to receive Colonel Seely with your charming message, and was deeply touched that you should have shown by your gift, once again the comradeship of arms, which unites more closely every day the officers and men of the noble British and French armies.

The great honour which you have done me will always be associated with the magnificent gift, which will become an heirloom.

I beg you to realise the importance which I attach to this gift, with my grateful thanks and respect.

DE MAUD'HUY.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Monday, January 11th, 1915.

The President of the Republic with the P.M. (French) and Gen. Foch visited my headquarters and conferred French decorations on Haig and S.D.

I had a long conference with Army Commanders, told them of my projected visit to London, of my future proposed plans, and of my ideas as regards forming regiments of three battalions. They fully concurred and have addressed letters to me to that effect which I shall read to the War Council. . . . Foch tells me the French are sending ammunition to Roumania.

Thursday, January 14th, 1915 (London).

I lunched with Winston Churchill and then went on to K. with whom I remained till 4.30.

He doesn't much like my proposed new infantry organisation but has refrained from putting his veto upon it.

Sunday, January 17th, 1915.

He (Joffre) doesn't like the proposed move along the coast. He fears it will extend our line too much for our strength. He says his line is too 'thin' in parts and that a serious 'break' anywhere (say at Roye) would entail bad consequences.

He would much prefer that I should relieve as many of his troops as possible and enable him to form 'Reserves' which he could use either for *offence* or *defence* according to circumstances. . . . I have arranged to see him again on Thursday at 10.30 at his Hd. Qrs. Chantilly.

Tuesday, January 19th, 1915.

On going closely into the subject I find that the reorganisation into regiments of 3 battalions *throughout the whole force* will cause too much dislocation to be carried out at once. I have therefore decided to apply the 6 battalions per brigade system throughout, but only to form 'regiments' when it appears convenient. . . .

I had a discussion with Murray, Wilson, Robertson and Huguet on the questions raised in the conference with Joffre on the 17th. There was a considerable divergence of opinion as to the possibility of any very effective and vigorous offensive by the French with their present strength. Wilson and Robertson thought under certain circumstances it might succeed. Murray and I did not share this opinion.

As a result of the discussion I therefore decided to agree with Joffre to take over the line held by the 9th and 20th French corps during the first week in March, provided Joffre on his side would agree to take over that part of our line which we now occupy with the 1st Corps between La Bassée and Richebourg St. Vaast.

My line will then extend from the latter place (on the South) to the right of the French Territorials (on the North)—a distance of 63,360 yards. This if occupied by 5 Corps (1st—4th—3rd—2nd and 5th) will give $2\frac{1}{2}$ men to the yard—quite a sufficient number. . . . I have heard from Sir

F. Bertie again about the French objection to our hunting and shooting. I saw Huguet about it who said it ought to be stopped. I have therefore sent for Allenby to get rid of the hounds with the cavalry and have told A.G. to issue an order forbidding hunting and shooting.

I have had an important and interesting talk with Atkins¹ about these foot complaints and diseases. He tells me that with proper care a lot of it might have been prevented, and Cavan's² brigade shows that he is right. It is necessary to observe certain simple rules. In this respect there has been culpable negligence either in the Medical or A.G.'s Depts. and I am having an immediate investigation into the subject.

A successful aircraft raid was made this morning on the German Air Depôt at G——. Four of our aeroplanes started in the dark and arrived there just before dawn. They flew very low and succeeded in dropping 32 bombs (as they think and believe) on the roof of the sheds. Capt. Roche fell with his machine and was killed.

Thursday, January 21st, 1915.

I went direct to the Embassy (Paris) where I had an hour's talk with Sir F. Bertie.

He told me (quite secretly) that he had received a visit from Mrs. K—— who said she had heard things were not going on well at the front and that a 'change' was likely to be made.

This is probably a kind of 'aftermath' of the rumours which have been set about England lately!

He told me that the French War Minister had gone to London to ask our Government to send out more troops to this country.

He said he thought Roumania would very soon come in and then Italy would probably follow suit.

Friday, January 22nd, 1915.

I had a telephone conversation with Winston Churchill this evening. He wanted to know how the matter of the joint operation stood. I told him it could not be commenced before March 1st. It appears he was giving some orders of importance to the Fleet.

¹ Col. (afterwards Sir John) Atkins, Medical Officer on Sir John French's Personal Staff.

² Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Field-Marshal) the Earl of Cavan, G.O.C., 4th Guards Brigade.

Saturday, January 23rd, 1915.

Hugnet brought me Joffre's written and signed 'agreement' and, after slightly altering one paragraph with reference to the Belgian army, I agreed and countersigned it. . . . Foch told me that the Italians had sold 800,000 rifles to the Russians and that the ammunition supply of the latter was far more satisfactory now.

Sunday, January 24th, 1915.

I had a wire from K. in the afternoon saying Millerand had been visiting England. That he had gone to Aldershot and was much impressed by the men of the New Army. That he had urged the despatch of as many troops as were available as soon as possible. That he deprecated the 'Ostend' expedition, but wanted to have all the French troops in the north relieved for offensive operations elsewhere. . . . I have decided that it is necessary to have Du Cane¹ in here to take Lindsay's² place now that we have so large and varied a force of artillery. I have arranged with Pulteney that Du C. is to come in and take up the duty to-morrow. Pulteney is to take Milne³ as C.S.O. I have told Lindsay of this. He prefers to go home but has taken it very well and I have asked K. to give him a division for which I think he is well fitted. . . . The German Emperor's birthday is on Wednesday 27th and we rather expect some vigorous attacks to take place on that day.

Monday, January 25th, 1915.

I had another talk with Atkins about Murray.⁴ The latter has written to say he is ready to take up duty at once. I have had to write to him fully and enclose copies of the telegraphic correspondence which has passed between me and the Govt. I wrote again to him this afternoon enclosing copy of a letter I have written to K. saying why I have made the change and asking that Murray may be sent out again in another capacity.

¹ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir John) Du Cane, appointed Major-Genl. R.A. at G.H.Q. from B.G.G.S. Third Corps.

² Major-Genl. Sir Walter Lindsay, Major-Genl. R.A. at G.H.Q.

³ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal Lord) Milne.

⁴ Sir Archibald Murray had gone home sick and was succeeded as C.G.S. by Sir William Robertson.

Tuesday, January 26th, 1915.

Allenby also came in and I told him about the rumour of attack to-morrow on the Emperor's birthday. I told him to hold two of his divisions 'saddled up' and in readiness to move.

Wednesday, January 27th, 1915.

To-day is the Emperor's birthday when we were led to expect attacks on a great scale. Nothing happened.

Friday, January 29th, 1915.

The French report that since Monday the Germans on this frontier have had more than 20,000 casualties!

Sunday, January 31st, 1915.

General Prince Yusopoff of the Russian Army presented me this morning with the 3rd Class of the Order of St. George by command of the Czar. . . . Subsequently I had a long talk with Youniloff (Russian Military Attaché in London) who came with the Prince.

Youniloff told me that a vigorous Russian advance in March was an absolute certainty, that they had *unlimited* troops—both officers and trained men—all they wanted was ammunition and rifles which were being rapidly supplied.

He and the Prince confidently expected to be able to advance and overwhelm the German armies and looked forward to a cessation of hostilities in May or June.

He asked me if he could come out here sometimes and I said I should much like him to do so.

I have asked Bonar Law¹ to come here, the P.M. having told Freddie Guest² he has no objection.

Monday, February 1st, 1915.

I have a very nice letter from Lord Curzon in which he asks to come out here. . . .

I have had another talk with Wilson³ (Chief Liaison officer). He seems quite happy and contented now.

Friday, February 5th, 1915.

Our crime statistics are very encouraging. The court martial returns up to Feb. 1st show that only $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of

¹ The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law, Leader of Opposition in House of Commons.

² Capt. the Hon. Frederick Guest, A.D.C. to Sir John French.

³ Sir Henry Wilson had been disappointed at not succeeding Sir Archibald Murray as Chief of the Staff.

the whole force have been subjected to trial. One half of these cases have been drunkenness.

General Joffre called to-day and stayed to lunch. He had nothing particular to put forward. He was very cheery and full of confidence. He quite agrees with all I think about the state and condition of the German army. . . . Bonar Law and Sir G. Purley (acting H.C. for Canada) arrived this evening.

Monday, February 8th, 1915.

I went to Scherpenberg hill to-day where I met the King of the Belgians and welcomed H.M. to our lines. . . .

After lunch I went to Poperinghe which is Plumer's¹ headquarters. There I met S.D. and the two Divisional Commanders, Snow² and Bulfin.³

We discussed the cause of the retirement at the canal.⁴ Bulfin seems practically sure that we are still in possession of the critical trenches we took over from the French. He says — are not reliable and efficient under their present C.O. I have directed the latter to be replaced at once, and if necessary two or three Company Commanders as well.

I have told Plumer not to waste men in any attempts to regain what the French have lost, but to make his present position perfectly strong against attack.

I have a wire from K. to-night saying the P.M. desires my presence at home as soon as possible to attend a War Council.

Wednesday, February 10th, 1915 (London).

I lunched with K. to-day and had a long talk.

Two very important decisions were arrived at. (1) That a communique emanating from me as C.-in-C. was to be sent to the press twice a week. (2) That a certain number of press representatives were to be sent out to write accounts of the recent battles and engagements for the press.

An American writer called Palmer and Valentine Williams of the *Daily Mail* were voted as two to form part of the number.

¹ G.O.C. 5th Army Corps.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) Sir Thomas Snow, G.O.C. 4th Division.

³ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Edward) Bulfin, G.O.C. 28th Division.

⁴ Yser Canal.

Thursday, February 11th, 1915.

I was received by the King at 5.30. I found H.M. much more confident as to the outcome of the war. The King kept me with him for an hour.

Friday, February 12th, 1915.

Freddie Guest, Brinsley and I left Charing Cross by special train and embarked in *H.M.S. Adventure* at 6.30. Reached Calais at 8.15. Arrived at H'd. Qrs. 9.

Sunday, February 14th, 1915.

Two Alsatian deserters captured yesterday by the French say that the Germans intend attacking the Northern part of our line during to-day and to-morrow.

This is so far confirmed by news which comes from the 28th Division to-night. They report that during the day the Middlesex Regiment have been attacked and have lost one of their trenches. Counter attacks have so far failed to retake it, and they report that they have lost severely.

Monday, February 15th, 1915.

He (Henry Wilson) spoke of a wonderful instrument the French have invented for locating guns in unseen positions. The reports of the sound at various points distant from one another are registered on a kind of huge drum which revolves. By some mathematical calculation these registrations being plotted on a board indicate (nearly) the exact position of the gun on a map.

Thursday, February 18th, 1915.

I went to the front this morning and visited a slack-heap just outside Vermelles which is used as an observation post for both French and English guns. I got a splendid view of the trenches S. of the canal and all the ground E. and S. of La Bassée and the Triangle.

The famous slack-heaps¹ were quite visible.

Saturday, February 20th, 1915.

I inspected the Canadian Division under Alderson² to-day. They appear to be a fine lot of men, and I liked the look of

¹ The coal mines at Lens.

² Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Sir Edwin) Alderson.

the Division. They stood very well and smartly on parade. . . . Haig came in to see me on my return and gave me the bad news that Gough¹ (his C.S.O.) had been wounded. He had gone down towards the trenches to lunch with his old battalion and a stray long range bullet hit him in the side. I hope his wound is not dangerous.

Sunday, February 21st, 1915.

At 6 a.m. to-day the enemy mined and blew up a trench in French lines opposite Ypres temporarily held by our 2nd Cavalry Division.

A counter attack failed and 100 yards (half French and half Cav. Div.) were lost. New trenches are being made in gap without difficulty. The 16th Lancers lost 4 officers killed, 2 wounded and 1 missing. Other casualties about 60. . . . The Indian Corps seem much happier now. They are gradually getting up to their full strength again. They are full of spirit and hope.

In the evening Sir W. Lawrence² dined with us and afterwards I had a most interesting talk with him. He has done a great deal for the Indians.

Wednesday, February 24th, 1915.

I had a very disquieting report from Maurice Brett³ this morning about the proceedings of a certain distinguished British officer of some rank, in Paris. . . . I then went to Bailleul where I had a talk with Pulteney. Unfortunately I have again to deprive him of his Chief of Staff. It is necessary to send Milne to S.D. and I am sending Lynden-Bell⁴ to replace him. Pulteney is very good about it all, as he always is.

Thursday, February 25th, 1915.

Clive came to see me this evening. He says the Russian Military Attaché officially reported the Russian reverse to Joffre. The Grand Duke added that as he might have to withdraw some troops from the Vistula to strengthen his positions in the North, it was possible the Germans might be able to move one or two Corps to the Western front.

¹ Brig.-Genl. J. E. Gough, late Rifle Brigade, died of his wound.

² Sir Walter Lawrence, late Indian Civil Service, Member of Council of India, 1907-1909.

³ Lieut.-Col. the Hon. Maurice Brett, 2nd son of Viscount Esher, British Provost Marshal at Paris.

⁴ Colonel (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Arthur) Lynden-Bell.

Joffre replied that he was quite happy, that he was prepared for this, and that he intended taking a vigorous offensive almost at once.

I had a long discussion with Macdonogh in the evening and from various facts and indications I have drawn the conclusion that the Russians are really stronger than they make out and are trying their old game of 'bluff'!

Wednesday, March 3rd, 1915.

There was a nasty accident at Aire yesterday caused by the bursting of a trench mortar. Six men were killed and 22 wounded. . . . I then saw Stuart-Wortley.¹ He gave a very good account of the state of his Division in which he professes to have very great confidence. Since August he has got rid of 7 out of his 12 C.O.'s.

Thursday, March 4th, 1915.

General de la Croix (late C.-in-C. of the French Army) came to Hd. Qrs. to-day and gave me the French 'Medaille Militaire.'

Willcocks, Pulteney and Allenby were given the 'Grand Officier' of the Legion of Honour.

Saturday, March 6th, 1915.

The enemy put about 30 shells into Neuve Eglise hitting the hospital. One officer was killed and 2 wounded. Thirteen other ranks killed and wounded. . . . I also got a letter from Stamfordham² expressing the King's pleasure in seeing the specimen of the work which has been done by the Prince of Wales.

Sunday, March 7th, 1915.

Indications in various parts of the line seem to show that many of the troops in our front are young and untrained. After a heavy artillery bombardment by the 5th Corps yesterday, considerable 'shrieking' was heard from the enemy's advanced trenches and one German ran out and surrendered. . . . I went to the Scherpenberg and saw a shot fired at Wytshaete by the 15-inch gun. There was a tremendous explosion which seemed to compass the whole of the village!

¹ Major-Genl. the Hon. Edward Stuart-Wortley, G.O.C. North Midland Division.

² Lieut.-Col. the Rt. Hon. Lord Stamfordham, Private Secretary to the King.

Du Cane was very pleased with the working of the gun as regards accuracy, recoil, etc. It should certainly have a great *moral* effect.

Monday, March 8th, 1915.

I hear Joffre has got a spy thro' Germany who has returned after an adventurous experience with some very interesting information.

Tuesday, March 9th, 1915.

I asked the Admiralty to send some ships to bombard Westende and the coast in order to distract the enemy's attention and prevent his moving reserves South.

They are sending some ships to open fire at daybreak to-morrow.

[TO GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.]

HEADQUARTERS,
BRITISH ARMY.

March 9, 1915.

MY DEAR HAMILTON,

Thank you very much for your useful and interesting letter. I heard rumours of your going to the Dardanelles. It would be a very interesting job but I have always indulged in hopes of our being together *here* before the end of the war.

Yours very sincerely,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Wednesday, March 10th, 1915.

I left St. Omer this morning for the report station at Hazebrouck where I arrived at 10.30. There I found that what I hope will turn out to be 'The Battle of Lille'¹ had commenced. . . . The whole attack was a complete surprise judging from statements of prisoners. . . . During the day from 700 to 900 prisoners were captured.

The enemy's losses must have been enormous. It is said many of them were killed simply by the *blasting* of the shells without being wounded.

Our casualties for the day are considerable . . . but the doctors report that the proportion of slight wounds is much larger than usual.

¹ Battle of Neuve Chapelle.

Thursday, March 11th, 1915.

The advance is difficult and slow but we are making good headway and the enemy's counter attacks to-day must have cost him considerable loss.

I went to see Haig at Merville to-day. He is quite satisfied with his progress and apprehends no difficulty in fulfilling the task allotted to him. . . . I explained the whole general plan we have formulated and he quite understands the part he has to play. . . . The enemy's trenches are said to be piled up with the dead.

Friday, March 12th, 1915.

Our attack on the 10th was a great surprise. Several units of the Saxon Corps and the 6th Bavarian Reserve Division had gone back to rest when on the night of the 10th the alarm was given and they were hurried to the front of the 1st Army. . . . The feature of the day is the capture of 612 prisoners. The enemy's losses are reported to be very heavy. . . .

I got a message of congratulation from the King of the Belgians on our success.

Saturday, March 13th, 1915.

It is now ascertained that we have a total of 1,720 prisoners in our hands. Some 4,000 or 5,000 dead Germans are lying in the battlefield in our front. Their losses, including everything, cannot be far short of 17,000 or 18,000!

Our losses in killed and wounded amount, I fear, to upwards of 10,000 in the three days' fight. . . . I had a talk with S.D. this morning about the failure of the 2nd Corps to capture Hill 75 yesterday, and afterwards I went to the Scherpenberg and met Corps, Divisional, and Brigade Commanders. The fact is the attack was left until too late in the day. The enemy's wire does not appear to have been properly cut, and sufficient force was not put in at first. I pointed out these faults, but I cannot help thinking that a certain lack of *determination in command and execution* characterises all the work of the 2nd Army. . . . I had a nice message of congratulation from Joffre and wrote him a note of thanks which I sent by Cavendish.¹

Sunday, March 14th, 1915.

Have sent a strong congratulatory wire to Haig and his army on their splendid success. I have also wired to the

¹ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) F. W. L. S. H. Cavendish, 9th Lancers, attached French G.Q.G.

Viceroy of India telling him how well the Indian Corps has done. Also a wire from me was sent to Willcocks. . . . At 8 this evening a report came in from 2nd Army saying that after a very heavy bombardment the enemy had captured three of the 27th Division trenches S. of St. Eloi. A subsequent wire said that at the same time they succeeded in blowing up a mine under the 'mound' immediately S.W. of St. Eloi. The enemy was further said to be holding some houses in St. Eloi. A counter attack is being organised.

I sent at once for S.D. and told him I was much surprised and annoyed to hear of this. I said it was very difficult to understand why his own artillery had not been able to keep down the enemy's fire to a greater extent, and in view of the weakness of the enemy in front of the 2nd Army I was much surprised to find our trenches taken. He had really nothing to say.

A document found on a captured officer shows what great stress the Germans lay on the necessity for the closest co-operation between infantry and guns.

'The O.C. The Heavy Batteries' is directed 'to meet as fully as possible the wishes of the infantry in the matter of selecting their targets.'

F.O. telegrams which were brought to me at the evening conference show that the Russians lay it down as to be understood that they intend to annex Constantinople, the Southern shore of the Bosphorous, and Southern Thrace, as well as the Dardanelles and Tenedos. The British Govt. have announced that they agree in this.

The Russian Fleet will be ready to commence bombardment of Northern end of Bosphorous on March 12th. The Admirals of Russian and British Fleets are to get into touch.

Tuesday, March 16th, 1915.

I had previously sent for Wilson and Huguet. They came at 10.30. I asked them to see Foch, to suggest a meeting with Joffre and to urge the absolute necessity for arriving at some conclusion as to our common action.

The French (they say) are still desirous of adhering to the original plan, viz—a simultaneous advance from Arras and Rheims respectively against the German main Lines of Communication thro' Belgium. They had already commenced their Southern move and had made some considerable progress N. of Perthe. But they were now hung up on both lines for want of men.

This is a situation which I am quite unable to understand. We know the Germans have now less than 1,400,000 men on the Western line. Surely the French must have far more than this. In one of their official communications to me they mentioned 2,300,000 as their numbers along the whole of their front.

This is what I want to be cleared up. Until we can thoroughly understand one another and realise our mutual strength and power we cannot act effectively together.

Wilson will report to me again (after seeing Foch) to-morrow morning. . . . Austria is said to have agreed to German proposals as to making considerable territorial concessions to Italy in return for her neutrality throughout the war.

Thursday, March 18th, 1915.

It appears the Germans have begun to form companies for the purpose of throwing vitriol and poisonous matter into hostile trenches.

[FROM GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
MEDITERRANEAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.]

S.S. "FRANCONIA,"

Dictated.

LEMNOS.

19th March, 1915.

MY DEAR FRENCH,

I know you would like to hear how we are getting on out here. I had a fast passage in a small cruiser and saw the new Admiral de Robeck (Carden¹ having just gone back sick) the day before yesterday evening. Yesterday I went in this same small cruiser right up to the head of the Gulf beyond Bulair, and came down the whole coast as far as Cape Helles, the extreme point of the Gallipoli Peninsula. We were in so near to land that I could see not only the regular spiders-web of entrenchments facing each possible landing place, but the glistening of the barbed wire entanglements covering them. Towards evening we rounded Cape Helles and ran into the Straits. Before we had gone a mile we came under fire of field guns, so the idea of the place having been cleared out is rather illusory. The scene was very wonderful. Some trawlers and destroyers were racing along with the field guns knocking up the water all about them; 2 miles up the Straits were several big battleships, but I suppose I had better not go into too much detail. The firing was very heavy. All of a sudden we got orders to stand by a ship of the largest kind which had been hit by a mine and was going to try and reach its base. We followed it out and saw no more of the fight.

¹ Vice-Admiral (afterwards Admiral Sir Sackville) Carden, in command of Naval operations at Dardanelles until incapacitated by illness, March, 1915.

Please understand I am only writing for your private information when I say that my mind is hardening to the idea that this will be a case of the army helping the navy through rather than of the navy helping the army through. We shall have to land and storm the bloody trenches—that's about the long and short of it. Naturally, I would infinitely prefer to see the thing done by naval means, if this could succeed, supplemented by a few landing parties under the fire of their guns, but after yesterday I greatly doubt so easy a solution.

Good-bye for the present. I wish you all luck. Please treat this letter as strictly private, for I have not yet got any clear line as to what is absolutely secret and what is not. But there can be no harm, surely, in my writing anything or everything to my old commander and comrade.

Yours very sincerely,

IAN HAMILTON.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Sunday, March 21st, 1915.

I also heard from Winston about my journey to see K. He told me he was anxious about the Dardanelles, but that he intended going on with the attack. . . . The enemy dropped some bombs here to-day, very little damage done.

Monday, March 22nd, 1915.

I inspected the 2nd London Division of Territorials to-day, under the command of General Barter.¹ The Brigadiers were Willoughby,² Cuthbert³ and Nugent⁴. I was immensely struck with the appearance of the men, their smartness and steadiness on parade. I also saw a good deal of the artillery which appears to be in a very satisfactory condition. The 18th 'London Irish' is quite one of the smartest battalions I have ever seen. . . . We have the glorious news to-night of the fall of Prymsyl. This was communicated to me to-day by a telegram from the Grand Duke Nicholas. I have replied with warm congratulations from the army in France.

Tuesday, March 23rd, 1915.

During yesterday the 3rd Corps artillery got some direct hits against hostile howitzers to the East of Ploegsteert Wood. . . . One Russian Military Attaché and 5 Japanese have arrived, accredited by our Government, to 'look round.'

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Charles) Barter.

² Brig.-Genl. the Hon. Charles Willoughby.

³ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Major-Genl.) G. J. Cuthbert.

⁴ Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Major-Genl.) O. S. W. Nugent.

Wednesday, March 24th, 1915.

We are doing all we can to profit by the mistakes which occurred in the last attacks.

The communication between aircraft and artillery was not sometimes as good as it should have been. Shells fell in a poor line and were so reported but they failed to hit houses from which M.G. fire was being poured and this was not noted. The methods and times for re-inforcing and putting in reserves require more careful attention. Reliefs must be better arranged and there must be a far better system of co-operation between the flanks of separate units.

I am in hopes that the new rocket bombs will prove of value for cutting and breaking up wire.

Thursday, March 25th, 1915.

Joffre has sent me a letter by H.W. stating his views on the situation generally and what his future intentions are. He is anxious for my support and that I should as soon as possible relieve his 9th and 20th Corps.

I have replied that I will postpone answering his letter in full until after the conference to be held with K. and Millerand at Chantilly on (presumably) Sunday.

In my conversation with K. on board the *Attention* on Wednesday night he referred to a possible landing in *Holland* and appeared to be rather in sympathy with certain ideas of Winston Churchill which the latter communicated to me when he was here the other day. I also told K. about my misgivings in regard to the capacity of S.D. and Rawlinson.

On the night of the 23rd a naval aeroplane raid on Antwerp found three German submarines and two destroyers at Hoboken. They descended to 200 feet and successfully dropped bombs on all these craft.

Saturday, March 27th, 1915.

The 3rd Division has replaced the 27th in the St. Eloi trenches. They say they are quite comfortable and express surprise at the 'heavy weather' which the 27th made of it!

Monday, March 29th, 1915.

M. Millerand asked if there was any definite plan for forcing the Dardanelles.¹ Lord K. said the only plan was to attack

¹ This was during a conference at Chantilly.

and seize the heights on Gallipoli overlooking the Narrows. I asked if any more troops were to be sent there. K. said "no, there are 67,000 there now and that is quite enough for our purpose."

Tuesday, March 30th, 1915.

I left St. Omer at 6.30 a.m., crossed in the Calais boat and reached Folkestone about 9.45. The motor met us there and we got to London at 1. (Brinsley was with me).

I was left alone all that day.

F. E. Smith¹ came to see me at 7. He told me he had made full investigations and felt sure there was no immediate intention of looking for any other theatre of war. He said he was wanted at the W.O. for some work in the Judge Advocate General's Dept. He therefore embraced the opportunity to remain at home for a time and watch the situation from my point of view.

Wednesday, March 31st, 1915.

I went to York House to breakfast with K. this morning and had a long talk with him.

He spoke of the necessity for more trained Staff officers and asked me if we couldn't undertake this on the same lines as we were now working with young officers. I told him I would go into the matter but doubted if we could help much.

He then told me definitely that he considered Joffre and I were "on our trial". That if we showed within the next month or six weeks that we could really make some "substantial advance" and "break the German line," he would, so far as he was concerned, always back us up with all the troops he could send. But that if we failed it would be essential that the Govt. should look out for some other theatre of operations. K. added that they had no fear on our account but were inclined to doubt the French. . . . I told him I wanted to form a Third army and that I should like to have A.P.² He didn't seem to think this possible and suggested Plumer. He is all in favour of a Third army being formed. He is much weakening on Holland! We had, on the whole, the most satisfactory talk we have had yet! I was left in complete peace for the rest of the day.

¹ The Rt. Hon. F. E. Smith (afterwards Earl of Birkenhead) attached to Sir John French's Staff.

² Sir Arthur Paget.

Friday, April 2nd, 1915.

Plumer came in to see me at 10.30 this morning. He says the water supply in the Ypres area may become a subject for anxious consideration. He agrees that — would not do to bring out a Territorial Division but recommended the retention of Baldock.¹ I have informed K. accordingly. . . . H.W. told me of Foch's ideas as regards possible German designs on Holland. He doesn't believe in them, but thinks it just possible they might be actuated by an idea of *annexing Holland instead of Belgium*.

Thus in proposing peace Germany might be willing to make good Belgium, cede Alsace and Lorraine, and placate Russia as she may desire, stipulating to keep Holland and the *total length of the Rhine*.

If we agreed to this Germany would be established at Rotterdam and be able to threaten us from there as she does now from Ems, etc.

Saturday, April 3rd, 1915.

We are going to try some experiments with flying kites carrying explosives. They have been tried at home with satisfactory results.

Sunday (Easter Day), April 4th, 1915.

The enemy are employing some of the Russian prisoners on this front. A Russian soldier escaped, who had been captured at C —, and came into our lines yesterday. . . . Esher came in to see me this evening. . . . I was, as usual, delighted to get a sight of him.

I attended service this evening and heard the Bishop of London preach a splendid sermon to a large gathering of our men.

Monday, April 5th, 1915.

It seems likely that we may once again traverse the Field of Waterloo! . . . After the interview with Foch I approved the instructions for the coming operations and these have been sent to Haig.

In a letter from K. I learn that the French have agreed to send us 26,000 rounds of ammunition for the Portuguese guns by the 20th of this month and the remainder (26,000) will be handed over at the end of the month.

¹ Major-Genl. T. S. Baldock, G.O.C. West Riding Territorial Division.

Tuesday, April 6th, 1915.

I have arranged with Robertson to detach the 3rd Corps from the 2nd Army. It is to come under G.H.Q. "For tactical purposes."

Wednesday, April 7th, 1915.

I have a letter and a wire from Winston Churchill as to one of our 15" guns which has lately arrived. He asks that the last one (which is now at St. Omer) should be sent at once (via Marseilles) to the Dardanelles. It is wanted in case the Naval attack should fail. Winston wants Bacon to go with it.

I have wired acquiescence but 'regret' that it is found necessary to remove the gun from this theatre. W.C. has promised to send one to replace it next week.

[FROM KING ALBERT OF BELGIUM.]

TELEGRAM.

LAPANNE. 8.4.15.

FIELD MARSHAL FRENCH. COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ENGLISH ARMY. ST. OMER. PAS DE CALAIS.

I thank you sincerely for the good wishes you sent me. I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my heartfelt regard to the Commander-in-Chief of the valiant English Army and my admiration for the courage of his soldiers.

ALBERT.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Thursday, April 8th, 1915.

I had a letter from Winston C. to-day explaining why he was obliged to remove a 15" gun to the East. He says it is a necessary precaution they must take to provide against failure by the ships to break past the forts. He says Bacon is required for a Naval Command and will not now be sent to the Dardanelles.

I had a talk with Lee to-day. He tells me that many wild rumours are flying about England of the battle of Neuve Chapelle. There is a tendency to represent it as a *defeat* rather than a victory. A rumour seems to have got about that most of the casualties we incurred were due to *our own* shell fire! I am trying to find out whence these rumours emanate.

It is very difficult to form any opinion as to the state of feeling in England just now. It is in a very curious state.



WITH THE LATE KING ALBERT OF BELGIUM AFTER PRESENTING THE BRITISH MILITARY CROSS
TO THE CITY OF YPRES

railway. Several fires were observed in trenches between Bixschoote and Langemarck giving out thick yellow smoke. Enemy reported to be using asphyxiating gases.

The Canadian Division reported at 7.40 p.m. that the French had been seriously driven back, apparently about one mile and their own left forced to retire.

French orders had been issued to regain all ground lost.

Friday, April 23rd, 1915.

It appears from S.D.'s reports that the Canadians never left their trenches till this morning although subjected throughout the night to a heavy enfilade fire from Germans in the abandoned French trenches.

Very unwillingly they were then ordered to throw back their left. During the night 22/23 a Canadian supporting brigade was moved to the left and executed a fine counter attack towards the N.W., driving back the Germans.

Four Canadian 4.7 guns had been posted in rear of the French right and were lost (with 30 other French guns) in the precipitate retreat of the French infantry. These guns (4 Canadian) were brilliantly re-captured by the Canadians in this attack. They then got touch with some French Zouave battalions on their left and these latter continued the line West to the canal.

The remainder of the French troops had fallen back West of the canal but were so much affected by the gas fumes that they were unable to offer any effective resistance.

Saturday, April 24th, 1915.

The Canadians have been slightly driven back from their forward positions to-night, and orders have been sent to S.D. to be careful that troops holding the Ypres salient to the East are not cut off.

Sunday, April 25th, 1915.

During the afternoon heavy attacks were made on 28th Division trenches at Broodseynde cross roads in which gases were again employed. Attacks repulsed with heavy loss. One German officer and 30 men captured. . . . I saw S.D. this afternoon and gave him full instructions. He is to understand it is the rôle of the French *entirely* to take back the lost trenches. Our rôle is to support and assist them in doing so, whilst we also insure the recovery of *our own line*.

Monday, April 26th, 1915.

In the night Germans attacked the Belgians using gases. But the Belgians had handkerchiefs damped with water over their faces and suffered no ill effects. The attacks were repulsed. . . .

At 12.45 Gen. Joffre accompanied by Gen. Foch paid me a visit.

First of all Joffre thanked me for the support we had rendered to the French troops in their recent trouble.

He went on to say that he thought the Arras-La-Bassée attack must now be delayed—but as little as possible. . . . I told him I was ready to join in the attack at any time after the Ypres situation was restored. . . . In reply to me Gen. Foch said he considered it absolutely necessary to regain our old line of trenches if we were to retain the Ypres salient. I agreed. . . .

Lt. Moorhouse (R.F.C.) descending very near the ground dropped several bombs on Courtrai Junction doing considerable damage. He was heavily fired on and one bullet hit him in the stomach. Although in great pain he steered his machine back some 35 miles and brought it back safely.

I am recommending him for a reward.

Lt. Cruickshank dropped nine 20 lb. bombs on Roubaix Station at 6 p.m. He completely wrecked the place.

Tuesday, April 27th, 1915.

Since the present battle commenced up to yesterday our losses have amounted to over 300 officers and 12,000 men killed, wounded, and missing. . . . Brig.-Gen. Riddell, comdg. — Brigade, has been killed to-day.

Thursday, April 29th, 1915.

I went to see Foch again this morning and once more pressed upon him the absolute necessity of an immediate and successful forward movement. I agreed, however, to postpone retiring our 'forward' line till I saw the result of his attack which is timed to begin at daybreak to-morrow. . . . I have reports from Plumer of the splendid conduct of the 84th and 85th Brigades in support of the Canadians on the 23rd and I have sent a "Special Order of the Day" to Plumer's Force congratulating all ranks on their fine conduct throughout these operations. . . . I fear the Canadian 4.7 guns (4)

have really got into the hands of the Germans. The Canadians retook them but were obliged to leave them when they subsequently retired.

[TELEGRAM DATED 30.4.15 FROM G.H.Q. (ADVANCED) TO G.O.C. PLUMER'S FORCE.]

Please issue following as a special order of the day to your force. (begins). Lt.-General Sir H. Plumer, K.C.B., I desire to convey to you and the troops under you who have so splendidly repulsed the attacks of the enemy my warmest appreciation of the skill evinced by commanders of all ranks and the magnificent courage and endurance displayed by Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men. I wish to make particular mention of the 84th and 85th Brigades of the 28th Division, who with the Canadian Division so bravely withstood the German onslaught on the night of 22nd-23rd. As regards the Canadians, their Prime Minister wires to me to say with what pride Canada has heard of the gallantry of her sons, and how every recruiting office in the Dominion tells of the instant response to the resolution to support their comrades in the field and strengthen still further the bonds of the Empire with more and yet more men. (Ends.)

(sd.) J. D. FRENCH,
Field Marshal.

[This was the 'Special Order of the Day,' referred to in Sir John French's diary of April 29th and issued during the 2nd Battle of Ypres. The troops operating in the Ypres salient were temporarily detached from the 2nd Army and placed under the command of Sir Herbert Plumer.]

Friday, April 30th, 1915.

I went to see Douglas Haig this morning. He knows that ground East of Ypres so well that I wanted to get his opinion as to the strength and value of the new line which we propose to take up thro' Hooge. He is all in favour of falling back there and then shortening our line and concentrating our forces.

He tells me they have observed the nozzles of gas pipes obtruding thro' the enemy's parapets opposite the 1st Army and small weather cocks have also been seen. Some of these have been shot away by our men.

Saturday, May 1st, 1915.

I have now definitely decided upon a withdrawal and asked Plumer what line he proposed to take up. He is preparing a very good line on what is known as the Frezenberg ridge.

I have told him to take up this line. . . . I have a report from Prince A. of Teck¹ forwarding one from Col. Tyrrell informing me that Dunkirk is in great trouble owing to large shells having been thrown into the town causing considerable loss of life and damage to property. . . . We are taking steps to locate this wonderful piece of ordnance and turn our 9.2 howitzers on to silence it.

Sunday, May 2nd, 1915.

'Plumer's Force' sends in a report timed at 8 p.m. that a violent attack was made at 6 on the 10th and 12th Brigades and also on the French right brigade. The Germans used gas fumes and asphyxiating shells. Large numbers of our men are said to have become asphyxiated, but the enemy would not himself advance owing to the dense gas fumes.

Tuesday, May 4th, 1915.

The Italian delegate who has come to Paris to sign the 'convention' with Italy came here to-day with Italian M.A. in Paris.

Italy mobilises on the 15th and 'comes in' on the 26th.

He tells me that they are organised in five Armies each of three or four Corps, and that they number 1,000,000 effectives. . . . I gave him my ideas as to the powerful 'factors' which have proved to be the most instrumental and useful in the conduct of the war.

Wednesday, May 5th, 1915.

4th Division reports that masks soaked in bicarbonate of soda were found to be of some protection when attacked by gases this morning.

Saturday, May 8th, 1915.

It turned out to be a heavy bombardment by the Germans all along the front of the 5th Corps. Later in the day a heavy infantry attack developed which culminated in the afternoon in a violent concentrated assault on the Frezenberg part of the line due East of Ypres. Here the enemy penetrated some points in the line.

Counter attacks have been organised to regain the lost trenches. The fighting is going on into the night. . . .

¹ Brig.-Genl. Prince Alexander of Teck (afterwards Earl of Athlone).

I went up the tower of the church at Estaires. There was a fine view of all the country over which we are fighting to-morrow. . . . Bombs were dropped at the headquarters of the Army and Corps (German) Commanders near Lille. The railway and road bridges at — were also successfully bombed. Lt. Glanville R.F.C. was wounded in carrying out this work on *the way out*, but *went on* and got back to our lines. . . . The 1st Army battle¹ commenced with a heavy artillery bombardment at 5 a.m.

The infantry attacks proceeded as arranged at 5.40 a.m. The 8th Division crossed front line of German trenches.

The 1st and Indian Corps assaults were held up owing to hostile m.g. fire.

Monday, May 10th, 1915.

The A.G. tells me this morning that the losses of the 1st Army yesterday and to-day are estimated at nearly 11,000. Possibly this is over the mark. . . . The French have made further progress to-day and have captured some more guns and prisoners.

Tuesday, May 11th, 1915.

Plumer reports this morning that enemy attacked yesterday S. of Menin Road under cover of gas which had little effect. Masks were used and found effective. Enemy infantry attacked in loose undisciplined mass and were mown down by shrapnel and attack was repulsed. In the evening he reported that the enemy had twice repeated their attacks but had been repulsed with heavy loss. . . . David Henderson has told me he will have to take special steps to recruit his aircraft personnel. He has lost no less than 12 (pilots or observers) killed in the last fortnight. . . . I saw plans of the ground which has been won by the French in the last few days. It is very strongly fortified and intrenched, numerous works and redoubts being included in the various trench lines. The French high explosive fire had however been so *intense* and so *accurate* and *continual* that they were rendered practically harmless before the infantry attacks were launched. . . . Gen. Joffre came to see me at 4 to-day. I discussed with him all I had spoken to Foch about.

I suggested also the possibility of my sending troops South

¹ Battle of Festubert.

to support the French if and when they succeeded in really breaking thro' the German line.

Wednesday, May 12th, 1915.

I am sending Brinsley FitzGerald and Freddy Guest home to-morrow to convey personally my ideas on the general situation, my views and intentions. Brinsley goes to K. and Freddy to the P.M. I gave them a precis of what I wished them to communicate. . . . I have written a pressing letter to the W.O. on the subject of drafts for Territorial battalions. Some of them are getting very weak indeed. The glorious patriotic spirit they evince is beyond all praise. . . . I had a visit at 1 p.m. from one of Gen. Joffre's Staff officers who offered to lend me a group of '75's' to assist in our coming attack. I gratefully accepted.

[FROM GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.]

Dictated.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
MEDTN. EXPED. FORCE.
13th May, 1915.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

In attempting to give you some notion of this bloody struggle in which we have been involved day and night for the past 20 days, it is difficult to know where to begin. I mean to say the work and the anxiety have been so continuous that I find it difficult to sort out things in my mind even to tell you, and as to writing a despatch, God knows how I shall do it, for I have not even yet made a note upon the subject except such as are recorded by my cables to Lord Kitchener.

Well, I must say the landing was a magnificent success.

First of all, in the quality of the staff work put into it by Braithwaite;¹ his assistants and a scratch pack of Naval Transport Officers whom we educated.

Secondly, in the astonishing valour of the troops.

What has come over our fellows I really don't know. Had our men fought like this in South Africa the war would not have lasted a month. When you think of steam pinnaces bringing strings of boats ashore, of which the leading two or three were filled with corpses. When you think of men seeing the Turks running down into their trenches to fire at them, and not speaking a word or making a sign until they get a chance to jump out into the water to their middles (or sometimes overhead, when they were drowned), and then, as each small boat load got footing on terra firma, fixing

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Walter) Braithwaite, Chief of Staff, Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

bayonets, however few their number, and going head down for the enemy, however great their number! Really it was fine and, as for the old Turks themselves, I must say they too fought with the greatest courage.

Had it not been for these inventions of the devil, machine guns and barbed wire entanglements, we would have swept everything before us inland in our first rush, and gained a commanding position and some elbow room. As it was our effort, made with tired and decimated troops, was either hung up altogether, as on our left; or, progressed but a thousand yards or so in other directions. Here many more brave fellows bit the dust.

That night (I speak only from memory, but I think it was that night) the enemy made a most determined attack upon us. We found their orders on the bodies of dead officers: for the sake of the Fatherland they were to die in the ranks or drive us into the sea. They came on in three lines; the front line had all their ammunition taken away and trusted entirely to the bayonet. The second and third lines were meant, practically, to drive the first line on. The officers were given star lights to fire out of their pistols; two white lights to show that the first line had been captured, two green lights to show that the second line had been taken, and two red lights to show that the heart of the position had been carried, and that we, I suppose, were in the sea.

The first rank came along crawling hands and knees. One of our battalions commanded by the only officer left, the Quartermaster, gave way, and stampeded right down to the beach. The Territorial battalion on their left flank charged in with the bayonet and partly restored the situation, and a good old English regiment in reserve eventually came up into line and restored the position. An immense lot of Turks were killed, and all next day they were burying them under their hospital flags. All these regiments of Turks, however, have now been relieved by fresh troops from Constantinople and Adrianople, whereas my poor 29th Division did not even bring its 10 per cent margin, and when it is going to be made up God alone knows.

The Australians are rather like the French—tremendous dash at first; strong re-action afterwards. There never were finer men in the world but, of course, what they want is discipline. They have been fighting day and night in their part of the peninsula. Three days ago they carried the top peak of SARIBAIR, but were driven out of it by a tremendous Turkish attack. The Turks followed them up to their old original line, and, in doing so, came under our artillery fire commencing at 1,200 yards and continuing to 800. The dead bodies of the Turks made quite an appreciable obstacle.

Last night we had a pretty little success. In each of the fights we have had, the enemy's extreme right has proved impregnable.

It is on the cliff by the sea, and consists of a big redoubt combined with trenches and entanglements. From thence machine guns sweep south-eastwards and hold up the rest of the line. Last night our left centre, the Manchester Territorial Brigade, made a demonstration against the enemy. Under cover of this the Ghurkas on the extreme left slid down the cliffs, and worked their way along their base by the sea shore for 600 yards, when they came up behind these works and managed to dig themselves in. They have got their machine guns up and the latest news I have is that they think they can maintain themselves.

Ammunition is terribly short, and for some time now I have been reduced to firing 10 rounds per gun as a maximum, whatever happens.

It is a cruel thought that these uncivilised Turks have ample ammunition, whereas we have to fight for a month with only a total allowance of, taking it all round, 500 rounds per gun.

Good-bye for the present. Whenever we have a moment to spare from our own efforts and the enemy's, we turn to think of you and your brave troops. May good fortune be with you. Every man in this force, I know, echoes that sentiment.

Yours very sincerely,
IAN HAMILTON.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Thursday, May 13th, 1915.

I had intended riding round the gun positions of the 1st Army this morning and on my way to join the horses I called at Haig's headquarters. He gave me a map with the positions of his guns marked on it. I spoke to him about the coming operations and impressed on him the necessity for deliberation and the possibility of failure, in which case to be ready in his own mind as to what course of action to adopt . . . and not to make any drastic change in his plans without reference to me.

Whilst I was with him a telephone message came from Robertson saying things were not going very well at Ypres, and asking if he might send the 2nd Cavalry Division North to support the 5th Corps and the rest of the cavalry. Accordingly I abandoned my ride round Haig's positions and came back to H'd. Qrs. after arranging with Haig to send one 15-in. and one 9.2 to Plumer at once. Some 6-in. guns were also sent from the 3rd Corps. . . . In view of the French successes I thought we ought to try and meet Foch's wishes and liberate the French 58th Division from their trenches

immediately S. of our line. . . . I told Plumer I hoped to gradually increase his strength so as to enable him to take a vigorous offensive towards the East after Haig's offensive operations had reached the desired point. I asked him to consider his points of attack, etc.

Saturday, May 15th, 1915.

The A.G. reports that our casualty list up to date from Ap. 23rd amounts to over 51,000 officers and men. . . . I had private letters from Kitchener and Brade¹ to-day saying there was trouble about Repington's presence at my headquarters. I have replied.

Sunday, May 16th, 1915.

The 1st Army has had a hard but successful day's fighting. The attack commenced at midnight S. of Richebourg L'Avoué where we crossed two successive lines of German breastworks on a front of 800 yards. This was carried out by 2nd Division. A mile further South another attack at dawn carried 1200 yards of German front line trenches and pushed rapidly on extending the success 600 yards further South by bombing along the German trenches. Here we have crossed the Festubert-Quinque road and advanced nearly a mile into the German lines. . . . The number of prisoners taken is not certain but probably between 200 and 300. The artillery did very good work throughout the day and silenced many of the enemy's batteries. 30 or 40 motor buses moving from La Bassée to Violaines were stopped by our shell fire. . . . I went to the top of Estaires church at 4 this morning to witness the opening of our attack but it was too misty to see any more than the artillery bombardment. . . . David Henderson reports that since 23rd April our aircraft have had 33 air fights with the enemy's machines. All have resulted in either driving him off or destroying him.

Monday, May 17th, 1915.

Haig's operations to-day were directed towards closing the gap between the 2nd and 7th Divisions. The bombardment of this intervening area (which is strongly held by m.g. posts, etc.) was commenced at daybreak.

The infantry attack commenced at 9.30 and made good progress. At least 500 prisoners were taken.

¹ Sir Reginald Brade, Secretary of the War Office.

700 Germans tried to surrender. . . . They were fired on by German artillery and ourselves. They have all been accounted for! . . . I have thought it right to communicate the Government's decision as regards the despatch of the 1st Army to Joffre and Foch. I therefore went to see them to-day at Foch's H'd. Qrs. I must say Joffre took it very well and my meeting with him was of a very kindly and cordial nature.

Tuesday, May 18th, 1915.

We have some reason to believe that the enemy is *poisoning* some streams which are flowing from his lines thro' ours. Unaccountable cases of sickness have been noticed by the doctors in the trenches near St. Eloi and the water on being examined has been found to contain large quantities of *arsenic*. The whole matter is being closely investigated. Brinsley FitzGerald has returned and has brought me an extraordinary message from the S. of S. which I am at a total loss to understand. He also told me of a former conversation he had with the S. of S.

I have received a very kind letter from Haldane, on subjects bearing on the above, to which I have replied. . . . It has been found that we are able to utilise captured German machine guns. . . . I went to see Foch to-day and thanked him warmly for the assistance given us by the group of '75's lent to the 1st Army.

Thursday, May 20th, 1915.

I went East of Poperinghe to-day to inspect and address the 80th, 81st and 85th Brigades of 27th and 28th Divisions.

I told them what I thought of the splendid work they had done and explained what immense value the 2nd battle of Ypres would prove to be in the progress of the campaign.

Friday, May 21st, 1915.

Clive has been in to see me and tells me that the bursting of the French guns was not due to the H.E. itself, but to the too hurried and careless manufacture of the shells. This, in its turn, is caused by the necessity for so large a supply of ammunition, making the French *risk* the bursting of their guns in order to obtain a sufficient quantity *in time*. . . . The A.G. tells me this morning that there is no proof of poison having been put by the Germans in the stream near St. Eloi.

I never really believed this. . . . I went to-day to inspect and address the 83rd, 84th Brigades of the 28th Division. I spoke to them in the same terms as to the troops I saw yesterday. They stood in pouring rain for half an hour and got wet to the skin but were as cheery as could be.

They are indeed a wonderful army!

Saturday, May 22nd, 1915.

Du Cane is applying home for 'delay' fuses to be sent out. He says that the method employed by the Germans in their system of defending houses by m.g. fire renders them immune from the destructive effects of a bursting H.E. shell, because the machine guns are put into cellars or enclosed in sand bags. If the fuse lasts some seconds after the shell has pierced the house it may destroy the cellar or enclosure. . . . I had a very nice and friendly wire from Gen. Smuts to-day in answer to my message to him. . . . Esher arrived to-day. He was asked by K. to come over and see me.

[PRECIS OF ADDRESSES DELIVERED BY SIR JOHN FRENCH,
TO BRIGADES OF THE 27TH AND 28TH DIVISIONS ON THE 21ST
AND 22ND MAY, 1915.]

"I came over to say a few words to you and to tell you how much I, as Commander-in-Chief of this army, appreciate the splendid work that you have all done during the recent fighting. You have fought the second Battle of Ypres, which will rank among the most desperate and hardest fights of the war. You may have thought because you were not attacking the enemy that you were not helping to shorten the war. On the contrary, by your splendid endurance and bravery, you have done a great deal to shorten it. In this, the second Battle of Ypres, the Germans tried by every means in their power to get possession of that unfortunate town. They concentrated large forces of troops and artillery, and further than that they had recourse to that mean and dastardly practice hitherto unheard of in civilised warfare, namely the use of asphyxiating gases. You have performed the most difficult, arduous and terrific task of withstanding a stupendous bombardment by heavy artillery, probably the fiercest artillery fire ever directed against troops, and warded off the enemy's attacks with magnificent bravery. By your steadiness and devotion, both the German plans were frustrated. He was unable to get possession of Ypres—if he had

done this he would probably have succeeded in preventing neutral powers from intervening—and he was also unable to distract us from delivering our attack in conjunction with the French in the Arras-Armentieres district. Had you failed to repulse his attacks, and made it necessary for more troops to be sent to your assistance, our operations in the South might not have been able to take place and would certainly not have been as successful as they have been. Your colours have many famous names emblazoned on them, but none will be more famous or more well-deserved than that of the Second Battle of Ypres. I want you one and all to understand how thoroughly I realise and appreciate what you have done. I wish to thank you, each officer, non-commissioned officer and man for the services you have rendered by doing your duty so magnificently, and I am sure that your Country will thank you too."

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Sunday, May 23rd, 1915.

The A.G. is well satisfied with the discipline of the army generally and this is borne out by all one observes at the front and elsewhere. Their bearing and spirit are splendid.

Tuesday, May 25th, 1915.

The final report received from 2nd Army to-night shows that the enemy's very violent gas attack has resulted in a — retirement (for some 800 to 900 yards) of the centre of our line to the East of Ypres. This is, of course, unfortunate but on the whole it may be said that the situation might have been much worse. All the troops occupying the trenches which were thus affected had recently received large drafts composed of men who had never been in action before. It is also to be feared that Regimental and Company Commanders have been very slack in insisting on the proper use of the precautions provided against gas. In fact the whole incident is largely due to this. The result is that these young soldiers have become to a certain extent demoralised—nor is this to be wondered at. This effort of the enemy to effect complete destruction of the man in the front line was the greatest he has ever made. . . . The retirement of the left of the 4th Division is inexplicable. The Commander (Wilson)¹

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Henry) Wilson.

may be able to give some reason for it, but it is difficult to understand how he can justify it. . . . I am sending fresh instructions to Haig. He is to break off the offensive, and his present operations. He is to confine himself to a 'holding' attack.

Wednesday, May 26th, 1915.

I directed the A.G. to send a strongly worded memo to G.O.C. 2nd Army expressing my strong disapproval of the slackness displayed by regimental officers in not seeing that their men were properly instructed and trained to take advantage of the precautions provided for them against these German gas attacks. It appears that such negligence was the direct cause of the demoralisation which was reported yesterday to be shown by the troops operating in the Ypres area.

Thursday, May 27th, 1915.

The losses caused by the Ypres gas attack seem to be very great. . . . The whole affair is wrapt in mystery and I am waiting for some elucidation or explanation. . . . He (Joffre) has promised to hand over to us all the machine guns captured from the Germans. We are able to fit our own tubes to them and make them of use. . . . The 2nd Army has never been properly handled. . . . There is evidence of restlessness and want of confidence amongst them. I feel sure, however, that if Plumer is properly backed up he will put this all right.

Friday, May 28th, 1915.

I had a talk with David Henderson this morning on the subject of gas attacks by aeroplanes. He is taking up the subject seriously. His great want is more *pilots*.

My view is that a great 'aeroplane gas attack' might secure great results. The air squadron of attack should be divided into two parts—(i) to drop the gas bombs—(ii) to protect the droppers, and attack any hostile attempts of the same kind. I hope we shall arrive at some definite result.

Saturday, May 29th, 1915.

We hear this evening that 600 Germans went back to Roulers on the 25th poisoned with their own gas!

Sunday, May 30th, 1915.

I saw Atkins and the A.G. this morning on the burning subject of gas. I have arranged that Atkins shall act as a 'reporter' personally to me upon all that is going on in this

country in the work done by expert committees, etc. Atkins will attend these committees as my representative. . . . Foch came to see me this afternoon. He told me that he expected to launch his main attack on June 3rd and asked for my co-operation. I told him it would be impossible for me to embark on any serious offensive operation for at least ten days owing to shortage of ammunition. I suggested that he should postpone his main attack for a few days. He said he would refer the matter to the C.-in-C. . . .

Du Cane tells me that 100 gas shells are now on their way to us and that the immediate ammunition prospects are much better.

I had a visit to-night from Mr. Ben Tillett.¹

Monday, May 31st, 1915.

The P.M. arrived very late and has been at the front all day. He inspected and addressed the 15th Brigade.

Monday, June 7th, 1915.

I have arranged with the C.G.S. to send to the W.O.—for the information of H.M. Govt.—a detailed statement setting forth the demands we have made from time to time for H.E. ammunition and our views as to the necessity for it. The P.M. suggested this when he was here. The letter and statement are being drawn up by the C.G.S. in consultation with Du Cane. . . . Spears came to see me this evening and reported the progress made by the French. They seem to be getting on well, but they have still a huge task in front of them to capture and hold the heights of *Vimy*.

Wednesday, June 9th, 1915.

I had a talk with A.G. this morning about his enquiries with regard to the number of 'missing.'

The general impression left on my mind is that (i) the influence which the higher command of an army should bring to bear on all ranks has for some time been wanting in the 2nd Army. . . . (ii) the missing appear chiefly in particular (regular) regiments and also in Territorial units.

The *Command* of irregular troops is very important.

Thursday, June 10th, 1915.

I received the members of the Italian Mission to-day. . . . Sir G. Makins (the great surgeon) who has been doing excel-

¹ Afterwards M.P. (Lab.) N. Salford. Lectured extensively on the War, emphasising the need for an ample supply of munitions.

lent work with us throughout the campaign called upon me to-day. Fowke¹ told me he thought the digging and intrenching in the 2nd Army had greatly improved.

Saturday, June 12th, 1915.

There is a difficulty about the Ross rifles. Canada can't supply enough ammunition and our own cartridges jam. I am arranging as a temporary measure to withdraw the Ross rifles and substitute our own. . . . Information has been received from Foch to-day that the French attack will take place on the 15th as arranged. Haig has therefore been instructed to commence his artillery bombardment to-morrow. Haig's infantry attack will open on the 15th and Plumer's on the same day.

Wednesday, June 16th. (Quatre Bras !)

Late last night Haig reported that the infantry attack of the 4th Corps had started at 6 p.m. after intense artillery bombardment. By 11 p.m. the 7th Division and Canadians had captured all the enemy's first trenches and part of the second line. The 51st Highland Division on the left had made a splendid advance capturing several trenches. . . . Haig describes the artillery preparation for this attack as the best and most effective he has ever known and gives great credit to General Mercer² and Col. Birch.³ . . .

News, however, came from 1st Army Hd. Qrs. at 7 this morning that all the troops had been bombed and shelled out of the captured trenches and were back at the original line. Thus no progress has been made.

. . . The Grenadier Guards held on to the last till both their flanks were uncovered and in the air.

. . . In any case the attack must prove to be of help to the great French attack, to support which was the chief object for which it was undertaken.

Haig came in and reported at noon to-day and I discussed the situation with him and Robertson.

In view of the great effort being made by the French and the enormously important results which would accrue from a successful offensive East of Arras, I thought it absolutely necessary to continue as vigorous a support as possible, par-

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir George) Fowke, Engineer-in-Chief, B.E.F.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Frederic) Mercer, R.A.

³ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Colonel) E. M. Birch, R.A.

ticularly having regard to the fact that nothing like so much ammunition had been expended as was reported.

I therefore directed Haig to relieve the troops which attacked last night and to repeat the operation this evening, commencing however at 5 instead of 6 in order to allow of time during daylight for troops to consolidate any trenches or positions they may be able to capture. . . . The latest news we have this evening is to the effect that the attack was duly delivered after a powerful artillery bombardment and that some German trenches had again been captured.

Thursday, June 17th, 1915.

Plumer reports this morning that the 3rd Division are now established in the German first line trenches West of Bellewaerde Farm. . . . The attack of units of 4th Corps last night made some progress and gained important points in the enemy's line. They were however counter-attacked during the night and driven out of most advanced positions. They now hold a line about 100 yards in front of original trenches and some 300 yards in length. They have secured themselves in this position. . . . They (51st Division) state the trenches are full of German dead and that few live Germans were seen until the enemy made a counter-attack with fresh troops coming from the direction of Violaines.

[FROM GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.]

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
MEDTN. EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

17th June, 1915.

Dictated.

MY DEAR FRENCH,

It must be fully a month since I wrote you but no one understands better than you must do how time flies under the constant strain of these night and day excursions and alarms. Between the two letters there has been a desperate lot of fighting, mostly bomb and bayonet work, and, except for a good many Turks gone to glory, there is only a few hundred yards of ground to show for it all at Anzac, and about a mile perhaps in the southern part of the peninsula. But taking a wider point of view, I hope our losses and efforts have gained a good deal for our cause although they may not be so measurable in yards. First, the Turks are defending themselves instead of attacking Egypt and over-running Busra: secondly, we are told on high authority, that the action of the Italians in coming in was precipitated by our entry into

this part of the theatre: thirdly, if we can only hold on and continue to enfeeble the Turks, I think myself it will not be very long before some of the Balkan States take the bloody plunge.

However all that may be, we must be prepared at the worst to win through by ourselves, and it is, I assure you, a tough proposition. In a manœuvre battle of old style our fellows here would beat twice their number of Turks in less than no time but, actually, the restricted peninsula suits the Turkish tactics to a "T." They have always been good at trench work where their stupid men have only simple straightforward duties to perform, namely to stick on and shoot anything that comes up to them. They do this to perfection; I never saw braver soldiers, in fact than some of the best of them. When we advance, no matter the shelling we give them, they stand right up firing coolly and straight over their parapets. Also they have unlimited supplies of bombs, each soldier carrying them, and they are not half bad at throwing them. Meanwhile they are piling up a lot of heavy artillery of very long range on the Asiatic shore, and shell us like the devil with 4.5, 6-inch, 8, 9.2 and 10-inch guns—not pleasant. This necessitates a very tough type of man for senior billets.

—, for instance, did not last 24 hours. Everyone here is under fire, and really and truly the front trenches are safer, or at least fully as safe, as the Corps Commander's dug-out. For, if the former are nearer the infantry, the latter is nearer the big guns firing into our rear.

Another reason why we advance so slowly and lose so much is that the enemy get constant reinforcements. We have overcome 3 successive armies of Turks and a new lot of 20,000 from Syria are arriving here now, with 14 more heavy guns, so the prisoners say, but I hope not.

I have fine Corps Commanders in Birdwood,¹ Hunter-Weston² and Gouraud³. This is very fortunate. Who is to be commander of the new corps I cannot say, but we have had one or two terrifying suggestions from home.

Last night a brisk attack headed by a senior Turkish officer and a German officer was made on the 86th Brigade. Both these officers were killed and 20 or 30 of their men, the attack being repulsed. Against the South Wales Borderers a much heavier attack was launched. Our fellows were bombed clean out of their trenches, but only fell back 30 yards and dug in. This morning early we got maxims on to each end of the place they had stormed, and then the Dublins retook it with the bayonet. 200 of their dead were left in the trench, and we only had 50 casualties—not so bad!

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal) Sir William Birdwood, G.O.C. Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

² Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Sir Aylmer) Hunter-Weston, G.O.C. 8th Army Corps.

³ General Gouraud, G.O.C. French Army Corps.

A little later on in the day a d—d submarine appeared and had some shots at our transports and store-ships. Luckily she missed, but all our landing operations of supplies were suspended. These are the sort of daily anxieties. All one can do is to carry on with determination and trust in providence.

I hope you are feeling fit and that things are going on well generally. Give my salaam to the great Robertson, also to Barry.¹ Otherwise please treat this letter as private. With all kind remembrances.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

IAN HAMILTON.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Friday, June 18th, 1915. ("Waterloo Day.")

The 3rd Division has made further progress in the Ypres area. The total number of prisoners now amounts to 213 including 2 officers. Three machine guns and a full gas cylinder have also been taken. More hostile trenches have been taken representing a gain of 150 yards on a front of 250 yards.

The 4th Corps are practically back again in the old trenches and no material progress has been made in the course of the last week's operations. Our attack, however, held the enemy away from the French main attack, drew fresh troops towards our front, strengthened the French left, and caused the enemy considerable loss. . . . Lloyd George² arrives at Boulogne to-night to meet the French Minister of Munitions. I have sent Du Cane and Freddy Guest to meet him. I wrote a day or two ago and asked him to stay at H'd. Qrs. for a day or two.

Monday, June 21st, 1915.

An order issued by the Staff of the German xxxii R. Corps has been captured which says that it is no longer the immediate intention to further prosecute the attack against Ypres and enjoining the troops to improve their intrenchments and make themselves as secure as possible against attack.

Monday, June 28th, 1915.

I hear from Calais that they have discovered a much better form of gas.

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Colonel) S. L. Barry, late 10th Hussars, A.D.C. to Sir John French.

² The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, Minister of Munitions.

Tuesday, July 6th, 1915.

An attack was made by the 4th Division on the German trenches N. of Ypres, which the Rifle Brigade captured at 6.30 a.m. Casualties slight. During the day numerous counter attacks by Germans were repulsed. The captured ground was thoroughly secured and wired. 80 prisoners were captured.

Thursday, July 8th, 1915.

I saw Du Cane and Fowke this morning and talked with them as to the possibility of a heavy concentrated attack on any part of our front, supported by a powerful reinforcement of heavy artillery. I discussed it more particularly from a Gunner's and Sapper's point of view. They are going to consider the subject conjointly and will give me their views.

Saturday, July 10th, 1915.

We have interesting information from reliable agents to-night. One in central Germany tells us that all the recent reports of big movements of German troops from East to West are unfounded and are spread about purposely to deceive. He says that the movements West are only drafts to make good losses and to replace men who have been sent back to Germany 'on leave' to get in the harvest. He believes that the Germans are intent on prosecuting their Eastern Campaign till they have possessed themselves of *Warsaw* and *Vilna*.

An agent from Petrograd tells us that the movements of heavy German artillery from West to East still continues.

Wednesday, July 14th, 1915.

I went out to the 3rd Corps area and inspected the 1st Canadian Brigade to-day. I talked to them and expressed all the great appreciation I feel for their gallant services. The men looked hard and fit though somewhat 'war worn.'

The Q.M.G. tells me that the first instalment of gas cylinders has arrived.

Saturday, July 17th, 1915.

Cavendish (from French H'd. Qrs.) reported to me this morning. He gave me the latest authentic news from the Argonne. It seems that the Germans have been bringing

a new gas into use. Its effect causes men to be immediately over-powered by sleep. In this way the Germans succeeded in capturing some French trenches but, as in the (—) case of Ypres, they were quite unable to follow up the success which came to nothing altho' they captured some prisoners.

We shall have to watch this new gas! . . . O'Donnell¹ came to see me this evening and reported well on the health of the troops. Every precaution has been taken against an outbreak of cholera. Enteric diseases are at a minimum.

Baldock² (comdg. 49th Division) was badly wounded yesterday in the head. He is, however, doing well and the doctors hope to pull him through.

Sunday, July 18th, 1915.

I rode out to-day and saw several units of the — Division on the march to take up a new billeting area. I saw them at the close of their march of 11 miles. It was quite a cool day and I thought the men appeared more tired and exhausted than the occasion or circumstances warranted. Moreover, there were a good many stragglers and men falling out with sore feet, etc.

The 'march discipline' was not of the best.

Monday, July 19th, 1915.

I saw Robertson this evening and discussed future plans with him. We are faced with difficulties but I hope and believe they can be overcome. The worst we have to dread is a 'deadlock.' . . . Clive says the French calculate that in some of these attacks (in the Argonne) they (the Germans) have had as large a proportion as one heavy gun to every 25 yards of front!

Tuesday, July 20th, 1915.

The S. of S. forwarded to me to-day a wire he had received from the Grand Duke Nicholas dated July 17th. The gist of it was that the Germans in his front were about to institute a strong offensive on all fronts. That they were threatening Warsaw. That he feared troops were still being moved from the Western front to join in the attacks against the Russians. That the arrival of these fresh troops made the task of the

¹ Surgeon-Genl. (afterwards Sir Thomas) O'Donnell, Director of Medical Services, B.E.F.

² Major-Genl. T. S. Baldock.

Russian Army very difficult. That he impressed upon us in the West the necessity of doing our utmost to hold all the Germans in our front and he asked the British Govt. to do all they could to urge the Italians to take a strong offensive, and so take pressure off the Eastern front. . . . German wireless messages of to-day (sometimes *true*, more often *lies*) tell us that their troops have made successful advances all along their Eastern line. . . . The Italians have had considerable success on the Isonzo and have made appreciable progress towards Trieste. They have taken 2000 Austrian prisoners and a good deal of war material.

Wednesday, July 21st, 1915.

Last night a German mine was discovered by 2nd Army opposite Hill 60. The whole charge of about 1,000 lbs. of unknown powder and the detonators have been removed.

The 3rd Division have now consolidated themselves in the trenches they won yesterday. These are important because they command ground occupied by the enemy in the direction of Bellewarde Farm and Railway Wood. . . . I had a talk with Fowke this morning. He told me of all the excellent work which is being done by the mining companies. The system is becoming so developed that constant fights go on in the galleries underground. Major Norton Griffiths¹ is in general superintendence and has done great work.

Fowke reports very well also on the trenching work which is being done throughout the command.

I told him to warn all commands that the value of their trenching and field fortifications might be put to very severe tests in the next few weeks.

I saw Atkins also who tells me good progress is being made by the scientists in their investigation of the various gases and they are in close touch with the executive authorities at home and out here.

[TO GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON IN GALLIPOLI.]

HEADQUARTERS,
BRITISH ARMY.
July 22, 1915.

MY DEAR HAMILTON,

This command is getting so large and extended now that I have my whole time taken up and there is no time to write very much.

¹ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Col.) J. Norton Griffiths attached R.E. at G.H.Q.

This is just a line to thank you so much for your most interesting letters. My dear friend, I know and feel the terribly anxious and arduous task you have been called upon to carry out, but I feel sure your gallant spirit will insure success if anything can.

Anyway, you know you have my earnest and heartfelt sympathy and desire that you should attain your object, as I know we—on our side—have yours.

You spoke of—in your letter. Why did they ever send him with you? I had to get rid of him as far back as last January for much the same reason!

Since the fighting at Festubert we have been hung up for ammunition but we shall get to work again very soon.

Best of luck and warmest wishes.

Your old friend,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Sunday, July 25th, 1915.

I motored to Etaples to-day and visited the hospital establishments there. I saw No. 18, No. 23 (Regular), No. 24 (American), 'Canadian,' 'Liverpool,' and the Duchess of Westminster's.

The whole spectacle was wonderful, and the labour and trouble which have been bestowed on the work have had the very best results. No stone has been left unturned to afford the utmost relief, help and comfort to the wounded and sick.

Tuesday, July 27th, 1915.

After leaving Foch we motored to a commanding point close to Arras from which we had an excellent view of the whole country up to the Vimy plateau. We were able to see clearly the whole ground over which the French attack on May 9th took place.

We then drove round to the South of Arras and went (on foot) thro' communication trenches to an excellent artillery observation post. From here we were able to see the ground to the S. of Arras and the probable field of the next French attack. The conditions of ground, etc., seem favourable and an excellent view of it was obtained.

Wednesday, July 28th, 1915.

I met Haig and his Corps Commanders at his house at 2 to-day. I saw him alone first and heard his report of his

Corps Commanders. . . . I then saw the Corps Commanders separately and discussed (in Haig's presence) with each individually the state of his command.

On the whole it appeared to be that the 1st Army is in a very efficient condition. Each commander expressed perfect confidence in the state of his intrenchments and in his ability to 'hold' his line well against any attacks that might possibly be brought against him.

It would appear, as regards officers, that the *weakest* link in the chain is the company commander.

Thursday, July 29th, 1915.

St. Omer was attacked by a German aeroplane last night. Two houses were practically knocked down and three civilians were killed.

Friday, July 30th, 1915.

The 2nd Army reports that a heavy bombardment of front of 14th Division and left of 5th Corps began at 3.30 a.m., and at 3.45 the enemy rushed the crater and trenches North of the Menin Road. The 8th Battn. R.B. were driven from trenches on either side of the crater and from trench just S. of Menin Road. The enemy used liquid gas in this attack.

The 41st Brigade was driven for some distance S. of the Menin Road and a small gap was left between its left and the right of the 42nd Brigade on the Menin Road.

A counter attack by 41st Brigade, launched about 3 p.m., was stopped by m.g. fire shortly after leaving woods.

A battn. of 42nd Brigade which attacked along the Menin Road reached the trenches which enemy had taken in the morning N. of Menin Road and held them.

Efforts were being made to connect left of 41st Brigade with right of 42nd. . . . Lord Haldane arrived at my headquarters on a visit to-day.

I went to Plumer's headquarters to-day and held a conference with him and his Corps Commanders.

Fergusson told me he thought the N.C.O.'s throughout his corps had not a sufficient sense of responsibility or the 'chain of command.' Allenby, on the other hand, spoke well of his N.C.O.'s.

All seems to be going well in the 2nd Army. The whole atmosphere and tone in the command seems to be greatly improved.

[FROM GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
MEDITERRANEAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.]

DARDANELLES.

5th August, 1915.

MY DEAR FRENCH,

I can thoroughly well appreciate your anxieties and your work and therefore I all the more appreciate your kindness in writing me on the 22nd.

Your letter has caught me on the very verge of another big plunge into the unknown. To-morrow, wind and weather permitting, we are taking on a very big thing indeed. I take it as a good augury your letter coming now as your last message to us arrived just before our first landing. Anyway I'll write later on D.V. and let you know what has happened.

I fear——commanding the——is threatened with cold feet.

Joey Davies¹ arrived ten minutes ago but has already managed to catch the prevalent stomach complaint! Anyway, I have asked him just to look on, at any rate at the opening moves of our game, for you can't find your way about these trenches in five minutes—hardly indeed in five days.

Good-bye for the present. We all look hopefully towards you, our big brother, to give these . . . Bosches the knock.

Your old comrade of the wars,

IAN HAMILTON.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Friday, August 6th, 1915.

It is reported that Warsaw has fallen and that Prince Leopold of Bavaria entered the city yesterday. . . . 1,500 gas cylinders and three gas companies have now arrived. . . .

Fowke tells me the intrenching is going on well and that the men dig much better than they used to. I am anxious to inspect all the trenches as much as possible and have told Fowke to arrange this for me.

Sam Hughes² arrived to-day.

Saturday, August 7th, 1915.

The Bishop of Khartoum has been appointed Deputy Chaplain General out here. He will supervise the C. of E. chaplains. He has served in this force for some months.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Francis) Davies.

² Col. (afterwards Hon. Lieut.-Genl. Sir Sam) Hughes, Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence.

[TO GENERAL JOFFRE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, FRENCH ARMY
IN THE FIELD.]

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
BRITISH ARMY IN THE FIELD.

7th August, 1915.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

In reply to your letter of August 2nd, I fully appreciate the importance which the enemy attaches to obtaining information as to the destination of the new formations which have recently joined my army, and I equally appreciate the importance of keeping him in ignorance on this point.

I regret, however, that it is not possible for me to agree to your proposal to detach a brigade to Alsace for the latter purpose. These new formations require careful training in trench warfare and this together with the re-organisation of army corps and armies, due to the arrival of reinforcements, prevents me from making any detachment at present.

Yours very sincerely,

J. D. P. FRENCH.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Sunday, August 8th, 1915.

Many Russian authorities think that Germany's next move will be on Petrograd, chiefly with a view to destroying the munition works there.

We do not yet know what the future Russian plans actually are. How far they intend to retire, or to what line.

It seems to me that the best course for them would be to retire slowly and deliberately, disputing every yard of the ground, to a line reaching from the — Lake to the Preppet marshes and thence along a chosen position to cover Kief and Odessa.

The retirement need not be hurried as the German advance cannot be very rapid and there should be ample time to fortify and intrench the ground.

A message from M.A. Petrograd, received to-day, says that there are at least two million Russian soldiers ready to form new units but they have no rifles. Their only hope of getting any appears to rest in *Japan*.

I saw Du Cane this morning and discussed with him the position of Artillery Commanders (or 'advisers') with *Army Corps*. They are at present employed in an advisory capacity and many of them are unfit for command.

Monday, August 9th, 1915.

After an artillery bombardment and preparation yesterday the 6th Division attacked at 4 a.m. to-day. The object was to recover the ground and trenches which were lost on July 31st, and if possible make further progress.

During the day these trenches were all retaken and following up the success we made further progress N. and W. of Hooge extending the front of the trenches captured to 1200 yards. During this fighting our artillery shelled a German train at Langemarck, derailing and setting fire to five trucks. The captures reported amount to three officers, 124 other ranks and two machine guns. Many other prisoners are reported to have been killed by their own shell fire on their way back to Ypres.

Tuesday, August 10th, 1915.

A very curious document has been taken from German prisoners by the French. It purports to be a 'memorial' addressed by representatives of the 'agricultural' and 'industrial' communities of Germany to the German Chamber.

In this document they assert their willingness and determination to suffer anything and to undergo any sacrifice to bring the war to a victorious issue for Germany. They go on to represent their conviction that Germany must never give up Belgium, Northern France, or any European territory they have won.

It is more than likely that this is another 'fake' adopted by the German Government to deceive the army and the people as to the real state of affairs. . . . There was a Zeppelin raid on the East coast of England last night. One of them returning to the coast this morning was brought down and wrecked at Ostend by five of our aeroplanes coming out from Dunkirk.

Wednesday, August 11th, 1915.

Robertson returned this afternoon and reported to me what he had seen at Havre and Rouen. He is far from satisfied with the arrangements for the training of drafts at the base. He says these drafts are sent out with a very limited training. Some of the men have never even fired off a rifle! This is especially the case with Territorial drafts.

We shall have to consider this question carefully. So far

as I have studied the question at present it seems to me that we should follow the *German* method and send drafts up to Army Commanders as they arrive. They can then be trained in rear of the fighting line.

Friday, August 13th, 1915.

I rode to the front to-day amongst the troops of the 14th, 6th and 49th Divisions. I saw and addressed several bodies of men who were engaged at the last fight at Hooge. They are all in excellent spirits and very much 'on their toes.' . . . Jack Cowans¹ has come out here and is dining with us here to-day. He spoke to me about the Admiralty objection to Calais and we agreed that we must stick to Calais at all costs even if we have to be responsible ourselves for the safety of the ships.

He tells me the materials for 'flame attacks' are ready and appear very efficient. They are to be sent at once.

Saturday, August 14th, 1915.

I commenced a personal inspection of the 1st Army to-day. The 4th Corps under Rawlinson was visited in the morning. R. seems to be doing much better and I was more favourably impressed with him than ever before. . . . The 1st Corps under Gough was visited in the afternoon. . . . On the whole I am well satisfied with the condition of the 1st and 4th Corps.

Wednesday, August 18th, 1915.

Kitchener, accompanied by Millerand, arrived at 8 this morning. They were handed over to Fergusson at Bailleul who took them round Ploegsteert and Armentières.

Thursday, August 19th, 1915.

All news from the Balkans to-day seems to point to a very unsatisfactory condition of affairs as regards the Allies. Bulgaria, probably encouraged by German successes in Russia, now entertains some idea of attacking Serbia in co-operation with an Austro-German attack from the North! She expresses herself as dissatisfied with the delay shown by the Allies in securing Macedonia for her.

All this causes Roumania to hesitate in taking active part with the Allies. But it is fairly certain that Roumania will

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards General) Sir John Cowans, Quartermaster General of the Forces, War Office.

not allow ammunition to pass thro' her territory to Turkey and that she will not stand by idle and see Bulgaria attack Servia. . . . I have been rather worried by the bursting of nine or ten 18 pdr. guns with H.E. shell in them. The causes are being closely investigated but no conclusion has yet been arrived at.

Some reports have also come from Monro¹ of the jamming of some S.A. ammunition in the rifles.

Friday, August 20th, 1915.

The British Minister at Nish says that the Turks have sent word to Germany that unless relief comes to them within a month they will be driven to the necessity of making a separate peace.

Germany in reply told them she intended invading Servia *at once* and pushing thro' there to the assistance of Turkey.

Sunday, August 22nd, 1915.

There can be no doubt that all the information we receive of threatened German action in the Balkans is nothing but bluff! . . . On the night of the 20th two mines were successfully exploded near Givenchy and Cuinchy respectively, by the 1st Army.

The enemy was reported to have suffered severely.

Tuesday, August 24th, 1915.

Joffre has written to me with reference to the employment of the cavalry in case we are fortunate enough to make a decisive break in the enemy's lines of intrenchment. He has brought up Conneau's Cavalry Corps (2 divisions) behind Arras. I have sent Fanshawe² to confer with Conneau after which he will report to me.

Wednesday, August 25th, 1915.

He (Fowke) is rather anxious about the losses of young Engineer officers. No less than seven have been killed or wounded in the 6th Division area during the last few days. . . . I motored thro' Armentières to the trenches which are being constructed to the East of that place. I saw the Cavalry Division men at work in the trenches and excellent progress was being made.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Genl.) Sir Charles Monro, G.O.C. 3rd Army.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Hew) Fanshawe.

Thursday, August 26th, 1915.

A very ingenious device to track the course of Zeppelins by means of *wireless* has been invented by the French.

We are taking it up.

Friday, August 27th, 1915.

I have been with the troops of the 3rd Army all day and returned to St. Omer this evening. . . . At the front the mist prevented close observation of the German positions. . . . I think the 3rd Army is doing very well and is in an efficient condition.

The Q.M.G. told me this evening that he is preparing everything for the winter.

The army has now increased so much in size that *all* cannot be accommodated in billets, so we shall have to put some six divisions in tents with hut accessories. Braziers for the trenches are being provided at the rate of 400 per division.

Saturday, August 28th, 1915.

Henry Wilson tells me there is very bad news from the Dardanelles. Not only have they been badly defeated but sickness is setting in to an alarming extent! Hamilton is said to have reported that 20 per cent of his force per month are going sick! It is said that the men are dispirited and unhappy.

Sunday, September 12th, 1915.

General Foch came to see me this afternoon. . . . We have arranged as to the boundary between the 1st (British) and X (French) Armies in case of a successful advance.

Monday, September 20th, 1915.

Lord K. arrived late last night. I had a long talk with him this morning.

Tuesday, September 21st, 1915.

Part of Houthulet forest was set on fire yesterday by the H.A. of the 2nd Army. Large explosions resulted.

Wednesday, September 22nd, 1915.

Bombardment¹ by 1st Army on enemy commenced yesterday. It was reported to be very effective on his trenches. The enemy's reply was weak. . . . Du Cane came to see

¹ Battle of Loos.

me this morning. He is much encouraged, as regards the effect of the recent explosions of 18 lb. guns, by the fact that yesterday's firing passed off without incident.

Foch came to see me yesterday and lunched with us. We discussed the situation and the details of our joint action. Kitchener left this evening. . . . The fear of a serious disaster to the Russians on their retreat from Vilna has passed. They are clear and retiring in good order.

In the South Ivanhoff continues to throw back the Austrians, and the Germans are firmly held by the Russians S.W. of Riga.

Thursday, September 23rd, 1915.

Our aeroplanes had six fights in the air yesterday. . . . They assisted materially in the artillery bombardment. Several of the enemy's batteries opposite the 1st Army were silenced. . . . I saw Foulkes¹ about the gas arrangements. All is in order and all we want is a favourable wind. There is a marked change in the weather to-night which promises well. . . . O'Donnell came to see me to-day. . . . All is in readiness to provide for extensive casualties on and after the 25th.

Friday, September 24th, 1915.

Our bombardment continues effectively. The enemy has replied in front of 2nd Army and N. of La Bassée Canal with some vigour, but he has been much quieter S. of the canal. One shell blew up three barges in the canal. . . .

Saturday, September 25th, 1915.

At nightfall after a heavy day's fighting and numerous German counter attacks—especially at Hill 70—the line ran roughly as follows.

From Double Crassier—S. of Loos—by Hill 70—to Western Exits of Hulluch—thence by the Quarries and Western end of Cité St. Eloi—East of Fosse 8—back to our original line.

The rain came down in torrents all the afternoon.

We have captured about 2,500 prisoners, eight guns and several machine guns. The French down in Champagne appear to have done very well. They have advanced from one to four kilometres on a front of about 25 kilometres. They have captured some 10,000 prisoners and several guns.

¹ Captain Foulkes, Gas Officer at G.H.Q.

I sent wires of congratulation and thanks to both Haig and Plumer. . . . Our casualties have been heavy—over 22,500 officers and men. The Germans must also have suffered immense losses.

Sunday, September 26th, 1915.

Our aeroplanes did very good work to-day. They set Valenciennes station on fire. They also successfully bombed two troop trains.

Monday, September 27th, 1915.

I visited Haig, Haking¹ and Fanshawe to-day and spoke to a lot of wounded men in the clearing station at Neux-les-Mines.

The Guards Division made a very brilliant and successful attack on Hill 70. They drove the Germans off the hill but did not take the redoubt, which is on the N.E. slopes below the crest. They also took the chalk pits. . . . They succeeded in re-establishing our line (bent back yesterday by the hasty and precipitate retreat of the 21st and 24th Divisions) between Hill 70 and West of Hulluch.

The 47th Division on the right of the Guards captured a wood towards the South and repulsed a hostile counter attack. . . . The situation at the Quarries remains much the same, the Germans holding a part and we the other part. Abandoned German howitzers are in the hollow between the two forces. . . . General Thesiger,² comdg. 9th Division has been killed. . . . N.W. of Hulluch we have repulsed a number of counter attacks and have inflicted heavy loss on the enemy.

Our captures now amount to 53 officers, 2,800 men, 18 guns and 52 machine guns. Our wounded up to noon to-day are about 900 officers and 35,000 men. . . . An attempted attack by 2nd Division, made at 5 p.m., failed, as gas was rendered ineffective by reason of fires which the enemy lit all along his trenches.

Wednesday, September 29th, 1915.

The French report that they have broken the German line S. of M—— and that they have pushed three divisions and some cavalry thro' the gap. . . . On the left there

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Sir Richard) Haking, G.O.C., 11th Army Corps.

² Major-Genl. G. H. Thesiger.

has been rather severe fighting all round Fosse 8. The situation there is still uncertain. Gen. Bulfin reported at 12 noon that he had the situation well in hand.

Torrents of rain have fallen all day preventing artillery observation, air reconnaissance, and generally retarding operations owing to the state of the ground.

[TELEGRAM FROM KING GEORGE V.]

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
7 p.m. 30.9.15.

To

FIELD MARSHAL SIR JOHN FRENCH,
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF,
BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

I heartily congratulate you and all ranks of my army under your command upon the success which has attended their gallant efforts since the commencement of the combined attack. I recognise that this strenuous and determined fighting is but the prelude to greater deeds and further victories. I trust the sick and wounded are doing well.

GEORGE R.I.

[TELEGRAM TO KING GEORGE V., SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1915.]

TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING,
BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
LONDON, S.W.

Your Majesty's Forces in France are deeply grateful for your Majesty's most gracious message. There is no sacrifice the troops are not prepared to make to uphold the honour and traditions of Your Majesty's Army and to secure final and complete victory.
FRENCH, Field Marshal.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Saturday, October 2nd, 1915.

I rode round the billets of the Guards Division at L—— and Sailly-la-Bours and spoke to several groups of men. I then went to Cavan's¹ H'd. Qrs. where I found Haking, Heyworth² and some C.O.'s assembled.

I thanked Cavan and all of them for the fine work they had done. I spoke to Cavan about the Prince of Wales and

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal) the Earl of Cavan, G.O.C. Guards Division.

² Brig.-Genl. F. J. Heyworth.

after hearing what he said I rescinded the order to send him to XI Corps H'd. Qrs. Cavan promised to look after him.

I then rode close to the neighbourhood of La B—— where I had a good view of the captured positions.

Afterwards I went to see Gough at his H'd. Qrs. and thanked him for all his good work. . . . There is bad news from the Balkans. Bulgaria is said to be on the point of taking hostile action. It is reported that many German and Austrian officers have arrived in Bulgaria for duty with that army.

Sunday, October 3rd, 1915.

A careful appreciation of the situation as it exists at the present moment shows that in spite of considerable reinforcements from Russia having reached the German fighting line between the La Bassée Canal and the French right (S. of Arras) we should be still greatly superior in numbers. . . . Poor Wing, commanding 12th Division, was killed yesterday. He will be a terrible loss to us.

Monday, October 4th, 1915.

Very heavy and severe counter attacks made on our trenches at the Quarries were gallantly repulsed by the 12th Division.

Saturday, October 9th, 1915.

The trench known as 'Big Willie' was retaken last night by the Guards. Another German trench to the West of Hulluch was also captured and held by the West Kents. . . . The Guards report the great efficiency of the Mills hand grenade.

Sunday, October 10th, 1915.

Our Intelligence has been investigating the probable losses, owing to sickness pure and simple, incurred by the German army. Macdonogh tells me to-night that throughout the enemy's force (East and West) we can reckon 10 p.c. as being always in hospital.

There are, of course, many more who have been permanently invalided during the course of the war from causes altogether apart from wounds.

Monday, October 11th, 1915.

Fowke came to see me and reports very favourably on the defences. He says the captured German trenches are now completed and rendered very strong against attack.

Wednesday, October 13th, 1915.

The 12th Division is reported to be in possession of the Quarries and the 46th Division of the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Latest reports, however, seem to indicate that to-night fighting is still going on at Fosse 8 and at the Quarries.

Fosse No. 8 is in flames. . . . Du Cane came to see me this evening on his return from Paris where he has been to consult Gen. — the great French artillery expert.

He says the French General can say nothing definite in the way of advice except that his own experience convinces him that it is only by the most stringent and exhaustive trials —conducted with an enormous expenditure of ammunition —that any really sound conclusion can be arrived at to account for defective fuses and the bursting of guns.

He (or some others in Paris) suggested to Du Cane that possibly the French might help us by giving us 200,000 fuses of which apparently they have a good surplus. This is being investigated.

Von Donop¹ informs Du Cane by telephone to-night that he hopes the trials now in progress at home are leading to some definite result.

Monday, October 25th, 1915. London.

Visited K. at 8.30.

Attended Cabinet Council at 3, remained till 5.

Tuesday, October 26th, 1915.

Visited K. at 10.15.

Arrived back at H'd. Qrs., St. Omer, at 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 27th, 1915.

Haig has sent in his reply to my remarks on his 'report'² and I discussed it with Robertson. The whole question is to be examined and reported on by the General Staff.

Sunday, October 31st, 1915.

We have captured a German 'order' reducing the number of horses on the establishment of the army. Six horse teams of artillery and transport are reduced to four and the number of horses allotted to officers is much reduced.

¹ Major-Genl. Sir Stanley Von Donop, Master General of the Ordnance and 4th Military Member of the Army Council.

² On battle of Loos.

I went to report to the King at Aire to-day. H.M. was not very well¹ and I didn't see him. He leaves to-morrow.

The Germans made a strenuous attack on the French in Champagne yesterday. It is thought that the Divisions which have come here from the Eastern Front were mostly engaged.

They attacked in 'dense masses of infantry' on a front of eight kilometres. They were repulsed with tremendous slaughter according to French reports.

Monday, November 1st, 1915.

The Germans attacked S. of Neuville on October 30th, and captured 1,000 yards of French trenches.

Sunday, November 7th, 1915.

These 'high explosive' inventions are causing some bad accidents. A new kind of bomb was being experimented with yesterday at Hazebrouck by 'Newton' factory when the bomb suddenly burst and killed and wounded twenty-five to thirty officers and men. . . . Cavendish came to see me to-night. He tells me that the Russian Attachés at French Headquarters say that they have now two Corps on the Roumanian frontier. In about a fortnight these will be joined by three more Corps. When five Russian Corps are there ready to move, Roumania will 'come in' and advance with Russian troops into Bulgaria. They say the Bulgarians will never consent to fight against the Russians. They regard the Czar as 'sacred' and their 'Saviour.'

Monday, November 8th, 1915.

O'Donnell came to see me to-day and reported 100 cases of 'feet' which have occurred in the last ten days. It is a warning of what we have to expect in the coming winter, but after our experience a year ago we ought to be able to combat this plague very effectively.

We hear of many German submarines being sent to the Mediterranean, apparently with the object of intercepting our transports carrying troops from Marseilles to the Near East.

The Prime Minister has asked that Du Cane may be sent home to see him.² He has been ordered to go.

Nothing more has transpired with regard to the 'Kitchener' mission to the Near East. He left France on Saturday night.

¹ King George was suffering from the effects of a fall sustained whilst inspecting troops on October 28th.

² Doubtless with reference to munitions question.

Friday, November 12th, 1915.

I had a very interesting talk with Clive this evening. He had come direct from French H'd. Qrs. He tells me that the French Government have received a telegram from the Greek Government warning them that in the event of British, French, or Serbian troops being driven back by Bulgaria into Greek territory, they would be *interned*.

Thursday, November 18th, 1915.

Winston Churchill and Mr. Redmond, M.P., arrived to-day. W.C. is joining his regiment . . . All the Corps Commanders feel that the officers of the New Army are very *unprofessional* and have all the defects which that entails. But they are gallant, very intelligent, zealous, and earnest, and strong hopes are entertained of a great improvement in them before the spring.

I was glad to learn that both officers and N.C.O.'s (particularly in the Canadian Divisions) had acquired a much greater power over their men.

The Command (in all ranks) of the Canadian Corps leaves a good deal to be desired. All their appointments are made with greater regard to social, political or other conditions than by reason of actual *fitness* for the positions.

This must always handicap the fighting value of the Canadian Corps in relation to others.

In the afternoon I went to see Fergusson at his headquarters and interviewed his Divisional Commanders.

Wilkinson¹ has done very well with the 50th Division. They have quite recovered from the results of the heavy fighting they went through at the 2nd Battle of Ypres. They are now a very efficient division and well up to strength.

Great credit is due to Wilkinson for what he has done with them.

The 'foot' trouble has been much better grappled with this winter. There is no anxiety about it, although the trenches everywhere are worse than they have ever been before.

Sunday, November 21st, 1915.

Clive came to see me this morning. He tells me that Joffre has called for the opinions of his Army Commanders as to plans for future attack.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Percival) Wilkinson.

So far as *we* are concerned, I think we ought not to proceed with any further advance on the 1st Army Front. The country is too difficult and the fortress of Lille is too near.

I am inclined to favour a powerful attack by the 3rd Army and subsidiary attacks elsewhere.

Monday, November 22nd, 1915.

I went out to-day to see Alderson and the Divisional Commanders of the Canadian Corps. Everything appears to be quite satisfactory. They have doubtless improved a great deal. Officers and N.C.O.'s have greater hold on their men and discipline is much better.

Wednesday, November 24th, 1915.

I went out to-day to inspect the 4th Corps. I saw (first) Rawlinson at his H'd. Qrs. and then all his Staff and the Divisional Commanders—separately and together. I was much impressed by all I saw and heard. The Command and Staff of Corps and Divisions appear to me very efficient.

(FROM MR. JOHN REDMOND, CHAIRMAN OF IRISH PARLIAMENTARY PARTY.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

DEAR SIR JOHN FRENCH,

I want to send a word of thanks to you and the members of your Staff for your great kindness to me during my recent visit.

I feel my visit has done good—at any rate to me.

Will you be so kind as to let your Staff know how grateful I am and accept my most sincere good wishes for yourself.

Very truly yours,

J. E. REDMOND.

25 Nov., 1915.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Monday, December 6th, 1915.

Left Amiens at 7 a.m. and reached Chantilly at 9.

A very fine battalion of Zouaves was drawn up as a guard of honour in front of Joffre's headquarters. I inspected them.

We then went into conference.¹

The general subject was placed before us by Joffre and the question of *heavy artillery* and *the employment of gas* was discussed. Joffre then placed before us a memo drawn up

¹ Allies' war conference.

by the French G.S., embracing proposals for a plan of combined action. I then proposed that Murray¹ should speak in the name of the British I.G.S.

The discussion turned almost entirely upon the question of the retention or evacuation of Salonika. The French, Russians and Italians wished to remain there. The principal reason was that it would furnish a kind of protection to Servia and would prevent the coast being used as a submarine base by the Germans. The Servian representative then read a paper (copies of which he gave us) on the present condition of the Servian Army. They have lost nearly all their guns and baggage, etc., but number (he says) 250,000!

After lunching with Joffre I came on to the Ritz at Paris.

I called on the Ambassador at 4 and had half an hour's talk with him. The French are very dissatisfied with the result of Saturday's conference at Calais.

Tuesday, December 7th, 1915.

Attended conference 9 a.m.

Lunched at Paris with M. Briand.²

Called on Gen. Gallieni at 3.

Called on Gen. Maunoury (Governor of Paris) at 4.

Dined with Esher.

Wednesday, December 8th, 1915.

Conference at 9. Conference concluded at 11.45, having arrived at certain decisions and conclusions.

K. and Grey³ arrive at Paris 4 a.m. to-morrow (letter from Bertie).

I received a letter from Asquith in reply to mine despatched on 4th instant.

Thursday, December 9th, 1915.

Called on K. at 9.45 and had a long talk with him.

Bad news from Salonika about 10th Division.

Left Paris (by motor) at 11 and reached St. Omer about 7.

Friday, December 10th, 1915.

The rains have been very heavy. All the rivers are in full flood. The communication trenches are flooded.

¹ Chief of the Imperial General Staff, War Office.

² French Prime Minister.

³ Sir Edward (afterwards Viscount) Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

I have appointed Bridges to command 19th Division (vice Tasker gone sick) and Winston Churchill to a brigade in that division.

[SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY.]

BY FIELD-MARSHAL SIR J. D. P. FRENCH, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O.,
K.C.M.G., COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, BRITISH ARMY IN THE FIELD.

In relinquishing the command of the British Army in France, I wish to express to the officers, non-commissioned officers and men, with whom I have been so closely associated during the last sixteen months, my heartfelt sorrow in parting with them before the campaign, in which we have been so long engaged together, has been brought to a victorious conclusion.

I have, however, the firmest conviction that such a glorious ending to their splendid and heroic efforts is not far distant, and I shall watch their progress towards this final goal with intense interest, but in the most confident hope.

The success so far attained has been due to the indomitable spirit, dogged tenacity which knows no defeat, and the heroic courage so abundantly displayed by the rank and file of the splendid army which it will ever remain the pride and glory of my life to have commanded during over sixteen months of incessant fighting.

Regulars and Territorials, Old Army and New Army have ever shown these magnificent qualities in equal degree.

From my heart I thank them all.

At this sad moment of parting my heart goes out to those who have received life-long injury from wounds, and I think with sorrow of that great and glorious host of my beloved comrades who have made the greatest sacrifice of all by laying down their lives for their country.

In saying good-bye to the British Army in France I ask them once again to accept this expression of my deepest gratitude and heartfelt devotion towards them, and my earnest good wishes for the glorious future which I feel to be assured.

J. D. P. FRENCH,
Field-Marshal,

Commanding-in-Chief, the British Army in France.
18th December, 1915.

[FROM GENERAL JOFFRE.]

FRENCH ARMY,
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

FRENCH REPUBLIC
HEADQUARTERS.

FIELD MARSHAL,

Dec. 18th, 1915.

Allow me to express my deep regret on the occasion of your relinquishing the Command of the British Army in France.

I lose in you a gallant comrade in arms, whose help has been very valuable to me in times of difficulty.

From the bottom of my heart I thank you for this comradeship on the battlefield, which has upheld the best traditions of your country.

Our soldiers, who have learnt to esteem, know and love each other will, thanks to this indissoluble union, do great things.

You have done a great deal to obtain this result, and you may be proud of it. Your appointment to the high position you are about to fill, and the great honour H.M. the King has bestowed upon you, shows the highest recognition of your services.

Accept, Field Marshal, my sincere and devoted regard.

J. JOFFRE.

[FROM MAJOR-GENERAL H. H. SIR PRATAP SINGH, MAHARAJA
OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR.]

THE PALACE,

JAMMU.

18th December, 1915.

MY DEAR AND VALUED FRIEND,

I have heard with very great pleasure that in recognition of your inestimable services in the Great War, His Majesty the King-Emperor has elevated you to the position of a Viscount. I am therefore writing to you in order to convey to you my most cordial congratulations on your elevation.

I trust this will find you in the enjoyment of an excellent health.

With kindest regards and best wishes,

Believe me always,

Your very sincere friend,

PRATAP SINGH.

[FROM MONSIEUR DU BOS.]

47, AVENUE HENRI MARTIN, 16eme,

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

I have just heard that you are going to have some rest after the glorious work which you have achieved; for which, like myself, all France must be deeply grateful to you.

Your rest, however, will only be comparative, as you are taking up a position¹ in England no less important or tiring.

I tried, without success, to join you on your last journey to Paris. I have not forgotten our last conversation in August, 1914, when you said to me, "It will be strenuous and long"! How right you were!

I wanted to send you these few lines, on your departure from France, to give you my best regards and sincere affection.

A. DU BOS.

Paris. 16.12.15.

¹ Commander-in-Chief Home Forces.

[FROM MR. F. J. BURDETT, LATE 19TH HUSSARS.]

COURT FARM,
BILLINGSHURST.
December 18th, 1915.

DEAR SIR JOHN FRENCH,

I feel I must write to express to you, what I know is the feeling of so many of us in the country, the deep gratitude and pride I feel in the great work you have done for our country and the army during the last sixteen months.

I once had the honour of serving under you in the 19th Hussars and being recommended by you for my commission during your command of that regiment, and though fate decided that I should resort to a peaceful life, farming and breeding horses, I have watched with such great joy and pride the steady and sure advance of my late Colonel to the highest rank in the army and to the command of the greatest army our country has ever known.

May I offer you my most hearty congratulations on your safe return and wish you most sincerely a long and peaceful enjoyment of the high dignity to which you have been raised.

With apologies for writing you during these strenuous times,

I beg to remain,

Yours most sincerely,
F. J. BURDETT.

[FROM MONSIEUR DU BOS.]

47, AVENUE HENRI MARTIN, 16ème.
PARIS.

Dec. 21st, 1915.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

I cannot tell you how pleased I was to see you yesterday, and to find you so well. I also want to thank you for your kind thought in inviting me to London, and my regrets at not being able to accept. But in writing these lines, I particularly want to tell you that on leaving you, I went as usual to the Jockey Club, and found all my friends there very much impressed with the wonderful words you spoke to your troops when taking leave of them, and I hear the same on all sides and from all classes.

This is the real object of my letter, and in respectfully shaking you by the hand, believe me, dear Field Marshal,

Your very devoted and grateful,
A. DU BOS.

CHAPTER VII
GREAT WAR
HOME SERVICE (1916-1918)
[FROM MR. C. S. COLDWELL.]

"LYNDHURST,"
MATLOCK,
DERBYSHIRE.

Jan. 7th, 1916.

DEAR SIR JOHN,

It was most kind of you to write and I had no right to expect an answer. . . .

I too, like Falkland in Clarendon's History, ingermine Peace, but I think we have still much to do and suffer first. It is a great mercy that with all our unreadiness, stupidity and muddling some great disaster has not befallen us.

When I was in Madeira in 1902 I dined several times with Prince Lichtenstein, one of the Kaiser's friends. He was Colonel of a Prussian Regiment of Dragoons and had been fighting against us in the Boer War. He quite frankly told me that the Germans meant to be Lords of the world . . . and that as England stood in the way, they must smash us if they could. He said he had been fighting against us to get military experience and that his sympathy was with the Boers. He had been wounded and I see has been wounded again in this war. He was a nice fellow personally.

I think you have won through wonderfully. It must have been a heart-breaking and sleep-breaking martyrdom, and I feel sure you were borne up from underneath by "the everlasting arms."

The loss of noble young and intellectual manhood is dreadful, but I think we shall be chastened and made more serious and sober minded.

I think England before the war was going to the Dogs as fast as its feet could carry it.

I congratulate you on the Peerage and am glad you retain your name like my old friend Sidney Buxton,¹ another recent Viscount. . . .

Yours ever sincerely,
CHARLES S. COLDWELL.

¹ Viscount Buxton, Governor General of South Africa.

[TO LORD ESHER.]

94, LANCASTER GATE.

Jan. 8th, 1916.

MY DEAR ESHER,

. . . I have been very quiet indeed, going nowhere except round the hospitals. I have done a lot of them, in fact, I spend most of my afternoons with the wounded men. I have also been entirely removed from the official world. My office¹ is in a state of change and flux. 'Home Defence' and 'Military Training' are moving over there. I go there most mornings and see General Staff officers, etc.

I have only seen K. once since I came back. I feel sure he is fighting like mad to remain where he is, but a man's case seems somewhat hopeless when he is reduced to defence in the columns of — !!

I expect there will be a row over Hamilton's² despatches. Stopford³ seems inclined to fight.

I shall be very glad when you are back in London as I want to have a talk with you about the future of the Home Forces generally. . . .

It is difficult and perhaps dangerous—to put one's thoughts on paper. . . .

Always,
J. F.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Thursday, February 3rd, 1916.

I had a meeting here with Robertson⁴ and the General Staff at 5. We had a useful discussion and exchanged ideas on the subject of home defence, re-inforcements and drafts.

Friday, February 4th, 1916.

One of the Zeppelins which raided England on the night of the 31st has been found a wreck in the North Sea. Her crew is in all probability lost.

¹ The Horse Guards, Whitehall.

² General Sir Ian Hamilton, G.O.C.-in-Chief Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, 1915.

³ Lieut.-Genl. the Hon. Sir Frederick Stopford, Army Corps Commander M.E.F.

⁴ General (afterwards Field Marshal) Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, War Office.

Tuesday, February 8th, 1916.

I lunched with the Bishop of London. He told me how it was he was not going to the front this Easter. . . . Lords Dartmouth and Scarborough called at 3.30 and laid certain proposals before me with regard to arrangements for filling up the Territorial units at the front.

Wednesday, February 9th, 1916.

I had a long interview with Rundle¹ this morning. He reported the whole state of his Command (Central Force) and I told him what my plans were for future home defence generally. . . . At 2.30 Macdonogh came and gave me a general appreciation of the war all over the world. . . . There was a hostile raid on Dover and Ramsgate this afternoon but very little damage was done.

Saturday, February 12th, 1916.

I went to see Mr. Birrell² this morning. . . . He thinks the 'military' should make a greater *display* (with bands, etc.) in Dublin. I told him that with the proximity of the fortress of Queenstown I didn't think Cork matters so much.

He tells me the Irish Constabulary are rather lazy and inert and quite useless from a 'detection' point of view. I told him the utmost reinforcement we could put into Ireland would be about a brigade of cavalry.

Monday, February 14th, 1916.

This afternoon I received a deputation from Birmingham and neighbouring towns. They were headed by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain)³ and Lord Dartmouth. They came to discuss questions of air defence and the means by which early intimation of the arrival of Zeppelins could be communicated to the local authorities.

Everything was explained to them and I think they were satisfied that all possible precautions were being taken.

Tennant⁴ (Under-S. of S. for War) came to see me to-day on the subject of the employment of Sir P. Scott.⁵

¹ General Sir Leslie Rundle.

² The Rt. Hon. Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary for Ireland.

³ Afterwards the Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain.

⁴ Mr. (afterwards the Rt. Hon.) H. J. Tennant, Under Secretary of State for War.

⁵ Admiral Sir Percy Scott, appointed to command Gunnery Defences of London against aircraft attack.

Wednesday, February 16th, 1916.

I went to see Lloyd George at 10.30 this morning at his own request. He wanted to speak to me about a proclamation he proposed to issue to assure munition factories that due warning of a Zeppelin raid would be given to them.

We talked of other things. He says there is still great friction existing between the War Office and Munitions Dept. He talked then of the lost trenches and asked me what I thought of the prospect of a *great offensive* on our side. I told him I didn't think recent occurrences encouraged us to hope for much in that way. He does not appear at all satisfied with the general conduct of the war at home.

This afternoon I went with Gen. Nicholls¹ (Inspector of Heavy Artillery) to see the defence arrangements to meet air raids in the Woolwich 'control.' I was met at Shooters Hill by the Commandant and a Staff officer.

The Arsenal seems to be fairly well defended and will be comparatively safe when we are able to get the new guns into position.

Saturday, February 19th, 1916.

We have had a great deal of unnecessary correspondence with the Home Office which has caused delay in making effective arrangements to communicate with munition factories, etc.

Monday, February 21st, 1916.

I spent to-day inspecting at Aldershot. Joined Hunter² and Staff at "Jolly Farmers" at 10.30. . . . The Division (40th) is composed of the class of men known as "Bantams". I see no reason to think these men much worse than others: but advantage seems to have been taken of the decision to reduce the height qualification, to enlist men of very weak physique and stamina who are manifestly unfit for service. The travelling Medical Boards have shown great slackness in taking and retaining such men.

The Division is commanded by Ruggles-Brise,³ who is an excellent Divisional Commander.

¹ General Sir William Nicholls, Royal Marines.

² General Sir Archibald Hunter, G.O.C. at Aldershot.

³ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Harold) Ruggles-Brise.

Wednesday, February 23rd, 1916.

We motored to Shirehampton where I inspected the Remount Dépôt. . . . My old friend Waite¹ of the 10th Hussars is the adjutant.

The Principal Veterinary officer of the Command (Gen. Smith² who used to be with us at Aldershot many years ago) was present. The 'remounts' were nearly all mules and heavy draft artillery horses. A lot of civilian grooms, hunt servants, etc. are employed. I afterwards inspected a veterinary hospital where I saw a new system in practice for detecting glanders.

On returning to Bath I lunched with the Mayor and Corporation and afterwards opened the new "Royal Baths" which have been extended by the Corporation chiefly for the treatment of wounded soldiers.

Thursday, February 24th, 1916.

Rundle came to see me this morning. He was just starting for the coast to watch the progress of trench digging, etc.

I warned him to keep his forces alert as one must never forget the possibilities of events, however remote or unlikely they may appear to be.

Friday, February 25th, 1916.

In view of the constant delays to get things through, I asked Walter Long to come and see me this afternoon. He was with me for an hour and we discussed the situation fully. He has asked me to appear again before the committee on the 29th and then he proposes to speak to the P.M.

Sunday, February 27th, 1916.

News came to-day of a disaster in the Channel off Dover. At 10 a.m. an outward bound P. & O. steamer struck a mine and sank. About 50 per cent of her passengers were lost.

Tuesday, February 29th, 1916.

This afternoon at 4 I took the oath and my seat in the House of Lords.

Wednesday, March 1st, 1916.

Lord Middleton came in at 11 and told me how he could help me to advance army interests in the House of Lords.

At 12 noon I attended for examination by Mr. Long's

¹ Major A. W. Waite, late Riding Master 10th Hussars.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Smith.

Committee. I gave them instances of the terrible delays which occur in getting decisions from the War Office.

Monday, March 6th, 1916.

There was another airship raid yesterday afternoon which lasted till 3 a.m. to-day. Three airships were engaged. . . . About 12 lives were lost and some 30 or 40 people were injured more or less seriously—all civilians—very little material damage was done. We were able to locate these ships very accurately and quickly and ample warning was given throughout the country. . . . Macdonogh came in at 2.30 and I discussed with him the general situation abroad. The outlook does not seem too brilliant!

Tuesday, March 7th, 1916.

I went to have a talk with Robertson at 11 this morning. I am satisfied that the refusal to appoint Bruce Hamilton¹ and Paget² emanated from Asquith.

Wednesday, March 22nd, 1916.

Certain men have been transferred from the disbanded 'Provisional' battalions and 'attached' to the 61st Division to make up their strength for service abroad.

The object of my visit was to make an appeal to these men to waive their 'rights' to join the units for which they had been originally enlisted and join the 61st Division permanently. To this end I visited and addressed eight separate groups.

They all gave me a respectful and attentive hearing except in the case of some men from the Essex regiment.

Thursday, March 23rd, 1916.

I held a conference at the Horse Guards this morning with Lord Wimbourne (Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), Mr. Birrell (Chief Secretary), Mr. Tennant, General Mackinnon,³ etc. Gen. Friend,⁴ Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, was also present.

The matters discussed had reference to the state of preparedness in case of sudden rebellion.⁵

We didn't arrive at very definite conclusions but all agreed in thinking that, somehow or other, more troops should be

¹ General Sir Bruce Hamilton, ultimately appointed G.O.C. an Army, Home Defence.

² General the Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur Paget, ultimately appointed G.O.C. an Army, Home Defence.

³ Lieut.-Genl. Sir Henry Mackinnon, Director of Recruiting, War Office.

⁴ Major-Genl. the Rt. Hon. (afterwards Sir) Lovick Friend.

⁵ Ireland.

got into the country and that it would be very advantageous for the King to come over and inspect in the early summer.

Friday, March 24th, 1916.

I had an audience of the King this morning and reported to H.M. as to the changes which had been made in the scheme and system of Home Defence. The King also asked me a good deal about the progress of A.A. defence. H.M. spoke also about Northcliffe.¹

I broached the subject of a visit by H.M. to Ireland. He doesn't seem very keen about it but I think he will go. Afterwards the Queen sent for me and told me how interested she was in the project for teaching trades to permanently disabled men.

I have told Jack Dawnay² to institute intermediate enquiries and try to determine the lines on which to proceed. I have told the Queen I will report progress to her. His Majesty also discussed the question of posthumous honours, and is very much in favour of it. . . . General Cadorna, the Italian Commander-in-Chief, and the Italian Ambassador dined with me this evening at 94. The General is quite a striking personality.

Saturday, April 1st, 1916.

Late last night and in the early hours of to-day there was a strong Zeppelin raid in this country. There were five ships identified. The principal objective was evidently Woolwich Arsenal. . . . The two leading ships steered a S.W. course after crossing the coast line near Cromer. They arrived within striking distance of Woolwich between 11 and 12. . . . Both were held up and driven off by the force of our guns. The Southerly raider was so badly hit that she had to come down into the sea a few miles East of Margate. The crew were captured and the airship taken in tow by tugs. She foundered at the mouth of the Thames.

The other ships turned back before they reached Woolwich and by 2 a.m. they were all on the way back.

It is believed that at least one other ship was badly hit as two machine guns, some petrol tanks and other things were found which had been thrown down, and they all had bullet marks.

¹ Lord (afterwards Viscount) Northcliffe, newspaper proprietor.

² Lieut.-Col. the Hon. John Dawnay (afterwards Viscount Downe,) late 10th Hussars, A.D.C. to Lord French.

Sunday, April 2nd, 1916.

Early this morning an explosion occurred in the Faversham explosive factory. A great many killed and wounded. . . . About 5 this evening I got news of four airships approaching the Tyne and Firth of Forth. Two turned back and two came on. . . .

About 9 I received a report that two or three airships were approaching London. They came on later by Chelmsford and Brentwood and attacked Waltham Abbey, but by 11.30 p.m. they were driven off by the fire of our guns.

Tuesday, April 4th, 1916.

To-day I made a personal tour round the Woolwich N.E. and Waltham 'controls'. I saw the various gun detachments and Station Commanders and congratulated them on the good work they had done in repelling the recent air attacks on London. I inspected the ground and gun positions. The dispositions all seemed adequate and satisfactory.

Saturday, April 8th, 1916.

Arthur Paget came in this morning. He protests against the further weakening of his divisions by taking trained men away and replacing them by Derby recruits. I told him the line I adopted in regard to such methods.

Wednesday, April 12th, 1916.

I had a small luncheon party in my room at the Horse Guards. Asquith, Balfour, Walter Long, Shaw¹ and Lowther.²

They afterwards inspected the 'map' and 'zeppelin' rooms and were much impressed by all they saw.

Thursday, April 13th, 1916.

To-day I made an inspection of the Harwich fortress. . . . On arrival I was taken to see some trenches. . . . It appeared on enquiry that no trenches or defence works whatever have been made on the sea shore between Harwich and Dovercourt.

Rundle promised me to see this carried out at once.

I then visited the Beacon Hill battery. It was reported to me that hardly any of the gunners had fired a gun at all and that no ammunition had hitherto been allowed for practice. This has now been put right by an order issued by me in

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards the Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick) Shaw, Chief of General Staff, Home Forces.

² Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Major-Genl. Sir Cecil) Lowther, B.G.G.S. Home Forces.

March. . . . I lunched with Rundle at Harwich and met Commodore Tyrwhitt¹ whose name has been so prominent in this war. He gave me his views and ideas as to the probable result of a naval attack on Harwich. He doesn't fear it. He told me that in his opinion the Straits of Dover might quite conceivably be *forced* by a powerful German Fleet.

After lunch we crossed to Felixstowe. . . . The coast defence is not satisfactory. There are no ingenious plans or contrivances for concealing machine guns or securing good cover for men against the inevitable naval bombardment.

Wednesday, April 19th, 1916.

I have formed the opinion that the whole coast line is much too thinly guarded: that the coast between Yarmouth and Lowestoft is dangerously open: that the dangerous stretches of coast line at B—— and North of Southwold require immediate and careful attention: and there is a dangerous deficiency of heavy and machine guns.

I think a great deal might be done by *mining* the coast line near the shore.

Thursday, April 20th, 1916.

I had many visitors at the Horse Guards to-day. Cis Bingham,² Allenby, Clare White (Army Temperance Association), Ian Hamilton, Col. Dauncey (late Inniskilling Dragoons), Winston Churchill and Joe Laycock.³

Monday, April 24th, 1916.

We have information that on the 21st inst. an incoming boat was seized at Tralee which was found to be loaded with arms and ammunition. Sir Roger Casement was also captured and sent over to London. He is now lodged in Brixton Gaol.

On the same day a steamer approached Queenstown and on being boarded hoisted the German Flag and sank herself. Three German naval officers and 19 men were taken prisoners. . . . Friend is over here. . . . But all regular telegraphic communication has been cut off. We manage, however, to get some news through, and troops are being hurried to Dublin from other parts of the country.

¹ Commodore (afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Sir Reginald) Tyrwhitt, in command of Destroyer Flotillas of First Fleet.

² Major-Genl. the Hon. (afterwards Sir) Cecil Bingham, G.O.C. 1st Cavalry Division.

³ Major (afterwards Lieut.-Col. Sir Joseph) Laycock, Nottinghamshire Horse Artillery (T.A.).

Friend leaves to-night and I interviewed him this afternoon. I also went round and saw Birrell. . . . This evening a message came from the Admiralty to say that they had information that ships of the German High Seas Fleet were under weigh and they expected a bombardment of the coast in the morning. Also Zeppelin raid to-night was very likely.

Tuesday, April 25th, 1916.

News reached us later in the day that the German Fleet had made off S.E. and returned to German waters¹. . . . The news is coming through better from Dublin and indicates that the rebels have very little support from the populace and that the military authorities have the situation well in hand.

The following is detailed information of the events of the past 24 hours:—

"Sinn Feiners who had collected quietly in Dublin, possibly as Bank Holiday trippers, broke into rebellion about mid-day yesterday the 24th inst. and seized the Post Office, cutting most of the telegraph and telephone wires.

"By 9.40 p.m. the rebels were in possession of the Municipal Buildings, Harcourt Street and Westland Row Stations and had intrenched themselves in Stephen's Green. They are reported to have machine guns.

"The Castle, Kingsbridge Station, North Wall and the Electric Power Station were held by our troops.

"Troops were on their way from the Curragh and 4-18 Pr. guns were on their way from Athlone by 2 a.m. to-day. Communication is maintained with Amiens Street Station, which is guarded by troops, but there is no communication thence to the Castle. Heavy firing took place in the streets between 2 a.m. and 2.30 a.m.

"By 3 a.m. this morning the troops had succeeded in occupying the Municipal Buildings. The rebels were strengthening Sackville Street on both sides of the General Post Office. The rebels appeared to be occupying houses with small detachments in various parts of the city. No estimate has been given of the number of the rebels.

"A message timed 9.45 a.m. states that rebel sentries occupy street corners. The rebels spent the night barricading the positions they hold. The mob did some looting but do not appear to be concerned in the rebellion. By noon to-day

¹ After bombarding Lowestoft and being engaged by a British Cruiser Squadron.

General Friend had arrived in Ireland. 800 Infantry had arrived from the Curragh and 150 from Belfast, bringing the number of troops in the city up to 3,500. The scattered detachments of troops had been concentrated by this time.

"It is not the intention to attack the rebels' main strength in Sackville Street until reinforcements arrive."

Wednesday, April 26th, 1916.

I attended His Majesty this morning at an inspection of the 41st Division under Lawford.¹ They looked splendid and the King was very pleased. H.M. spoke of his visit to Lowestoft and the unsatisfactory nature of defence there.

He is rather pessimistic about the Irish situation and suggested my seeing Redmond.

Thursday, April 27th, 1916.

There was another very futile air raid late last night and in the early hours of this morning.

I saw Maxwell² at 10.30 this morning and gave him full instructions. He left for Ireland this afternoon.

Friday, April 28th, 1916.

I went to see Long this morning. He says there is no doubt we must now resort to universal compulsion—pure and simple. . . . He talked a great deal about Kitchener and his position.

By direction of the P.M. Lord Middleton came to see me at 12. He wanted to urge the advisability of sending more troops to Cork. He said the Sinn Feiners, although they hadn't risen, were in considerable strength and a show of force was absolutely necessary. He had himself just returned from Cork and the South of Ireland.

He also expressed a strong desire to go over himself at once and render any help he could in the way of advice. After some discussion I agreed to send over a strong battalion to-night from the 60th Division. . . . Later in the day Sir Edward Carson³ came in to see me at my particular request. He also dwelt very strongly upon the danger at Cork. He confirmed all Middleton said.

In view of this second opinion, I have thought it better to despatch the whole of the brigade to Cork (of which one

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Sydney) Lawford.

² Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards General the Rt. Hon.) Sir John Maxwell, appointed Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

³ Afterwards Lord Carson.

battalion has already been sent). Sir Edward said he thought Ulster was really all right but hoped the troops that had been sent from Belfast to help Dublin would be returned as soon as the situation would allow. He said he would gladly go over and help matters in Ulster or even in Dublin if he could do any good.

There are 50,000 Ulster volunteers (all armed) at their homes in Ireland and ready to turn out, if required, at a moment's notice. . . . He considers Redmond absolutely reliable. . . . Maxwell has asked for the Aldershot Cavalry Brigade which I am sending him.

Saturday, April 29th, 1916.

I had interviews this morning with Mr. John Redmond and Arthur Paget.

A letter arrived from Maxwell, describing his arrival and the state of affairs in Dublin. He found it impossible to express any decided opinion as to the general course of events, but he was hopeful.

Sunday, April 30th, 1916.

Late last night very favourable news arrived by wire from Maxwell. This was confirmed by letter brought to me from Maxwell by his A.D.C. (Lord Decies) this morning. . . . Maxwell's first letter was much more pessimistic than the second. It is clear that the situation changed sharply for the better in the middle of the day. He enclosed a copy of a rebel proclamation couched in very insolent language.

The second letter said that "the Rebel Provisional Government" wanted to know on what terms they could surrender. His reply was—"unconditional, arms must be laid down, and all come out in the open."

A few hours later the rebel Pearce surrendered (dressed in uniform).

Sinn Feiners in Cork and Kerry have intimated that they will surrender with arms to-morrow.

He adds, "I hope the movement is dead."

Decies personally explained the situation to me with a map of Dublin. He said it was quite unsafe to motor about Dublin. That his car was 'sniped' as he drove to catch the mail boat at Kingstown.

I endeavoured to talk with Maxwell on the telephone but it was almost impossible.

A telegram arrived from him in the middle of the day saying rebels were surrendering "freely" in Dublin. In other centres they hesitate to believe in surrender of leaders. Priests were busy going round and advising compliance with Pearce's instructions, etc. It is evident that the rebellion is rapidly collapsing. The leader Conolly is also in Maxwell's hands. He is said to be dangerously wounded and dying. . . .

I had an interview with the P.M. at 3. . . . My impression is that he is not inclined to lay much blame upon Friend, nor for that matter on Birrell either! . . . Stamfordham came in during the interview and carried back the latest news to the King.

Subsequently Robertson arrived. We then discussed the question of Hamilton for the Eastern Command. Asquith was very interesting about this. He said Hamilton's action in the Dardanelles had been very seriously commented upon, on all sides of the House . . . he felt that he couldn't sanction Hamilton's further employment at present.

Tuesday, May 2nd, 1916.

I went to Chatham this morning and there commenced an inspection of the "Thames and Medway" fortress. The fortress commander is General Mullaly,¹ R.E. . . . There is a very strong and well dug line of entrenchments all round the fortress running back several miles from the sea. . . . The redoubts are splendidly built and are the best I have seen in this country. . . . Altogether I was greatly pleased with my inspection. The fortress is a model of what such a place should be.

On my return to London I got the reports from Ireland and found a letter from Maxwell. He says all is going well there. He wants instructions as to how he is to deal with Countess Markievicz,² as the court is sure to sentence her to death. I have referred this to the P.M.

He asks that His Majesty may be requested to send a congratulatory message to the troops in Ireland.

Wednesday, May 3rd, 1916.

I communicated by telephone with Cust³ at Windsor this evening. I asked His Majesty to send a message to the troops

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Herbert) Mullaly, G.O.C. Thames and Medway Defences.

² A prominent rebel and afterwards M.P. (Sinn Fein) for St. Patrick's, Dublin.

³ Commander Sir Charles Cust, R.N., equerry to the King, 1892-1919.

in Ireland and told him I had conveyed his wishes, in regard to Ireland, to Maxwell.

A German airship which raided Scotland last night has been wrecked off the coast of Norway.

Thursday, May 4th, 1916.

On the whole I was quite pleased with all I saw at Dover. . . . General Bickford¹ commands the fortress and he strikes me quite favourably.

Friday, May 5th, 1916.

I went with the King to Bulford to-day to inspect the 61st Division under Mackenzie.² They looked wonderfully well and stood splendidly on parade.

Maxwell came over from Ireland last night as Lady Maxwell was dangerously ill. I found him waiting for me on my return. He had seen the P.M. and had been before the Cabinet. He has a complete understanding with the P.M. He returns to Dublin to-night.

Saturday, May 6th, 1916.

Wolfe Murray³ came in to see me this morning. He is relieving Rundle in command of the Eastern Command. The Countess Markievicz has been sentenced to death by Court Martial but the sentence has been commuted to penal servitude for life.

Monday, May 8th, 1916.

Lloyd⁴ came in to talk to me about the London Defences. He has completely laid out his line and has the 'volunteers' at work on it every Sunday. I have promised to go round with him one Sunday.

Tuesday, May 9th, 1916.

I left at 8 a.m. for Colchester to inspect the portion of Paget's command known as "the Clacton Peninsular." . . . Paget had arranged an excellent 'scheme' with a 'general idea' of a naval descent on the coast and a landing. . . . It was all very well done. . . . The operations were very instructive and realistic.

¹ Brig.-Genl. E. Bickford, late R.A.

² Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Colin) Mackenzie.

³ Lieut.-Genl. Sir James Wolfe Murray.

⁴ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl.) Sir Francis Lloyd, G.O.C. London District.

I was profoundly surprised to see the enormous improvement which has taken place in the defence arrangements since Paget's arrival.

Wednesday, May 17th, 1916.

In the afternoon I visited the hospital for maimed and disabled soldiers at Roehampton. I was received by the Commandant and shown the men's quarters and the workshops where they are taught electric work, carpentering and other trades. . . .

Mrs. Gwyn Holford afterwards took me over her establishment for making 'arms' and 'legs' for men who have lost them. I was much surprised to find what wonderful efficiency had been attained in their make and construction. Men who had both limbs amputated were walking about as if they had never lost them. I then visited the men at their tea and addressed them.

Before leaving I had a private talk with Mr. Myers who has organised all this splendid work and is greatly interested in its development throughout the country.

Thursday, May 18th, 1916.

I left London early this morning to finish inspection of Southern Army and its defences. . . . This ends my inspection of the Southern Army of Defence under Paget, and I was very much pleased to see the progress which has been made and the energy displayed by everyone.

There is a very good C.R.E. (who was also brought to my notice before by Birdwood), Brig.-Gen. Horniblow, R.E.

Friday, May 19th, 1916.

This morning the King visited the Horse Guards and inspected all our arrangements for meeting Zeppelin raids and attacks.

I afterwards inspected a new movable carriage, invented by Percy Scott, for the 3" A.A. gun. It is very mobile and he claims that it can travel at the rate of 30 miles an hour. It can be mounted and dismounted with great rapidity.

Wednesday, May 24th, 1916.

I made several inspections in the Aldershot Command to-day. First the 4th Canadian Division at Bramshott. I saw all three brigades at training of various kinds. One battalion (the 73rd Toronto Highlanders) was formed up for

inspection and presented a magnificent appearance. I liked the way Watson¹ (the newly appointed Divisional General) is getting hold of the Division.

The Division should soon be ready for the field.

I then went to the ranges and saw some musketry practice going on and afterwards visited the South Africans at Bordon. Here also I was much impressed by the physique of the men and their bearing on parade.

The thought came powerfully to me, after seeing the Canadians and South Africans, of the wonderful resources in *man power* of the British Empire, and what tremendous effect the war was having in welding all parts of the Empire together.

I then visited some batteries of heavy artillery—some were just going to France—very fine men and horses, all looking remarkably well. On my way back I inspected one of the Reserve Cavalry Regiments under Joe Aylmer,² and in the afternoon the Reserve Cavalry Brigade under Milner.³

Thursday, May 25th, 1916.

His Majesty inspected the 40th Division under Ruggles-Brise at Aldershot to-day. I was in attendance.

Saturday, May 27th, 1916.

This afternoon I inspected an officers' hospital at Highgate. Amongst others I saw Crichton⁴ of the 10th who has been laid up with wounds a long time.

Wednesday, May 31st, 1916.

I went to Heytesbury this morning and attended the King at his inspection of the 60th Division under Bulfin. The Division looked wonderfully fit and well.

Thursday, June 1st, 1916.

I went to Brentwood this morning where I saw the 9th and 10th Mounted Brigades under Binning⁵ and Fergusson⁶ respectively. . . . The horses had improved very much and both brigades looked well. The transport was particularly good and well turned out.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir David) Watson, Canadian Forces.

² Colonel E. K. G. Aylmer, late 19th Hussars.

³ Brig.-Genl. G. F. Milner, G.O.C. 1st Reserve Cavalry Brigade.

⁴ Major C. W. H. Crichton, 10th Hussars.

⁵ Brig.-Genl. Lord Binning, late Royal Horse Guards.

⁶ Colonel W. J. S. Fergusson, late 1st King's Dragoon Guards.

Burn-Murdoch¹ and his Staff were with me.
It was a very satisfactory inspection altogether.

Friday, June 2nd, 1916.

The German High Seas Fleet came out (I believe in great strength) on Wednesday (31st) and had reached the Northern shores of Denmark when our Cruiser Squadron from the Forth dashed across to try to cut them off from returning to the Elbe. Our ships were presently supported by four battle ships. As soon as our ships appeared the Germans turned back for their ports. The Cruiser Squadron closed and engaged them but as they were not supported in time by battleships they suffered severely. The *Queen Mary*, *Invincible* and *Indefatigable* (all battle cruisers) were sunk, also two smaller cruisers and eight destroyers.

The Germans also suffered heavily. . . . Henry Lawson² came in and told me all about his visit to the French front and the state of feeling generally in France. I gather that they think it is high time some others of the Allies launched a powerful offensive and took some of the German weight off Verdun.

Tuesday, June 6th, 1916.

Authentic news reached London this morning that H.M.S. *Hampshire* either struck a mine or was struck by a torpedo at 8 p.m. yesterday. Kitchener, FitzGerald³ and the Staff proceeding to Russia with him have all gone down in the ship. The *Hampshire* sailed from the H'd. Qrs. of the Grand Fleet yesterday afternoon. . . .

Thursday, June 8th, 1916.

I went down to Bedford to-day to inspect the 68th Division under Reade⁴. . . . I was favourably impressed by their appearance and the progress they were making.

Monday, June 12th, 1916.

Spears came in to see me this afternoon and gave a very interesting account of all that is transpiring in France. He fears it is possible we may *lose* the Ypres Salient. He says our men don't dig enough—nothing like so much as the French.

¹ Major-Genl. J. F. Burn-Murdoch, G.O.C. Mounted Division.

² Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Sir Henry) Lawson, G.O.C.-in-Chief, Northern Command.

³ Lieut.-Col. O. A. G. FitzGerald, Indian Army, Staff Officer to Lord Kitchener.

⁴ Major-Genl. R. N. R. Reade.

Nor have we yet understood (as the French have) the new methods of German infantry attack and how they save their men.

He gave me a lot of interesting information as to *numbers* and the class of heavy guns now employed on either side.

Tuesday, June 13th, 1916.

I attended the memorial service for Lord Kitchener at St. Paul's this morning.

Wednesday, June 14th, 1916.

He (Maxwell) is not at all satisfied with the state of affairs in Ireland. Sedition and discontent seem to be rampant everywhere. He wants his battalions brought up to strength at once. English drafts to be sent to Irish regiments to 'water' them. . . .

The C.I.G.S.¹ came over this evening and wanted to discuss the general situation abroad. We had a long talk about it, particularly with regard to Commanders and the advisability of an offensive movement in the near future. He also dined with me this evening.

Friday, June 16th, 1916.

I had an interview with the P.M. at 4 this afternoon. . . . I then asked him to remember Hunter's name when selecting a new Field Marshal and he received the suggestion very favourably.

Wednesday, June 21st, 1916.

I visited St. Dunstan's (blind) hospital this afternoon and was deeply interested in all I saw. Sir Arthur Pearson (himself blind) runs the whole thing. He received me and showed me round the place. I addressed the men and pinned the medal for Distinguished Conduct in the field on one of them.

Friday, June 23rd, 1916.

A letter arrived to-day from the Military Secretary offering me the Colonelcy of the Irish Guards. I have accepted.

Tuesday, June 27th, 1916.

I lunched with the Asquiths at 10 Downing Street, to-day. Lloyd George was there and I went away with him and had a talk with him at the House of Commons.

¹ Sir William Robertson.

Wednesday, June 28th, 1916.

Mrs. Townshend (wife of the defender of *Kut*¹) came to see me this morning to discuss the possibility of 'exchanging' the General.

Friday, June 30th, 1916.

The main attack to be made by us and the French opposite Amiens commences at daybreak to-morrow.

Lloyd George, Winston Churchill and Lord Reading² dined with me at 94 Lancaster Gate this evening.

Saturday, July 1st, 1916.

I went to H—— this morning and attended the King at his inspection of the Canadian Division (under General Watson). . . . The Division looked very smart and well turned out. The horses of the artillery and transport were excellent. The brigadiers were Col. Meighen: Lt.-Col. Kemball: and Brig.-Gen. Lord Brooke.³

After the inspection I went with the King to the Pavilion⁴ and stay there till to-morrow.

In the evening I paid my respects to the Empress Eugénie, who received me very kindly.

Sunday, July 2nd, 1916.

News came in late last night and this morning of the progress of the attack in France. . . . The whole line of attack was about 24 miles. . . . Some 2,000 to 3,000 prisoners were captured and a quantity of war material.

Our casualties for the day were estimated at 27,000.

The French made nearly double the depth of ground we did, and captured about twice as many prisoners. . . . I attended the King this morning (the Queen was also present as on the previous day) at a Church Parade of the cadets at Sandhurst.

Monday, July 3rd, 1916.

The French are apparently making excellent progress in the direction of Peronne and have taken many more prisoners. They have also captured some German heavy guns.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Charles) Townshend, G.O.C. during the siege of Kut, Mesopotamia, became a prisoner in the hands of the Turks on the fall of the town.

² The Rt. Hon. Viscount (afterwards Marquis of) Reading.

³ Afterwards Earl of Warwick, formerly A.D.C. to General French.

⁴ Royal residence at Aldershot, built for Queen Victoria.

It is therefore possible for me to form a fairly accurate estimate of that work and of the enormous extent to which His Majesty's Forces improved from a fighting point of view owing to the skill, energy and determination which he brought to bear upon the difficult problems which presented themselves for solution.

The changes which had to be effected and the difficulties which it would be necessary to overcome could not be thoroughly understood until the reports of Lord Elgin's Commission and the Esher Committee were fully studied and digested, and as this was only arrived at shortly before Lord Haldane took office no fair opportunity had accrued to his predecessors of forming a mature judgment of the necessities which had arisen or of preparing a scheme to meet them.

I do not therefore desire to dwell on the condition of affairs when Lord Haldane first went to the War Office, but I feel absolutely certain that if the events of 1914 had occurred in 1906 we could never have put six divisions in the field, found, equipped and furnished in the same thorough efficient manner or transported them across the sea with the same marvellous expedition. We could not have effected this or anything like it.

In spite of this unanswerable evidence of Lord Haldane's splendid work, there are people in this country who do not hesitate to accuse him of sacrificing efficiency to economy and making dangerous reductions in the Military Forces of the Crown.

Yet how stands the case?

So far from condemning him I believe the country owes the deepest debt of gratitude to Lord Haldane. I feel certain that our ability to hold our own, thrust back the enemy from the decisive objectives he was aiming at during the first few months of the war was the direct result of his military administration during the previous seven or eight years. It was never at any time contemplated to put a larger force than these six divisions in the field, and the speed with which they were placed there, and their condition when they took their place in the line of battle left nothing to be desired.

But what, in my humble opinion, stamps Lord Haldane for all time as a great military administrator is his conception of the Territorial Army and Territorial County Associations.

I well remember the first discussion which took place when the plan was outlined. The idea of organising War

Divisions complete with Staffs, artillery and transport was entirely his. Many soldiers looked aghast at the scheme.

Pending the raising of the New Army it was necessary after a time to support these six divisions and then we felt indeed the value of that wonderful Territorial Army which he called into being.

An idea prevails in some quarters that something of what has happened should have been foreseen and provided for. Can any sane men who are mindful of the state of thought in this country as it existed before the war, doubt what would have been the answer given to any Government or Minister who asked for any force such as we see in the field at present.

My Lords, it is easy to be wise after the event. But the fault of inadequate preparation to meet this great war rests on no Government or individual Minister. It is the fault of the people themselves who closed their ears to every argument and persuasion, and we are now as a nation paying the penalty.

The vituperation with which one of the greatest of England's statesmen has been undeservedly assailed is only another instance among many of the sinister effect produced by this terrible fog of war, which has hung over the Empire for nearly two years, which has caused each successive event throughout the course of this campaign to be distorted, magnified or minimised in accordance with the transient humour of the moment, which has apparently destroyed all sense of proportion and has caused public opinion to be swayed by every idle rumour which prevailed.

[EXTRACTS FROM SIR JOHN FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Wednesday, July 26th, 1916.

I received His Majesty at Liverpool Street Station at 8.30 this morning and went in his train to attend him at the inspection of the 62nd Division under Braithwaite.¹ . . . The artillery were well turned out but the horses were poor. The infantry looked very well and in excellent condition.

Friday, July 28th, 1916.

It will be a very difficult matter to bring these Irish regiments up to strength and maintain them by voluntary recruiting.

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir Walter) Braithwaite.

Saturday, July 29th, 1916.

An air raid (of 10 ships) took place last night but only three or four ships crossed the coast. They dropped a few bombs but did no practical damage.

Tuesday, August 1st, 1916.

There was an air raid last night but no damage was done and no casualties reported. Ten ships started, and seven crossed the East coast at various points. One is reported to be badly hit.

I went to Shoeburyness to-day and inspected the Gunnery school there. Col. Sclater-Booth,¹ R.A. commands there. His battery (H.A. of 1st Cavalry Brigade) was nearly wiped out at N— on Sept. 1/14,² he himself being badly wounded. . . . Excellent work is being done.

Wednesday, August 2nd, 1916.

Churchill showed me a memorandum on the recent operations which he is submitting to the Cabinet.

Arthur Paget came to see me and complains bitterly about his depleted battalions, but I told him there was nothing to be done. Losses in France must be made good.

Thursday, August 3rd, 1916.

There was an air raid of considerable extent in the early hours of this morning. Some eight or nine ships came over. Numerous bombs were dropped at Harwich, Dover and places further inland but no damage is reported anywhere. I came to the Horse Guards myself at 12.30 a.m. and remained till the ships had all returned out to sea (about 3 a.m.)

Monday, August 7th, 1916.

Maxwell came in to see me this morning. He is satisfied with the military control in Ireland but considers the general state of the country deplorable and certainly very dangerous.

Wednesday, August 9th, 1916.

There was another air raid in the early hours of this morning. Eleven ships (the whole Zeppelin strength of Germany) approached the coast but only three or four ships actually came inland. Two men, two women and three children

¹ Lieut.-Col. (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) the Hon. Walter Sclater-Booth.

² Action referred to in Sir John French's diary of September 2nd, 1914, on pages 148-149.

were killed and about fourteen persons were injured. No military damage of any kind was effected.

Thursday, August 10th, 1916.

I dined 'on guard' last night.

Tuesday, August 15th, 1916.

I left Euston last night by North Wall train and reached Dublin at 7.45 this morning. I was received by Maxwell and his Staff and a guard of honour of the 3rd Battn. Royal Irish.

I went to Phoenix Park at 11 and inspected a brigade of artillery and the 176th Brigade of the 59th Division under Brig.-Gen. Carleton. Col. Peel (C.R.A. 59th Division) was present.

I then saw the Dublin garrison. . . . The troops looked well both in appearance and turn out.

In the afternoon (after lunching with the Angleseys¹) I opened a Y.M.C.A. tent and afterwards drove round the city with Lowe,² who explained his plans for quelling the Sinn Fein rebellion. It was all most interesting and great credit is due to Lowe for his prompt, energetic and skilful dispositions.

In the evening we dined at the Royal Hospital.³

Wednesday, August 16th, 1916.

We left the Royal Hospital by motor about 10 and reached the Curragh about 11 a.m. . . . The horses of the artillery were not looking too well, otherwise the troops presented a splendid appearance. It is one of the best inspections I have seen since I came home. . . . I lunched with Sandbach⁴ and left at 4 by train from Kildare for Cork, arriving there at 8.45 p.m. . . . His Majesty has returned from the front where he has spent about ten days.

Thursday, August 17th, 1916.

I inspected the Cork Garrison in the morning. . . . The Lord Mayor of Cork attended the parade.

Saturday, August 19th, 1916. [London]

There was a Naval demonstration by the German High Seas Fleet to-day. One group of ships was located at the

¹ Marquess of Anglesey, late Captain, Royal Horse Guards.

² Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Major-Genl.) W. H. M. Lowe.

³ Official residence of the Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

⁴ Major-Genl. A. E. Sandbach, late R.E.

Dogger Bank. There was a line of Zeppelins (9) covering the movement and extending from the coast of Norway by Aberdeen, South to E. of Cromer.

I have ordered the Northern Command and the Northern and Southern Armies of Defence to assume a 'warning' attitude.

Sunday, August 20th, 1916.

The German Naval concentration broke up on finding superior Naval forces against them and returned to port.

Two of our cruisers (small) were torpedoed and sank. We got two German submarines. Nearly all hands on board the cruisers were picked up and saved.

Monday, August 21st, 1916.

I arrived at the Central Station, Glasgow at 8.15 this morning and was received by Ewart¹ and his Staff and a guard of honour of the 3rd Royal Scots Fusiliers.

During the morning I went by train to Fort Matilda and inspected the 3rd Battn. Royal Scots Fusiliers and 4th Scottish Rifles—also the R.G.A and R.E.

I then viewed the lie of the forts in the Clyde and inspected the Torpedo factory (Naval) which was very interesting. Returning to Glasgow I lunched with the Lord Provost.

After lunch we went to the ceremony of unveiling the statue erected by the city of Glasgow in memory of Lord Roberts.

The Countess Roberts (Lady Aileen)² unveiled the memorial. Derby³ made the principal speech, and I made a short one in proposing a vote of thanks to Lady Roberts.

Wednesday, August 24th, 1916.

I then embarked on a mine-sweeper where I was met by Sir Frederick Hamilton, Admiral Comdg.-in-Chief.⁴ Landed at the island of Inchcalm and inspected the fortifications. . . . We went on and landed at the island of Inchkeith. This has been made very strong since I saw it last about four years ago.

Three 9.2 guns are in position and four 6-in.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. Sir John Ewart, G.O.C.-in-Chief, Scottish Command.

² Elder daughter of 1st Earl Roberts whom she succeeded in 1914, Lord Roberts' only son having been killed at the battle of Colenso on December 10th, 1899.

³ The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Derby, Under Secretary for War.

⁴ Coast of Scotland.

As it is intended to bring a large part of the Battle Fleet from the North to the Forth, the main line of defence is being pushed out to Inchkeith and Kinghorn and all the channels strongly protected by booms, etc.

The Admiral told me he would prefer to have batteries still further forward (at May Island and North Berwick) armed with 12-in. guns, so as to keep hostile ships at a distance.

We then landed at Granton where a guard of honour of the fishermen (who have been working on the mine-sweepers since the beginning of the war) was drawn up. I was met by Admiral Startin¹ who, with the rank of Commodore (he was retired before the war) has been organising and commanding them.

Friday, August 25th, 1916. [London]

There was a considerable air raid in the early hours of this morning.

Sunday, September 3rd, 1916.

The most extensive air raid which has yet happened took place in the early hours of this morning.

Monday, September 4th, 1916.

I am rather dissatisfied with the shooting of the guns in the raid of Sunday morning and have sent Drake,² Inspector of Horse and Field Artillery, to visit the various stations and look into what happened. I am in hopes there may be some improvement.

Tuesday, September 5th, 1916.

I visited three hospitals this afternoon and talked to a large number of wounded officers and men.

Wednesday, September 6th, 1916.

The crew of the Zeppelin we brought down on Sunday (15 in number) were buried at Cheshunt this morning with military honours.

I saw Drake (Insp. of Art.) this morning and received his report on the shooting of the guns during the raid. More attention must be paid to observation of fire. In some instances the guns were slow in getting off their rounds. On the whole the shooting was fair.

¹ Admiral (afterwards Sir James) Startin.

² Brig.-Genl. B. F. Drake, late R.A.

We have picked up an important part of a Zeppelin which flew over Massingham where they dropped it. The strong inference is that this airship was badly hit and wanted to lighten the ship.

Friday, September 8th, 1916.

Some more valuable parts of a Zeppelin have been found near Cambridge which have evidently been thrown over to lighten the ship after being hit by our guns. . . . This evening I opened some new buildings in the Y.M.C.A., one of which was offered by Mrs. Alec Tweedie in memory of her son who was killed early this year.

Saturday, September 9th, 1916.

Monro¹ came to see me to-day to say good-bye before going to India as C-in-C. I had a very interesting talk with him.

Tuesday, September 12th, 1916.

I there (Andover) found the horses and rode to Tidworth where I inspected the 2nd Reserve Cavalry Brigade under Lumley². The C.O.'s were Decies,³ Colvin⁴ and Pollock-Morris.⁵ Colvin's horses looked the best, but the whole parade and turn out was very good. . . . In the afternoon I visited the 3rd Australian Division and interviewed the three Brigade Commanders and the C.R.A. General Monash⁶ commands the Division. General Sir Newton Moore⁷ (for some years Agent General for Australia and formerly Premier of West Australia) is in general charge of the Australian Forces in this country. He was present at my inspection.

I was quite satisfied with all I saw of the Australian troops and their training.

Thursday, September 14th, 1916.

Tom Bridges⁸ came to see me to-day. He gave me some very interesting accounts of the work done by his division.

¹ General Sir Charles Monro.

² Brig.-Genl. the Hon. Osbert Lumley, late 11th Hussars.

³ Lieut.-Col. Lord Decies, late 7th Hussars.

⁴ Lieut.-Col. F. F. Colvin, late 9th Lancers.

⁵ Colonel W. Pollock-Morris, late 18th Hussars.

⁶ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir John) Monash, A.I.F.

⁷ Major-Genl. Sir Newton Moore.

⁸ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. Sir G. T. M.) Bridges, G.O.C. 19th Division.

He thinks the breaking of the German line is quite a feasible operation and says we have now some 145 squadrons (French and English) in waiting behind the line to take advantage of any break.

There has been another successful advance by the British troops. . . . They have made good an average of a mile in depth. 'Caterpillars' were employed and are reported to have acted well.

Monday, September 18th, 1916.

The losses in the fighting last week were very heavy. Raymond Asquith¹ of the Grenadiers has been killed.

Tuesday, September 20th, 1916.

I went to Bramshott this morning to inspect the Canadian Training Division.

The training is going on very well and is largely carried out by officers who have seen much fighting at the front.

I was as much impressed by the excellence of the Canadian personnel as I have ever been. I am bound to say in this respect they compare most favourably with our own men.

I saw an instrument, designed to replace flag-signalling which has been invented by an officer at the front. It is very simple and consists of a board, on which the letters of the alphabet are inscribed, which is stuck up in the trench by uprights and stays so as to be seen from front and rear. A disc is then passed along the board to indicate the letter, and thus words are spelt out. There are luminous contrivances which enable it to be used at night. There are many objections to its practical use but they may be overcome and I have asked Hunter to forward it here officially.

I was delighted to meet my old friend Josceline Wodehouse² looking on.

Thursday, September 21st, 1916.

Locke Elliot³ came in to see me this morning. He gave me some interesting news from the front particularly with regard to the employment of the 'tanks.' . . . I went to see Guy Brooke⁴ in hospital this afternoon. He goes on well.

¹ Prime Minister's son.

² General Sir Josceline Wodehouse, late R.A.

³ Lieut.-Genl. Sir Edward Locke Elliot, late Indian Staff Corps.

⁴ Brig.-Genl. Lord Brooke (afterwards Earl of Warwick), wounded on Western front.

Saturday, September 23rd, 1916.

I attended His Majesty to-day at Aldershot at the inspection of the 57th Division. . . . News of approaching airships was received about 8 p.m.

Sunday, September 24th, 1916.

An air raid took place last night and in the early hours of this morning.

[Fourteen or fifteen airships took part. Two were brought down. One near Billericay was destroyed and the crew were killed. The other at Little Wigborough was only partly damaged, the crew of 2 officers and 20 men being taken prisoners.

Casualties—Killed: 23 men, 12 women, 3 children.

Injured: 54 men, 42 women, 24 children.]

Monday, September 25th, 1916.

I went to Colchester this morning and was met there by General Blomfield,¹ comdg. 66th Division. He motored me to Little Wigborough where the airship L.32 was brought down early yesterday morning.

The envelope has been burnt and various parts of the ship are badly damaged but she is practically intact and will certainly render full use and value as a specimen of the kind of craft which the German "Super-Zeppelin" is. There were many shell marks on her and she was struck by a lot of bullets.

I got back to London about 4 and at 6 heard of the approach of another air raid.

Tuesday, September 26th, 1916.

Arthur Paget came to see me this morning and brought me a torn flag taken from Zeppelin No. L.32 at Little Wigborough. . . . Air raid in the early hours of this morning.

Wednesday, September 27th, 1916.

I reached Liverpool at 6 this morning and commenced the inspection of the Western Command at 10.

Friday, September 29th, 1916.

My opinion of the efficient condition of the Western Command is fully confirmed.

¹ Major-Genl. C. J. Blomfield.



Lord Ypres

M. Poincaré

Photo, Continental Daily Mail

THE CEREMONY AT MEAUX IN COMMEMORATION OF THE VICTORY OF THE MARNE



I expressed this to General Sir P. Campbell¹ on taking leave of him at the station.

Tuesday, October 3rd, 1916.

Another air raid took place on the night of Sept. 30th and in the early hours of Sunday, Oct. 1st.

Wednesday, October 4th, 1916.

Col. Proby² called this morning about the heavy casualties which the Irish Guards have suffered in the recent fighting. We want at least twelve sulbalterns.

Thursday, October 5th, 1916.

The reports that the airship L.17 was wrecked in the North Sea near the Frisian Islands are confirmed. It is clear that she was badly damaged by gun-fire from Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Sunday, October 8th, 1916.

I was much struck with the appearance and physique of all the groups of volunteers I saw. They seem to be animated by the highest spirit.

In speaking to all of them I particularly referred to the present terms of their service (14 days notice of quitting) and explained the position of the Govt. in reference to the supply of arms and equipment in such circumstances. They took what I said in very good part.

Monday, October 9th, 1916.

Lovat Fraser³ lunched and told me some interesting facts with regard to Northcliffe's visit to the front.

Tuesday, October 10th, 1916.

Henry Wilson and Horne⁴ came over in the same boat⁵ and I had a long talk with both of them . . . on reaching the Ritz (Paris) I found Bertie (British Ambassador) waiting for us.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. Sir William Pitcairn Campbell, G.O.C.-in-Chief, Western Command.

² Colonel D. J. Proby, Commanding Irish Guards Regt. and Regimental District.

³ Member of the Editorial Staff of *The Times*.

⁴ General Sir Henry (afterwards Lord) Horne, G.O.C. First Army.

⁵ Lord French's visit to the French Front to examine French artillery methods.

Wednesday, October 11th, 1916.

He (Joffre) has agreed to send a small mission to England to look round our artillery schools if the Govt. so desire.

I then asked him to accept the silver clock I brought him as a souvenir of our service together. . . . I was particularly impressed with photography. The French have brought this, in connection with aviation, to very great perfection.

We then visited the School at La Bourgaïs where I was met by the Governor of Paris.

Here I was also intensely interested. Aeroplanes were flown fitted with rockets intended to act against Zeppelins.

I then saw some machines which were fitted with guns (37 cm.) which were capable of being trained so as to bear on objectives immediately *above* and *below* the machine.

Thursday, October 12th, 1916.

We then visited the aerodrome (Verdun area) and afterwards had breakfast with the General¹ and his Staff. My old friend Gen. Maud'huy was there and I was very glad to see him again. . . . Verdun lies in a hollow. All along its Eastern front are ranges of hills of medium height lying in successive crest lines towards the East. East and West of the fortress (through which the Meuse flows) is another strong line of defence of which the fortress forms the most important 'point d'appui.' . . . The town was very much battered at the commencement of the battle and several public buildings and whole streets of houses have been knocked to pieces.

The cathedral, which we visited, is badly damaged and the Bishop's palace is almost a wreck. . . . The Citadel is the most interesting feature in the defences. It is an old place consisting of a huge rocky eminence surrounded by a wide ditch of great depth. The escarp and counterscarp are built up by massive stone walls on the face of the rock. These walls are now being pierced with embrasures blown out of the solid rock to hold heavy guns of long range. From such cover they will be absolutely secure from any damage and their positions impossible to discover.

Down below the rock, extending all over its whole extent, there is a veritable 'town'—hospital: church: place d'armes: messrooms: kitchens: bakeries and a kind of hall or chamber

¹ General Nivelle.

where the President, Ministers and Generals assembled last month to receive the decorations conferred on the town by the various Allied Powers.

We spent a most interesting day and returned to Sailly about 6.

After dining with General Nivelle (who was kind enough to accept a small souvenir of my visit from me) we left by train for Chalons. . . .

Friday, October 13th, 1916.

. . . We¹ then went back to Chalons to lunch and the General² made a very kind and generous speech in proposing our healths. Huguet³ was at lunch and I was very glad to have an opportunity of a talk with him. . . .

Saturday, October 14th, 1916.

. . . We⁴ then inspected the photograph work, which was quite excellent, and afterwards examined all the arrangements for intercommunication, etc. This is on an excellent system and the French are fast evolving a regular tactical training and instruction for aircraft. I was struck by the similarity of it to our old cavalry reconnaissance principles. There is a continual flow of the latest information throughout all units concerned. A certain quota of aircraft is told off to each unit in accordance with its size and the rôle it has to carry out, whilst the other air detachments 'take on' the enemy's aircraft and hold them off. I discovered that there is a limitation in the above distribution of which I was not before aware. If aircraft employed to observe and communicate are too close to one another they interfere with the wireless connection and the messages get mixed up. . . . During the whole of our visit to the front the French placed a special train (the President's⁵ own) at our disposal and made us most comfortable.

Tuesday, October 17th, 1916. London.

At 4.30 I had a long interview with the S. of S.⁶ and told him of my French visit.

¹ Lord French and his Staff.

² General Gouraud, commanding IV French Army.

³ Colonel Huguet (in charge of French Mission attached to G.H.Q., 1914-1915).

⁴ Visiting French aerodromes with General Foch.

⁵ M. Poincaré.

⁶ The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, Secretary of State for War.

He has asked me to put my report in writing and send it privately to him.

Wednesday, October 18th, 1916.

In the afternoon I was examined for half an hour by the 'Dardanelles' Committee in 'A' committee room, House of Lords.

Friday, October 20th, 1916.

I also had a visit from Repington who brought me a most extraordinary message from Northcliffe which I have practically ignored!

By His Majesty's orders I went to the station (Paddington) to meet the Duke of Connaught on his arrival from Canada.

Saturday, October 21st, 1916.

I had an audience of the King at Buckingham Palace at 12.30 and told His Majesty about my tour round the French front and reported the situation and condition of the volunteers.

Sunday, October 22nd, 1916.

I left Liverpool Street by special train at 9 this morning on my usual Sunday 'volunteers' inspection. There was a guard of honour of Royal Defence Corps men on the platform. . . . The more I see of these volunteers the more impressed I become with their value for home defence. Their steadiness on parade is very remarkable and they are full of keenness.

Thursday, October 26th, 1916.

I left St. Pancras this morning for Leeds, arriving there at 1.30 p.m.

I was met by Gen. Lawson and his Staff and proceeded at once to inspect the Anti-air Defences of Leeds. . . . In the afternoon I motored to Otley and inspected the Bombing and Grenade School under Major Burton. . . . Major Burton appears to be an excellent officer. He rose from the ranks of the R.E. He has gained much distinction from his bravery in saving life at sea.

Before leaving I received a telephone message from the S. of S. for War saying that the Govt. had decided to move Sir J. Maxwell from Ireland to the Northern Command and Gen. Lawson to Guernsey.

We returned to Leeds and stayed for the night with the

Lord Mayor (Mr. Lupton) who had a large dinner in the Mayor's parlour. No speeches!

Friday, October 27th, 1916.

The hospitals were excellent and show what Leeds has done during the war.

Saturday, October 28th, 1916.

The enemy's destroyers raided the Channel last night.

[Action in which enemy destroyers and zeppelins were engaged by British Naval forces about 18 to 20 miles East of Dover. British destroyers *Amazon* and *Nubian* damaged, the latter being beached in sinking condition at Dover.]

Sunday, October 29th, 1916.

I made a third tour of inspection of volunteers to-day. It poured with rain till evening and it was extraordinary what little effect this appeared to have upon the numbers on parade or upon the bearing and cheerfulness of all ranks. This applied not only to the troops but also to the spectators. Just as great crowds as before assembled in the streets and on the ground which looked like a sea of umbrellas! It speaks very well for the spirit of the country.

All I saw confirmed me more and more in the conclusions I have arrived at with regard to the use and value of the volunteers.

Monday, October 30th, 1916.

. . . C. Warde¹ also came in and accepted the 'Volunteer' post I offered him.

Friday, November 3rd, 1916.

Lord Northcliffe called to see me and absolutely repudiated Repington's message in the sense in which it was put before me. He was very friendly and accepted an invitation from me to come to my volunteers inspection on Nov. 19th. Smith-Bingham² came in at 3. I hadn't seen him since just after he was carried wounded out of the trenches at Loos.

Saturday, November 4th, 1916.

Mahon³ came to see me to-day on being appointed C.-in-C. in Ireland.

¹ Colonel (afterwards Sir Charles) Warde, late 10th Hussars.

² Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) O. B. B. Smith-Bingham, late 3rd Dragoon Guards.

³ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards the Rt. Hon.) Sir Bryan Mahon.

Sunday, November 5th, 1916.

I continued to-day my Sunday volunteer inspections. . . . All I saw confirmed my previous experiences of the volunteers. Their energy and zeal, their soldier-like bearing, and their appearance on parade, combined with their unconcern at having to stand for over an hour in the pouring rain, won my deepest admiration. I feel sure they will prove to be a most valuable force.

Tuesday, November 7th, 1916.

I dined with Haldane¹ this evening and attended a meeting of the 'Eighty' Club. Haldane was in the chair and Winston Churchill was present. . . . I gave a short address on the lessons of the war and there was a most interesting discussion afterwards.

Wednesday, November 8th, 1916.

Philip Chetwode² came in this afternoon. He has got command of a Corps in Egypt. We had a long talk about the situation. I don't think he shares in the advanced cavalry ideas at the front.

Thursday, November 9th, 1916.

In the evening I attended the Lord Mayor's banquet and returned thanks for the army.

Friday, November 10th, 1916.

Paget,³ late C.R.A. 6th Corps, came in this morning. He tells me Keir⁴ has been relieved from the command of the 6th Corps.

Thursday, November 16th, 1916.

. . . He (Stamfordham) wants the King to give the V.C. *in public* and has asked me to write to the Duke of Connaught. I have done so.

Sunday, November 19th, 1916.

I made a tour of inspection of volunteers to-day. . . . Everyone who saw these parades was tremendously struck with the zeal, energy and appearance on parade of these volunteers.

¹ Viscount Haldane of Cloan, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, 1912-1915.

² Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Field Marshal) Sir Philip Chetwode, late 19th Hussars.

³ Brig.-Genl. W. L. H. Paget.

⁴ Lieut.-Genl. Sir John Keir.

At Nottingham and Sheffield the enthusiasm displayed by the public was quite remarkable. . . .

Saturday, November 25th, 1916.

I had an audience of the King this morning at Buckingham Palace. His Majesty conversed with me on some very confidential matters.

The King sanctioned the dress proposed for the new pipers of the Irish Guards.

Monday, November 27th, 1916.

I attended a memorial service for the officers and men of the Irish Guards who have fallen in the present war, which was held at the Cathedral, Westminster, this morning.

The Duke of Connaught and Queen Amélie of Portugal were present.

I lunched with the Lytteltons¹ at Chelsea Hospital and went on with Lady L. to open a 'Nurses Club' in Ebury Street.

Frankie Lloyd came in to see me to-day about an endeavour he is making to insist on restaurants serving officers in uniform with meals at reduced (and fixed) prices.

Tuesday, November 28th, 1916.

Late last night and in the early hours of this morning there was another Zeppelin raid. . . .

[Nine airships took part. One was brought down in flames in the sea, about 15 miles N.E. of Lowestoft, by Royal Naval Air Service machines, and another after being attacked by an aeroplane fell into the sea in flames near Hartlepool. About 100 bombs known to have been dropped. Casualties very slight. Some houses damaged. No damage of military importance.]

Wednesday, November 29th, 1916.

The aeroplane which invaded London yesterday was brought down by the French in the neighbourhood of Dunkirk about 4 or 5 last evening. It was a German seaplane and two naval officers were in it. Also a large chart map of London.

Thursday, November 30th, 1916.

I spoke this evening in the House of Lords on the second reading of the volunteers bill.

¹ General the Rt. Hon. Sir Neville Lyttelton, Governor of Chelsea Hospital.

Monday, December 4th, 1916.

I had a visit to-day from Proby and De Breteuil (Liaison officer with Joffre to the War Office). The latter gave me a cheerful account of the French army.

A Government crisis is going on. Mr. Asquith informed the H. of C. this evening that the King had consented to a reconstruction of the Cabinet. The H. of C. adjourned till Thursday.

Tuesday, December 5th, 1916.

The Germans and Austrians are closing in on Bucharest. . . . All the cavalry reserve regiments are being depleted of men to furnish drafts for France. Some regiments will only have about 150 men for 800 or 900 horses!

Friday, December 8th, 1916.

Lloyd George is P.M. and is forming a Govt.

Sunday, December 10th, 1916.

L.G. has completely formed his Govt. Derby is S. of S. for War. I had a nice letter from him telling me of it, to which I replied.

Bucharest has fallen.

Monday, December 11th, 1916.

Bobby White¹ and Toby Long² both called. It was amusing to note the diametrically *opposite* opinions they expressed as to the situation at the front.

Thursday, December 14th, 1916.

. . . We got a great reception at Cardiff and were shown great kindness and attention. I made a short speech at the lunch and addressed the volunteers on parade.

The feeling in Wales is very much against the conclusion of any peace at present.

Saturday, December 16th, 1916.

I left Euston at 2 p.m. for inspection of Scottish volunteers. We reached Lockerbie at 9.30 p.m. and stayed for the night at Castle Milk with Sir R. Jardine. . . . There were splendid musters everywhere and great enthusiasm. . . . The inspection at Glasgow was held in dense fog which, however, made no difference in the numbers on parade or looking on!

¹ Brig.-Genl. the Hon. Robert White, G.O.C. 184th Infantry Brigade, B.E.F.

² Brig.-Genl. Walter Long, commanding an Infantry Brigade, B.E.F.

Monday, December 18th, 1916.

There has been another great French advance at Verdun. I have sent a wire of congratulation to General Nivelle.

Tuesday, December 19th, 1916.

I had a visit from Sir Evelyn Wood¹ to-day. He was looking hale and hearty and nothing like his age (about 77!).

Henry Wilson also came in. I had a long and interesting talk with him. He was very happy and cheery. I had also a visit from Allenby, who was also in excellent form and very hopeful.

Wednesday, December 20th, 1916.

Great speeches were made in the Lords and Commons last night by Curzon² and Lloyd George respectively. The principles and views of the new Government were clearly laid down.

Asquith also delivered a somewhat weak reply in the Commons to L.G.

Thursday, December 21st, 1916.

At 11.45 I paid my first official visit to the S. of S. We discussed many things—the undefended state of the coast-line: the question of 'leave': volunteer matters: . . . the establishment of allotment grounds in the neighbourhood of camps: publication of the recent — Court of Inquiry, etc., etc. . . . I dined with Charles and Mrs. Hunter last night and met Dr. and Mrs. Page (American Ambassador).

I heard all about the question of President Wilson's note on peace which is published in this morning's paper.

Wednesday, December 27th, 1916.

Bobby Ward³ and Col. Farquhar⁴ brought me a new rifle, which the latter has invented, for the inspection of Shaw⁵ and myself. The best description of it would seem to be that it unites the qualities of the automatic rifle and the Lewis gun. It appears a most effective weapon and weighs about 10½ lbs.

I had an interview this evening with Mr. Ian Macpherson, the newly appointed Under-S. of S. for War. He came over here to see me about the volunteers.

¹ Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, born in 1838.

² The Rt. Hon. Earl Curzon, President of the Air Board.

³ Captain the Hon. Robert Ward, late Worcestershire Yeomanry Cavalry.

⁴ Lieut.-Col. M. G. Farquhar, late Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry.

⁵ Major-Genl. (afterwards Lieut.-Genl. the Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick) Shaw, Chief of General Staff, Home Forces.

Amongst other things he asked me what I thought about taking up the Irish volunteers. I told him that in the present condition of Ireland I should entirely deprecate any such proposal. He agreed with me.

Thursday, December 28th, 1916.

I had an interview to-day with a representative (Mr. Bell) of a Chicago paper (*Chicago Daily News*). It was at the instance of Lord Newton, Under-S. of S. for Foreign Affairs. He asked my views on several points relating to the impressment of populations of small countries (Belgium, Servia, Poland) by the Germans. I told him all I thought.

I had my answers to his queries typed out and sent to S. of S. for War, who said he approved.

Tuesday, January 2nd, 1917.

I went to see Walter Long¹ this morning (at his own request) at the Colonial Office. He discussed a very secret and confidential subject with me, and I am to think things over and see him again.

Wednesday, January 3rd, 1917.

In the afternoon I visited the 'Freemasons' hospital at Chelsea, also three other hospitals at Campden Hill (1) and Palmers Green (2), all run by Lord Knutsford,² and all given up to cases of 'shell shock.'

I saw one or two rather sad cases, amongst them the naval officers who took the submarine through the Dardanelles and dived under the Turkish boom and mine field!

Friday, January 5th, 1917.

I had another interview with Walter Long to-day. I told him fully what my reasons were for refusing to meet his suggestion as regards the C.-in-C. in France and his Staff.

[SPEECH AT OPENING OF WAR EXHIBITION AT BURLINGTON HOUSE ON JANUARY 7TH, 1917].

I am sure we all deeply regret the absence of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, whose place I am most unworthily filling this afternoon.

¹ Secretary of State for the Colonies.

² Viscount Knutsford.

Such an Exhibition as this cannot fail to be of great use in existing surroundings. It should bring home to the minds of the community at large some idea of the nature of war as it is conducted to-day. People who are not soldiers have long been familiar with the long range rifle and field gun, but they will see many implements of war displayed in this Exhibition about which none of us had any knowledge before the commencement of the war. Some of these, indeed, are revivals of weapons used a century ago. Time does not allow me to go into any detail on these subjects, which, indeed, might fill volumes, but if these exhibits are properly studied, explained and understood, the whole nation will be better educated to the terribly difficult problems which have faced our commanders in the war, and will realise more clearly the reason why such demands have to be made on the community for supply of men, munitions and money.

The object for which the Exhibition is held is much easier to talk about. It is to provide funds for the Red Cross, and on this subject words completely fail me. I have nothing like the power of speech or eloquence to do adequate justice to all the Red Cross have done throughout this war, and how deeply they have deserved our utmost sympathy, gratitude, help and support.

I think it was during my time in France that they experienced their greatest difficulties and trials, and I was a witness to the arduous and determined efforts which they made to surmount all difficulties and to render the fullest measure of help to the wounded soldiers.

I should like to take this opportunity of personally thanking, in the name of the whole army, Sir Arthur Stanley and those who have assisted him for all the splendid work they have done on their behalf.

I do not wish to detain you any longer, but before concluding I cannot help expressing the very great pleasure it has given me to be received here by a Guard of Honour of the Artists' Rifles. This grand corps has done glorious service throughout the war, and was one of the first Territorial regiments to arrive in France. They rendered me help of a special kind in regard to the provision of officers, which I shall never forget.

In the hope that this Exhibition may have all the success it so richly deserves, I now declare it to be open.

[EXTRACTS FROM LORD FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Wednesday, January 10th, 1917.

. . . Spears also came in. He is on his way out to France again. He told me much of great interest about Northcliffe and others! . . .

. . . I dined with the S. of S.¹ to-night in Stratford Place and met the Duke of Connaught and the P.M.²

Sunday, January 14th, 1917.

I returned from Panshanger³ this evening. There was a pleasant party there. Asquith and Mrs. A., Balfour, Lady Wemyss,⁴ Revelstoke,⁵ Miss E. Asquith, and some very nice children. I had a long walk and a talk with Mrs. Asquith.

This morning, by command of the King, I attended a requiem mass at Westminster Cathedral for the late Count Benckendorff, Ambassador from Russia. . . . I dined with C.I.G.S. at United Service Club to meet Gen. Nivelle and French officers. The P.M. was present.

Tuesday, January 16th, 1917.

I lunched with Derby to meet Gen. Nivelle. The P.M. was there and it was a large party and included Lady Derby and Lady Crewe and other ladies. The French Ambassador was also there.

Thursday, January 18th, 1917.

Mahon ('Mahout') came in this morning. He is afraid that the 65th Division will be too weak to secure the requisite margin of safety in Ireland now that the 'A' men are being taken away. I have told him to write officially and I will forward his letter to W.O.

Brinsley brought me a message from Derby which it is rather difficult for me to answer. I hope to see him or hear from him. . . .

. . . The C.I.G.S. came to see me to-day. More divisions are wanted for France and it is the old story of reducing the Home Forces. It is proposed now to send the 67th and 66th

¹ Lord Derby.

² Mr. Lloyd George.

³ Panshanger, Hertford, home of Lord Desborough.

⁴ Wife of Vice-Admiral Sir Rosslyn (afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Lord) Wemyss, Commander-in-Chief East Indies and Egypt.

⁵ Lord Revelstoke.

Divisions. Robertson wants my opinion. I told him there would certainly be a risk in so far denuding the forces at home, but I thought the risk should be run if these divisions were really wanted in France. I wrote officially in this sense.

Friday, January 19th, 1917.

I received an invitation from Derby to dinner on Monday next to meet Haig. I am engaged to dine with Haldane, but apart from that there are reasons why I can't meet Haig, and so I asked Derby for an interview. He was kind enough to come over himself and then I explained the situation to him. It is perhaps better not to put it in writing. He quite 'understood,' and so the matter stands. I shall write later and explain my view of the situation.

This afternoon I visited the Ophthalmic hospital in Portland Street, the London University hospital in Gower Street, and the Middlesex hospital. I saw and spoke to about 500 soldiers. . . .

. . . There was a very bad explosion to-day of a munition factory at Silvertown (on the Thames opposite Woolwich). Many lives have been lost and much damage done.

Monday, January 22nd, 1917.

I met, by appointment, the Duke of Connaught in Derby's room at the W.O. He has consented to become 'Colonel-in-Chief' of the volunteers.

Wednesday, January 24th, 1917.

Hankey¹ came to see me this afternoon at my request and I explained to him my view of the War Council minute which included my name and opinion. I have not objected but simply pointed out that I have no responsibility. . . . Lake² told me a lot of interesting stories about Mesopotamia. It appears Townshend rather misled them as to the condition of Kut.

Thursday, January 25th, 1917.

. . . Derby also called and discussed the advisability of appointing the Duke of Connaught—Inspector-General of the Overseas Forces training in this country. I thought it would be useful.

Lloyd³ came in for a talk. He is very much upset (and

¹ Lieut.-Col. Sir Maurice Hankey, Secretary, War Cabinet.

² Lieut.-Genl. Sir Percy Lake, late commanding Mesopotamian Force.

³ G.O.C. London District.

very rightly so) because he is passed over by so many of his juniors in to-day's gazette.

I have seen Derby and the Military Secretary. They both agree that Lloyd should receive immediate promotion and I sincerely hope this will be done at once.

Friday, January 26th, 1917.

A small unidentified German vessel approached the Suffolk coast last night and fired a number of shells, only a portion of which reached the land.

There were no casualties and only insignificant damage was caused.

Saturday, January 27th, 1917.

I received two letters from Derby this morning. The first told me that Lloyd was to be promoted and antedated at once.

Monday, January 29th, 1917.

This morning I received the sad news that Toby Long had been killed in action on Saturday. He will be a great loss to the army and to the country. He had just been made a Brig.-General. I have written to Walter Long and Lady Doreen and have very nice replies from them, heart-broken as they are. I have also written to Mrs. Long. The poor dear lady was to have dined at 94 to-night.

[FROM THE RIGHT HON. WALTER LONG.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MY DEAR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF,

From our hearts we thank you. Such a tribute from you to our dear soldier son, knowing him as you did, is a very great help in our trouble. No man ever had a better son, a truer friend. I have given the best I had.

Sincerely yours,

WALTER H. LONG.

29.1.17.

[EXTRACTS FROM LORD FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Tuesday, January 30th, 1917.

I held another 'volunteer' conference here this morning. Mr. Ian Macpherson, M.P. (U.-S. of S.), attended. He is very useful and efficient.

Sunday, February 4th, 1917.

The United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany yesterday.

Monday, February 5th, 1917.

I have had a letter from Esher asking me to lend all possible help to M. Hanotaux (late French Minister for Foreign Affairs) in the publication of a four-volume history of the war.

I have arranged with Hankey to send the letter on to him for reply in view of the fact that he is in charge of the ("Historical Section") of the C.I.D.¹ I have replied to Esher that I have done this and that personally I am prepared to render M.H. every assistance in my power. . . . At 12.45 the Duke of Connaught came in. He spoke of letters he had received as Col.-in-Chief of the volunteers and said he would send them up for consideration here. He then mentioned the possibility of his being appointed "I.G. of the Overseas Forces," and asked my views.

I told him I could see nothing but good in such an appointment. I assured him that no difficulty would arise in this office.

Wednesday, February 7th, 1917.

I was in attendance on the King at the opening of Parliament this morning. Met a very enthusiastic crowd en route! H.M.'s speech from the Throne was excellent.

Monday, February 8th, 1917.

I had an audience of the King at Buckingham Palace at 12.30. I took occasion to mention to H.M. the valuable services performed by Sir Douglas Dawson² since the beginning of the war.

Saturday, February 10th, 1917.

I have this week's secret General Staff summary. It is a somewhat depressing document!

Tuesday, February 13th, 1917.

I attended His Majesty to-day on an inspection of the 59th Division on Salisbury Plain. They are leaving for the front in a few days. . . . I didn't think the physique or bearing of the men (on their marches) was so good as when

¹ Committee of Imperial Defence.

² Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) Sir Douglas Dawson, late Coldstream Guards, Inspector of Vulnerable Points.

I saw them in Ireland last August. Since then they have lost 3,000 to 4,000 men who have been sent as drafts to the front, and these men have been replaced by a lower class. We are decidedly touching a lower grade! But this is quite natural.

Wednesday, February 14th, 1917.

'St. Valentine's Day' is, and will always remain, a day of solemn importance to me. It was spent as such. . . . At 3.30 I received the new Belgian Military Attaché. He was with me in France all the time.

Maxse¹ came in to see me at 5 and gave some most interesting accounts of the work of the 18th Division in the recent fighting. He has done excellent work and has just been given command of a Corps.

The Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and Brinsley dined with me at 94 this evening.

Monday, February 19th, 1917.

At 3.30 I had a visit from Mr. Neville Chamberlain² on the subject of finding more men at once for agricultural purposes.

Tuesday, February 20th, 1917.

A short paragraph appeared in this morning's *Times*, expressing my dissent from S.D.'s account (of Sunday)³ of the Mons retreat, etc.

Wednesday, February 21st, 1917.

I went to Chatham yesterday to inspect troops under General Mullaly's command.

I saw two very fine battalions (Reserve) of R.E. They paraded as for 'alarm,' with transport, etc. They were of very fine physique, well set up, and splendidly turned out.

Thursday, February 22nd, 1917.

I attended His Majesty yesterday at an inspection of the 66th Division. . . . On the whole the division presented a fine appearance, although there are more weakly looking men in the ranks than in the divisions sent out last year.

* There has been a very great improvement in the condition of the horses all round.

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards Sir Ivor) Maxse, G.O.C. 18th Army Corps, formerly G.O.C. 18th Division.

² Mr. (afterwards the Rt. Hon.) Neville Chamberlain, Director General of National Service.

³ Article by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien in the *Weekly Dispatch*.

Tuesday, February 27th, 1917.

Lord Ardee¹ has been appointed to command the Irish Guards and he came to see me this morning. He complains much of recruiting.

Saturday, March 3rd, 1917.

In the afternoon I attended an entertainment given by the County of London Motor Volunteer Corps at the Holborn Empire to over 1,000 wounded men from nearly all the hospitals in London. I addressed them.

[FROM GENERAL MAUDE, GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING-
IN-CHIEF MESOPOTAMIA—MARCH, 1917.]

FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH,
LONDON.

Most grateful for kind message immensely appreciated. Few messages amongst many received have given me more real pleasure than this one from my late Chief. Dash and gallantry of troops have been matchless.

GENERAL MAUDE.

[EXTRACTS FROM LORD FRENCH'S GREAT WAR DIARIES.]

Tuesday, March 6th, 1917.

. . . Col. (Br.-Gen.) Balfour² met us at the docks. He is Embarkation Commandant. I first went round a hospital train and two hospital ships with my old friend Donovan,³ who is P.M.O. here. All the arrangements are excellent.

We then went round the various wharfs and sheds, looked at the immense stores of hay (some of it *very bad*) which are awaiting embarkation, also at the guns which are sent home for repairs. A good deal of the repairing work is done in workshops inside the docks. One feature which struck me greatly was seeing many young ladies employed in this work . . . looked through the shed where the ammunition awaits embarkation. Over 4,000 tons are despatched every day. We boarded some of the ammunition ships and watched the process of getting the shells on board and stowed away. We also inspected a large ship (about 8,000 tons) which had been

¹ Colonel (afterwards Brig.-Genl.) Lord Ardee.

² Brig.-Genl. (afterwards Sir Alfred) Balfour, Embarkation Commandant, Southampton.

³ Major-Genl. Sir William Donovan, late R.A.M.C., served with General French as P.M.O. Cavalry Division in South Africa.

badly torpedoed but had kept afloat by its watertight compartments and gained a harbour.

It was a very interesting inspection. . . .

Wednesday, March 7th, 1917.

. . . The 'Tank' Instruction School is organised there¹ under Maj-Gen. Anley,² who commanded a brigade of the 4th Division during the earlier part of the war. . . . The tanks took the trenches and all the rough ground very well but two of them were 'held up' by deep shell craters.

I drew the conclusion that this *might* often happen in action. . . . It was altogether a most interesting morning. I am not sure of the value of these 'tanks.' They appear very vulnerable to artillery fire and considerable targets. As numbers of them are being sent to the front they will have a good practical trial. They can only keep out rifle and shrapnel bullets.

Thursday, March 8th, 1917.

This afternoon I got news of poor dear Katie's³ death at Monastir. She has been at the head of the Scottish women's hospital in Salonika for some time. She had gone to Monastir to assist the Servian refugees and was (twice) hit by shell fire which the Bulgarians were directing against the town. Both her daughters were nursing in that theatre of war.

She did splendid work during the first one and a half years of the war in France and was given the 'Croix de Guerre' by the French Govt.

Monday, March 12th, 1917.

The Servian Minister called to-day at 4 to express condolence and sympathy.

Tuesday, March 13th, 1917.

At 4.30 I had a visit from Gen. Nivelle⁴ and Capt. Berthier. He is over here to attend a War Council.

Wednesday, March 14th, 1917.

I went to the House of Lords this evening and heard Islington⁵ speak on the contribution which India proposes to give towards the war expenditure (£100,000,000).

¹ Waal.

² Major-Genl. F. G. Anley, late Essex Regt.

³ Mrs. Harley, widow of Colonel Ernest Harley of the Buffs (East Kent Regt.), and a sister of Lord French.

⁴ Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies in the field.

⁵ Lord Islington, Parliamentary Under Secretary for India.

Thursday, March 15th, 1917.

The Duchess of Connaught is dead. The Duke was consequently unable to attend the weekly Volunteer Committee which we held here this morning.

Henry Wilson came to see me at 11.45. He has been appointed Head of the British Military Mission at French Hd. Qrs.

Friday, March 16th, 1917.

I attended a conference at the W.O. (presided over by Derby and attended by Jellicoe¹ and other Lords of the Admiralty) on the subject of invasion.

Saturday, March 17th, 1917. (St. Patrick's Day.)

There was another air raid last night and in the early hours of this morning. . . .

[No damage or casualties reported from bombs which fell in open places. One R.F.C. pilot killed whilst in pursuit of raiders. One hostile airship reported down near Compiègne on way back.]

I went to Warley this morning for the Irish Guards' St. Patrick's Day parade. Distributed shamrock and addressed the regiment.

Sunday, March 18th, 1917.

A naval attack on Kent took place last night.

[No casualties on land. A few shells from enemy destroyers fell at Broadstairs and Ramsgate.]

Monday, March 19th, 1917.

This morning I attended (by H.M.'s command) the funeral of H.R.H. the Duchess of Connaught at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Tuesday, March 20th, 1917.

General Zekomelski of the Russian army came to see me this afternoon. He is an A.D.C. to the Czar and is over here on a special mission.

Thursday, March 22nd, 1917.

. . . On the whole I was very well satisfied with the Defences of the Substitute army under Bruce Hamilton who is most painstaking and energetic and has done excellent work.²

¹ Admiral Sir John (afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Earl) Jellicoe, Chief of Naval Staff.

² Result of inspection at Cromer, Lowestoft, etc.

Sunday, March 25th, 1917.

I paid a visit to 'The Despard Arms'¹ this afternoon. This is a 'non-drink' public house started as an experiment. Some soldiers are billeted there.

Monday, March 26th, 1917.

. . . I had a small dinner party for Gen. Smuts²: the P.M.: Long: Winston: Rothermere³: Shaw: Lowther: Brinsley: Freddy Guest.

Tuesday, March 27th, 1917.

. . . 'Brab'⁴ is looking rather 'shrunken' but very well. His splendid courage was severely tested in an operation he underwent the other day. . . . I have promised to take him with headquarters in case of invasion.

Wednesday, March 28th, 1917.

I was summoned to the War Council this morning and was thus prevented attending the memorial service to poor dear Katie's memory which was held at St. Margaret's, Westminster. I hear there was a very large attendance. . . . This evening I dined at Gray's Inn to meet Gen. Smuts. Lord Haldane, Finlay⁵ and Derby were there, also Marlborough and Winston Churchill. . . . F. E. Smith⁶ presided and made an excellent speech to which Smuts responded in a most interesting and capable manner.

Thursday, March 29th, 1917.

The people on the coast seem to be getting rather 'jumpy.' There was another scare last night when some firing was heard to the East of Lowestoft.

Friday, March 30th, 1917.

I motored to Cophall (Epping Forest) at 12 and met the horses. Thence I rode to Ingatstone (Essex)—(20 miles,

¹ Named after Mrs. Despard, a sister of Lord French and well known for her activities in support of the women's suffrage movement.

² General the Rt. Hon. J. C. Smuts, Minister of Defence, Union of South Africa.

³ Baron (afterwards Viscount) Rothermere, Director-General Royal Army Clothing Department, 1916-1917, Air Minister, 1917-1918.

⁴ Major-Genl. Sir John Brabazon, late 10th and 4th Hussars, Colonel 18th Hussars.

⁵ Baron (afterwards Viscount) Finlay, Lord Chancellor.

⁶ The Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick Smith (afterwards Earl of Birkenhead).

seeing some Air Stations en route)—where I inspected the Southern Army Bombing School. I met Joe Murdoch¹ there. . . . I dined quietly in Downing Street with the Prime Minister. There I met Winston, Marlborough and Westminster.

Tuesday, April 3rd, 1917.

America has declared war against Germany. There is great excitement and enthusiasm in Washington and New York.

Tuesday, April 10th, 1917.

Our army in France delivered a successful attack yesterday between Arras and Lens and made about two to three miles of ground.

11,000 prisoners and 100 guns were captured by our troops. The armies under Allenby and Horne were chiefly engaged.

Wednesday, April 11th, 1917.

I left London for York at 2 and arrived there at 6.30. Maxwell and his Staff met me and there was a guard of honour. We stayed the night with Maxwell.

Thursday, April 12th, 1917.

Carried out inspection. . . . Gen. Kelly² was in command of 69th Division, Gen. Simpson³ commanded at Ripon and Gen. Rimington⁴ at Catterick. It was quite a satisfactory inspection all round.

Friday, April 13th, 1917.

Some parts of the line of coast held by the Tees garrison are rather weak. There is a want of 'chain of responsibility' in the command. All the men I saw looked well. More guns are wanted to defend the mouth of the Tees.

Tuesday, April 17th, 1917.

The French commenced their attack on the line Soissons-Rheims this morning. They have penetrated to a depth of three miles. Taken two lines of German trenches, 10,000 prisoners and large number of guns.

¹ Major-Genl. J. F. Burn-Murdoch, commanding a Mounted Division.

² Major-Genl. F. H. Kelly.

³ Major-Genl. C. R. Simpson, G.O.C. Ripon Reserve Centre.

⁴ Major-Genl. M. F. Rimington, G.O.C. Catterick Reserve Centre.

Wednesday, April 18th, 1917.

I had an interview with the S. of S. this morning. He is not very pleased with the progress of the offensive in France and is very apprehensive as to the course of the submarine campaign.

Two hospital ships were sunk in the Channel last night and many lives were lost.

Thursday, April 19th, 1917.

I fear things in Russia are far from satisfactory and we can only hope for a defensive attitude from them for this year.

Friday, April 20th, 1917.

I attended the service at St. Paul's this morning held on the occasion of America joining in the war. The King and Queen were there and the Royal Family.

The service was very impressive.

Saturday, April 21st, 1917.

I rode early in Richmond Park and inspected the Balloon Sections on Barnes Common.

There was a naval fight off Dover last night. We sank three of the enemy's destroyers and took many officers and men prisoners.

Sunday, April 22nd, 1917.

The following is a fairly accurate account of the naval bombardment at Dover in the early hours of the morning of the 21st:—

"The first explosion was reported at 00.27 from a direction due South, the range of which was estimated at about 6,000 yards. Star shells were sent up by enemy destroyers illuminating Shakespeare Cliff, and a portion of the Breakwater and Admiralty Pier.

"Between 30 and 40 shells were fired. Some of these fell near Court Wood on the Folkestone Road, some at Church Hougham, some at Chilverton Elms, Elms Vale, one in the Tramway Stable at Buckland, doing practically no damage.

"Others fell in the vicinity of Frith Farm anti-aircraft gun. The last round was fired at 00.31.

"It is reported that a trawler was hit near the Varne Lightship, one man killed and another injured.

"It is also reported that 3 of the enemy destroyers were sunk by our patrols, and 9 officers and 85 or 86 German seamen captured. No serious damage was done to our destroyers."

Tuesday, April 24th, 1917.

Inspection of the fortress of Harwich was carried out. . . . Gen. Stanton¹ is a good man and quite in the right place. He has got the fortress into excellent order and his dispositions are very satisfactory.

Wednesday, April 25th, 1917.

. . . . Paget considers the Isle of Thanet a vulnerable part of the coast which is likely to attract attention of the enemy. I think its near proximity to Sheerness, where there are considerable naval forces, and the difficult navigation renders it unlikely that any attack will be made there.

I was deeply interested in my visit to the 'Inland Water Transport' establishment. It has grown into a tremendous place, with railway communication all over it: cranes of all sizes and capable of lifting the heaviest weights: landing stages and wharfs with every facility for handling and unloading ships. A perfect place for the Germans to seize and make a base from which to operate in this country, if they could only seize it by a swift and sudden onslaught against the coast.

It is now somewhat weakly defended by one of Paget's brigades intrenched on the sea shore, but it is in the near neighbourhood of the Naval Patrol headquarters at Dover and the shore is very difficult of approach.

On the whole I am fairly well satisfied with Paget's strength and dispositions South of the Thames.

Thursday, April 26th, 1917.

. . . . I am well satisfied with the state of the fortress at Dover. . . . On arrival I was met by the 'Admiral of Patrols' Sir R. Bacon.² I discussed the possibility of an invading force being able to pass Westwards through the Straits of Dover and land at some unprepared part of the coast South or West or anywhere. He adheres still more

¹ Major-Genl. (afterwards Sir Henry) Stanton, G.O.C. Harwich Garrison.

² Vice-Admiral (afterwards Admiral) Sir Reginald Bacon, in command of Dover Patrols.

strongly to the opinion which he expressed to me last year, that no *transport* could force the Straits and that I was quite safe in relying upon the defence dispositions which I have made and which have been in force during 1916.

Friday, April 27th, 1917.

We left London by motor and inspected the Reserve Brigade and Defences at Chatham.

General Mullaly, who commands the Thames fortress, has established a system of fortress defence which should serve as a splendid model in field fortifications in war as it is to-day.

An immense amount of work has been done in the last two and a half years, mostly by Kent Territorial Engineers.

Saturday, April 28th, 1917.

Sir Arthur Lee came to see me at 10.45 this morning and we had a long discussion (Shaw was present) upon the amount of help we could give to the new Food Production programme.

As usual it was supposed that our resources in men were much greater than they really are.

I explained our position to him and pointed out that if we gave the help required (110,000 men!) all Home Defence arrangements would be completely broken up.

Lee saw my reasons and will now lay the matter before the War Cabinet.

Monday, April 30th, 1917.

Joe Murdoch came to see me this morning. He asked for leave to go to France to stay with Gough for a week.

Mahon also came in. He says he thinks that conscription could now be easily applied to Ireland, since America has come in and adopted universal service.

I have arranged for him to have an interview with Derby before he leaves London.

Tuesday, May 1st, 1917.

There is a lull all along the Western front. The operations seem to have fizzled out for the moment.

Thursday, May 3rd, 1917.

The submarine campaign is getting very bad. Double the number of ships have been sunk during April.

Saturday, May 5th, 1917.

Sir L. Rolleston came in this morning. He says my visit to Nottingham has not succeeded in the desired direction. Very few new men have joined. He and those in authority at Nottingham think that all the willing men have been exhausted. It is certainly very disappointing for there are a number of 'loafers.' Mrs. Asquith has asked me to stay for the week-end but I have refused.

The news from Russia is bad and we are doing badly at the Western front. Losing no end of officers and men with no sufficient gain—or indeed any gain just now.

Monday, May 7th, 1917.

Robertson came to see me at 3. Still more men are wanted, and still greater reduction of our strength at home! It is now proposed to reduce the Garrison Battalions. I have held out for them in Ireland however.

Friday, May 11th, 1917.

I stayed with Sir H. and Lady Sclater¹ at Government House, Salisbury, last night. My old friend Dean Page-Roberts² (Dean of Salisbury) came to dinner. . . . The Southern Command inspection was most satisfactory in every way.

Sunday, May 13th, 1917.

. . . The Huntingdon Regt. of volunteers was drawn up in the park³ under Lord Charles Montague, the County Commandant. Lord Norreys is the Adjutant.

I inspected and addressed them. I spoke very strongly to those men who have not yet taken the obligation to serve, and reminded them of their duty.

Monday, May 14th, 1917.

Lawson came in this morning. He has been ordered to Egypt to carry on the 'combing out' process there.

Tuesday, May 15th, 1917.

. . . We⁴ talked on many other subjects, that of *war medals* in particular. He wants my views as to the desira-

¹ Lieut.-Genl. (afterwards General) Sir Henry Sclater, G.O.C.-in-Chief, Southern Command.

² Very Rev. W. Page-Roberts, Dean of Salisbury, 1907-1919.

³ Hinchinbroke.

⁴ Lord French and the Secretary of State for War.

bility of giving a special medal or star to the original Expeditionary Force. I am all in favour of it within certain limits.

Wednesday, May 16th, 1917.

Lowe (Br.-Gen. in Ireland) again saw me with reference to his position. He has certainly been very insufficiently rewarded for his undoubtedly very valuable services. Winston Churchill also came in. He seems much more cheerful and hopeful as to his own future prospects. I understand that he spoke very well in the 'secret session' of the H. of C. the other day.

Thursday, May 17th, 1917.

To-night I dined at Brooks' Club with Lord Knollys¹. I met Asquith and Hardinge.² I drove Asquith home after dinner. During dinner the late P.M. expressed his decided conviction that the war could not end with any decisive military victory on either side. Economic conditions he said would decide it.

Wednesday, May 23rd, 1917.

At 11.15 Bishop Mylne³ called and I gave him the Military Cross which had been awarded to his son who was killed at Loos. He was in the Irish Guards.

There was an air raid to-night. . . .

[Four or five airships took part in raid, but did not succeed in penetrating far inland. Very few bombs dropped and only one casualty reported, a man being killed at Wellingham, Norfolk.]

Friday, May 25th, 1917.

There was an air raid this afternoon.

[About 16 German aeroplanes raided S.E. Essex and Kent. Civil population of Folkestone suffered heavy casualties, as follows:—

Killed: 11 men, 25 women and 20 children.

Injured: 29 men, 40 women and 14 children.

At Shorncliffe Camp one Canadian officer and 8 men were killed and 60 wounded.

Considerable damage caused to houses and shops in Folkestone.

Railway and telegraph lines slightly damaged.

Enemy machines got away without apparent loss, flying at a great height. Total British casualties 73 killed and 143 injured.]

¹ Viscount Knollys, Lord-in-Waiting to Queen Alexandra.

² Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Former Viceroy of India.

³ Rt. Rev. L. C. Mylne, Bishop of Bombay, 1876-1897.

Saturday, May 26th, 1917.

Major Parsons of the U.S. army called on me. He has come over as the head of the body of engineers which America has sent to France. He appears a very capable officer.

Monday, May 28th, 1917.

His Majesty sent for me to Buckingham Palace. . . . The article in the *Times* this morning had annoyed him. . . . H.M. said it (his reception in the North) was the warmest he had received in this country since he came to the Throne. He is quite convinced the people of this country are thoroughly loyal to the Crown and the Throne.

Tuesday, May 29th, 1917.

The Portuguese War Minister came to see me to-day. I also had a visit from Gen. Foch (who has been over here in consultation with the War Council) and his S.O. Colonel Weygand who is an old friend of mine. Spears was also with them.

Foch told me that 'La Grande Guerre est finie'! He thought the forces would 'nibble' at one another for a time and that soon the effect of the Russian Revolution and the united action of the Socialists all over the world—coupled with the prospect of famine—would bring about peace.

Friday, June 1st, 1917.

Repington came in this afternoon and we had a long talk. He has lately returned from a long visit to the French front but he also visited British Headquarters. I told him of my short conversation with Foch and he told me that from his talk with Petain¹ he thought the latter General shared Foch's opinions.

Saturday, June 2nd, 1917.

The King held an investiture in Hyde Park this afternoon. I was present to receive and attend on His Majesty. I feel sure these public investitures do much good.

Monday, June 4th, 1917.

H.M.'s birthday. I have sent a wire from Home Forces to Buckingham Palace.

¹ General (afterwards Marshal) Petain, commanding a group of French armies.

I had an 'air defence' conference with Shaw and Higgins¹ this afternoon. It does not appear that the training squadrons are going to afford us very much help, and they are thinking to further starve our Home Defence Air Service by forming new night squadrons for France.

I have decided to order an aircraft concentration to-morrow afternoon to meet an (imaginary) raid.

Tuesday, June 5th, 1917.

I went to the S. of S. this morning with Col. Higgins¹ (Head of H.D. Air Service). I told him of the actual state of affairs. That the H.D. Air Service was starved to send pilots, mechanics and machines to France, and that we were practically powerless to oppose successfully an aeroplane raid in this country. I think he begins to see the matter in the light of H.D. and some help will be given us.

I presented a Military Medal to Corporal of Horse Horsman, 1st Life Guards, given to him for gallantry in the field. . . . Another air raid was attempted this evening.

I had ordered a practice concentration for 3 this afternoon. This lasted till 5 and the machines had just descended when we got warning of the coming air raid from the Kentish Knock.

[Sixteen hostile aeroplanes took part. Sheerness and Shoeburyness were principal objectives. Owing to heavy A.A. fire enemy was unable to penetrate far inland. Casualties 9 men killed and 35 injured, one woman and one child injured. Some damage to houses at Sheerness also to barracks and railway station. Very little damage at Shoeburyness. Several enemy machines destroyed or driven down out of control.]

Friday, June 8th, 1917.

I went with Derby to Euston station to-day and met Gen. Pershing, commanding U.S. Troops in Europe.

Saturday, June 9th, 1917.

I rode round some anti-aircraft stations round Barnet and Potters Bar this morning. This afternoon we had another 'Practice Concentration' of aircraft against an aeroplane attack. Reports are not yet complete but 32 machines were in the air 19 minutes after the 1st warning, 12 of them were 1st class machines.

¹ Colonel T. C. R. Higgins, commanding Home Defence Air Service.

Plumer has scored a great success in France this week. We have at last retaken the whole of the Messines-Wytschaete ridge.

Monday, June 11th, 1917.

I dined at the American Embassy this evening to meet Gen. Pershing. . . . The Prime Minister and Balfour were present and I sat next to the former. There was a big reception by Mrs. Page after dinner.

Wednesday, June 13th, 1917.

At 10.5 a.m. hostile aeroplanes were reported in Essex.

[At about 11.30 bombs were dropped in Eastern outskirts of London and thereafter in Forest Gate, East Ham, Bow, Hoxton, the City, Clerkenwell, Poplar, Dalston and Southwark. 13 or 14 bombs fell in the City. A train was hit in Liverpool Street station. Various shops, warehouses and other buildings were damaged more or less seriously. An L.C.C. school at Poplar was hit, a number of children being killed and injured. London casualties were 97 killed and 434 injured. From 11 to 16 enemy machines were engaged in the raid.]

Saturday, June 16th, 1917.

I attended a memorial Requiem Mass held at Westminster Cathedral for the Catholic soldiers and sailors who have fallen in the war. A sermon was preached by Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster.

Sunday, June 17th, 1917.

There was an air raid late last night till the early hours of this morning.

[Four hostile airships approached Suffolk and Kentish coasts about 11 p.m. About 6 bombs dropped on Ramsgate, demolishing Naval Base buildings and seriously damaging many houses. Some casualties. Another airship dropped 14 bombs at Kirton without causing casualties or damage. One airship was brought down in flames at Theberton by 2/Lieut. L. P. Watkins of the 37th Squadron Royal Flying Corps. Three survivors of the crew, one officer and two men, all injured, were taken prisoners.]

Thursday, June 28th, 1917.

. . . Sir J. Nixon¹ also came in to see me. He is naturally much upset by this Mesopotamia report.

¹ General Sir John Nixon, G.O.C.-in-Chief Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, April 1915-Jan. 1916.

Saturday, July 7th, 1917.

There was an air raid between 9 and 11 a.m.

In consequence of this a War Cabinet meeting was ordered at 3.30 which I attended with Shaw.

It has been decided to bring back the two squadrons which were sent to France on 5th and 6th.

At 5 this evening I drove round the City and East End with the P.M. and visited the locations where the principal damage was done. It is wonderful that so little was destroyed. There were altogether under 200 casualties in town and country.

[From 22 to 30 German Gotha machines employed. Bombs dropped on many parts of the City and East End of London. Some fires broke out but were soon extinguished.

Three enemy machines were brought down on their way back by pilots of the Royal Naval Air Service. A pilot of the R.F.C. reported bringing down another machine in the sea. Two British machines were destroyed.]

[TO LORD ESHER.]

G.H.Q., HOME FORCES.

3 Jan., 1918.

MY DEAR ESHER,

Thank you with all my heart for your letter which has touched me deeply. Indeed I wish you everything for 1918 that I did in 1902 (our year of meeting) and every intervening one!

Indeed I never suspected you of any such conduct as you suggest. It was only my affection for you that perhaps made me over-sensitive. The fog of this terrible war is over us all. Thank God it has not succeeded in separating us.

No one acknowledges more readily, freely and gratefully than I do your loyal and most valuable friendship with all it has brought to me.

I have never passed such happy and profitable hours in any man's society. You are the only man in the world in whose society I can truthfully say I have never spent a dull moment.

If I have been fractious please be noble like yourself—forgive and forget.

I shall regard it as one of the greatest pleasures I could have to carry your 1914 Star to the dear old Roman Camp¹ and give it to you there.

¹ Lord Esher's residence in Scotland.

[FROM LIEUT. GENERAL (LATER GENERAL) THE HON. SIR
HERBERT LAWRENCE, CHIEF OF STAFF, BRITISH ARMY
IN THE FIELD.]

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
BRITISH ARMIES IN FRANCE.

25 Jan., 1918.

MY DEAR LORD FRENCH,

I am most grateful for your kind letter.

I owe you so much and am so proud of having served under you that a letter from you is a source of the greatest pride and gratification to me.

I realise all the difficulties of my task and only hope I may prove equal to them.

Very gratefully yours,

H. A. LAWRENCE.

[To LORD ESHER.]

94, LANCASTER GATE.

4 Apr., 1918.

MY DEAR ESHER,

This is only a line to thank you for your delightful letter. Just like old times! I won't write at length because I shall see you next week and can talk things over. I grieve more than I can express at what has happened. It seems so hard that all one's early work should be thrown away. If one could only hope to throw them back as at the Marne! I *did* hope that a week ago but the time has gone by I fear.

[This referred to the serious British reverse in March, 1918.]

CHAPTER VIII
IRELAND AND AFTER (1918-1925)

[TO LORD ESHER.]

VICE REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN.

26th May, 1918.

MY DEAR ESHER,

It gave me deep and abiding pleasure to get yours of 6 May. Subsequent events have shown you how full my head was of all sorts of things, and will partly explain why your delightful letter was not answered sooner. It is very helpful to me that you should write as you do.

I have loved this country and these people all my life and I would do anything or sacrifice anything for them. They are so infernally emotional. If they could only be got to realise the true characters of such 'leaders' as people steeped to the neck in the violent forms of crime and infamy and with the smallest possible proportion of Irish blood in their veins. If they would but understand that all that these people can do is to *talk* and feed their damnable aggressive vanity—I feel sure the Irish would cast them out like the swine they are.

One must try to study and understand what the real Irish National aspirations are, and how to get into and to keep trust with them. But before one can even begin to put the garden in order one must *weed it out*. My first great effort is to stamp out this German intrigue. Many who are implicated in it have been absolutely terrorized by their leaders.

[This letter was written only a few days after Lord French had become Viceroy of Ireland.]

[SPEECH BY LORD FRENCH AT BELFAST IN 1918, SOON AFTER BECOMING VICEROY OF IRELAND.]

Whatever services I may have been able to render to the State I feel to be far more than adequately rewarded when, at the close of my military career as a soldier, I am chosen to represent our great and gracious Sovereign in a country which I hold so dear as our beloved Ireland. Doubtful as I must

always be of my fitness for such a position, and deeply alive as I am to the tremendous and almost terrible responsibilities attaching to it, the fact that even for comparatively a short time my name has been so closely associated with the official life of the land I love so well, will ever be to me an abiding source of pride and pleasure to the end of my life.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing the deep gratitude I feel to all my fellow countrymen in Ireland for the kind and generous reception I have received from them.

May I say how glad I am that my first important public utterance as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland should be made in this great City of Belfast, a city which has done so much by the innate energy, power and activity of its people to lead the way towards the development of Irish trade and industry, and enhance the material prosperity of Ireland.

I do not think I can express what I feel better than by repeating what I said when the Belfast Corporation were good enough to visit me in Dublin.

I welcome this opportunity of expressing to you my appreciation and admiration of the contribution which the shipyards and the looms of Belfast have made to the resources of the Empire in the struggle now raging. Every rivet struck and every inch of linen woven adds to the mastery of sea and air communications, never more vitally necessary to our cause than at this moment. The knowledge of these facts, I feel certain, will be a source of fruitful encouragement to the workers of Belfast to redouble their efforts.

Living in such a time of stress and strain it is impossible for me to speak to an Irish audience and not refer to what Irish soldiers have done in this war. Some of their splendid work has been accomplished under my own eye, and I can personally vouch for it.

The Ulster Division and its glorious performances in the field will animate with pride every Ulsterman and every Irishman.

As their Colonel it has been my earnest endeavour to watch closely the military career of those two magnificent corps, the Irish Guards and the Royal Irish Regiment. Right nobly have they maintained their national characteristics, and covered their standards with new titles of honour and glory.

Not one word less can be said of any Irish regiment which has borne a part in this long and terrible war.

These thoughts lead me further still. I would fain, indeed, leave all controversial subjects alone on this occasion when you have made me feel so strongly that I am surrounded by the kindest of friends and compatriots, but loving Ireland and Irish soldiers as I do, I must enter upon a few words of explanation.

Much comment has been made in Parliament and elsewhere on the last Proclamation from Dublin Castle. Now, my Lord Mayor, may I briefly explain what that Proclamation was meant to convey.

I intended to remind my countrymen that it was the duty of Ireland to take her share in the necessary demands which were being made upon the manhood of the United Kingdom owing to the immense additional burden thrown upon the Allies through the events in Russia.

The opportunity for doing so is represented by the voluntary recruiting campaign which is now being carried on. I can assure you we are doing our best to prosecute that campaign in the best way, and you have seen published in the paper the names of those patriotic Irishmen who have undertaken the onerous task of forming a working committee for this purpose. They have earned our deep gratitude. I earnestly appeal to you in Belfast, and through you to all Irishmen, to help in this great work.

I appeal especially to the heads of all the Churches in Ireland, whose power and influence is of the greatest value. I wish to remind them of the assistance they rendered at the commencement of the war, a help that, as Commander-in-Chief in the field at that time, I felt deeply grateful for, and I would ask them to remember that if such help was then required, it is far more necessary at the moment when we have arrived at the most critical period of the campaign.

The Proclamation was intended to enlighten Irishmen on other points upon which they were much misled. I wished it to be clearly understood that the farming and industrial interests in Ireland would not be interfered with, and that we were determined to maintain the prosperous condition of the country, and should look chiefly for the help we wanted to those classes of the population who were not engaged in productive work.

Finally, a most erroneous idea was diligently spread about that all able-bodied men up to the age of 50 were to be taken ;

but that fallacy was also completely dissipated by the terms of the Proclamation.

My Lord Mayor, I do not wish to sail under false colours or create false impressions. You may take it direct from me that when that Proclamation was framed there was no thought of abandoning the possibility of conscription in Ireland, nor was any such idea intended to be conveyed. If the military requirements as laid down in the Proclamation to be taken from the Irish population are not satisfied by voluntary effort, the Government must deal with the situation thus created as they decide in the interests of the army.

Do not let there be any misunderstanding about this. The numbers referred to in the Proclamation are those to be found by voluntary effort, and the fifty thousand men and the moderate subsequent monthly requirements can easily be obtained, and will be obtained if the recruiting campaign is not wrecked by hostile action, or by sullen apathy; and those who would save the country from an event that all would deplore can help to this end by assisting recruiting.

That number was laid down in the Proclamation which appeared under my name as the number of men which would be accepted as Ireland's contribution, and speaking personally, you may be quite sure I shall stand by what I have said.

If compulsion has to be resorted to, the conditions become changed and the number will, of course, be regulated by the population as is the rule in other parts of the Empire.

I should ill requite your kindness and hospitality if I attempted to strike a jarring note in this assembly, but I must say plainly and emphatically that the Government of Ireland will carry out its duty in this respect unflinchingly, without fear or favour, and in face of whatever opposition, whether of criticism or actual force, may be most unfortunately and inadvisedly attempted.

Once more, even at the eleventh hour, let me make an earnest appeal to the leading spirits, churchmen and laymen, in Ireland, to use their powerful influence in bringing home to the minds of our compatriots that the Empire is in the midst of a tremendous crisis in its history, and urge on one and all, but especially the clergy whose power is so great, to lead and direct the thoughts of all away from domestic and local controversies towards what ought to be the one dominant idea in every Irish heart at this moment, the attainment of a decisive victory which shall mean a satisfactory peace.

SOME WAR DIARIES

[TO LORD ESHER.]

VICE REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN.

7 Sept., 1918.

Thank you, my dear Esher, for your delightful letter of Aug. 21 which brought to my mind those happy old days of 8 or 10 years ago! How this damnable war has changed everything. It is so horrible over here now that I have never ventured on asking you to embark upon it. One of our old talks, however, would be of great help to me. I suppose there is no chance of your being in London between Sept. 15th and Oct. 5th. I want to see Lady Esher again so much. Do you know the last time I saw her was in that horribly (to me) sad time when I was driven out of France by Asquith at the instigation of Haig. My dinner with you that night in Paris was the only bright spot in a very dark week. It was not at all, with me, a question of personal advancement, or 'fame,' or anything of that kind. I had lived all my life for 'service in the field' and I had tried to prepare myself for it: and I was taken away from it for no adequate reason. Nothing that can ever happen to me could compensate for the loss of 1916 and 1917 and half of 1918 *in the field*. However, there it is: and after all what does it matter. I am delighted to have had your kind words about my work here. If I *can* do any good God knows I have tried and will try. For many reasons Ireland is very dear to me and I long to see the country peaceful and prosperous.

I quite agree with all you say as to 'unity of purpose among the Allies.' It is wanted as much as 'unity of command' and if effected it would have the same happy results. I do think of our old days in King Edward's time and what a difference he made in all our lives. I hope he *knows* how we think of him.

[TO H.H. PRINCESS SOPHIA DULEEP SINGH.]

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

Sept. 12th, 1918.

DEAR PRINCESS,

I hope the enclosed will be useful to you. We are all deeply indebted to you for championing the cause of our gallant comrades in the Indian army.

Yours very truly,

FRENCH.

I gladly comply with the request to express my appreciation of the services rendered by India's fighting men on the Western Front during the years 1914-15.

When the Indian Troops first arrived in October, 1914, the situation was of so drastic a nature that it was necessary to call

upon them at once to reinforce the fighting front and help to stem the great German thrust.

Their fine fighting qualities, tenacity and endurance were well manifested during the First Battle of Ypres before they had been able to completely reorganise after their voyage from India. The manner in which they acquitted themselves showed the excellence of their previous training for war.

In all subsequent battles during these years they took a prominent part and behaved with the utmost gallantry.

As Commander-in-Chief I was on many occasions deeply indebted to them for valuable help, and I have no hesitation in saying that they splendidly upheld the glorious fighting traditions of the Indian army.

This record is all the more honourable when it is remembered that they were suddenly despatched from a hot climate at almost the worst season of the year to face the rigours of a Western winter.

It will always be a source of pride and happiness to me that I have been associated in the field with these gallant troops.

FRENCH,
F.M.

Sept. 12th, 1918.

[SPEECH AT THE SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' CENTRAL CLUB,
DUBLIN, IN 1918.]

It gives me the very greatest pleasure, My Lord Chief Justice, to be here to-day and to render any assistance, however slight, to the noble work which you and your Committee have so successfully carried out during three years of this devastating war.

While in every quarter of the Empire the care of soldiers returning from the war, whether wounded, on leave or discharged, must ever be one of our chief concerns, it fills me with sorrow and regret to be obliged to emphasise the fact that in Ireland, and especially in Dublin, the unreasoning animosity of a small portion of the community towards any returned soldier lays an additional burden upon all the loyal population in counteracting this sinister and unworthy influence.

My Lord, I insist that this is a matter into which politics should not enter at all. I hold it to be the sacred duty of every able-bodied man and woman in Ireland, no matter what their opinions may be, to render all the help and support they can to men who have freely given their lives and shed their blood to preserve their fellow countrymen and women from the worst form of bondage and destruction.

I sincerely trust that sailors and soldiers throughout Ireland will seriously realise this and band themselves together to preserve the military traditions which form such a glorious part of Irish history and to keep the old flag flying under which they fought and bled.

There are indications in several parts of the country of a great desire to form clubs and associations amongst ex-soldiers and sailors having these objects in view. I received a deputation of soldiers from Limerick only a week ago on this subject. In the town of Boyle near which I live a number of old soldiers are thus banding themselves together, and I heard of the same thing in several parts of the country. For instance, the great town of Galway has not only furnished large contingents of soldiers, but many sailors, who have taken a prominent part in those glorious achievements which throughout this war have added such laurels to the records of the British navy. It is our intention to do all we can to help these seafaring men to resume their peace occupations after having done such magnificent service for their country.

In this connection, we must bear in mind that Ireland, with its long coast-line and magnificent harbours, must always maintain a large sea-faring population, and I trust every effort will be made to establish nautical training schools in great centres on the coast for the training of the sea-faring youth of the country.

I wish to take advantage of every opportunity which presents itself of assuring all soldiers and sailors throughout Ireland who have returned from the war, that it is my earnest desire to help them in every possible way, to encourage them to join old soldiers' clubs wherever they exist, and to form them in places where they do not exist.

The Government will spare no effort to secure their welfare and prosperity or to show their gratitude for all they have done for their country; and I shall always welcome any deputation of old soldiers and sailors who wish personally to represent their needs.

I wish to express the gratitude which all soldiers, and especially Irish soldiers, feel towards you, My Lord Chief Justice, the Committee and the Voluntary Service Corps presided over by Dr. Ella Webb for the splendid help they have rendered to soldiers during three years of this terrible war.

When we remember the magnificent courage, tenacity and endurance which have been displayed by soldiers in the ranks

throughout the whole course of this war, when we remember the marked difference which exists between this and former wars, what a much greater strain has been put upon men's courage and nerve, how rapidly they had to be pushed to the front and into the trenches without any previous training in peace time, and finally, the sudden and unexpected nature of the calls which have been made upon them, it fills our hearts with gratitude for the tremendous efforts which have been made for their hospitable entertainment and comfort by such institutions as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Central Club.

Anyone who reads this report which I have in my hand, can realise all that has been done, and what a boon the club has been to those for whose benefit it exists.

Volumes are expressed in the short paragraph on page 4 entitled "The Ever Open Door." Here in about four brief lines, all that has been done for these men is ably summarised.

[TO KING ALBERT OF BELGIUM.]

3rd October, 1918.

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF THE BELGIANS,

As having fought side by side with your Majesty's army in days of stress and strain, I trust your Majesty will allow me to express my heartfelt joy in the victories now being gained by the Belgian army under your Majesty's command.

FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH.

[FROM KING ALBERT OF BELGIUM.]

FROM ALBERT,
G.Q.G. BELGE.

6th Oct., 1918.

TO FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH,

94 LANCASTER GATE.

I thank you heartily for the congratulations you send me on the occasion of the important advance realised by the British and Belgian troops fighting side by side. In these days my thoughts often went towards the great soldier who under the most difficult circumstances saved Ypres and the left of the Western Front in 1914.

[EXTRACT FROM SPEECH AT BELFAST IN OCTOBER, 1918.]

The small army which I took out to France in 1914 became the instrument through which the British Empire had to

learn another long and painful lesson. It seems to be written in the book of fate that the power and magnitude of the British people is invariably destined to be displayed rather in their wonderful determination to face and overcome difficulties and dangers when they arise than in their statesman-like ability to provide effectually against them. In other words, that army was too small, and much too weak in the matter of guns and ammunition for the work it was called upon to perform.

Our methods of carrying on war have been aptly described as a process of muddling through, and in a sense it is a very good description. But in a sense only. Because in the process of this muddling through we have seen before, and we have seen again in this war, with what magnificent courage and tenacity British soldiers can face enormous odds and pay with their lives the inevitable penalty of inadequate peace preparation.

We have seen also how a great nation can rise to the occasion. That small nucleus of military strength which took the field in 1914 has gradually extended in these four years of desperate struggle into the magnificent Imperial army which is now gaining victory after victory, and, combined with the other forces of Marshal Foch's great command on the Western front, is even now dealing the last great smashing blow to what was the most powerful military organisation in the world.

I should ill requite your generous kindness if I forgot for one moment that you are receiving me to-day as a soldier, and as nothing else, and I am glad to be able for the moment to breathe the wholesome air of Belfast undiluted and uncontaminated by any political responsibility.

We soldiers in the study of our profession should warn people particularly to beware of the fog of war. Until that enveloping fog lifts nothing can be seen and understood in its true perspective. It is in failing to remember this fact that men's ideas become distorted. For this reason it is impossible for me to enter into detail regarding the work which was done by the British army in the field under my command.

There is one great truth, however, which nothing can conceal, one shining glory which no fog of war can dim, and that is the devotion, self-sacrifice, and consummate bravery of the regimental officers, non-commissioned officers, and

soldiers of that army which went out to do battle in August, 1914.

[FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH¹ ON THE OCCASION OF THE ARMISTICE IN NOVEMBER, 1918.]

VISCOUNT FRENCH,
VICE REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN.

Warmest congratulations to Your Excellency on glorious victory which Your Excellency made possible by noble defence when commanding the Old Contemptibles.

ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

[FROM THE VETERANS' ASSOCIATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE ARMISTICE IN NOVEMBER, 1918.]

FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH,
HORSE GUARDS,
S.W.

The Veterans' Association and Veterans' Club send you most hearty congratulations at the result of your great efforts in the war and assurances of their regard.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE,
7, Bedford Row.

[FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND.]

13 Nov., 1918.

The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland desire to offer to Your Excellency an expression of their loyalty to His Majesty's Representative and to congratulate you on the glorious part you took in bringing about the great victory achieved by the Allies and the United States of America.

[FROM HER MAJESTY QUEEN ALEXANDRA.]

February 20th, 1919.

To

FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH,

Am so distressed to hear you have been so ill. I do hope you are recovering now and that you will soon be about again. My very best wishes for your speedy convalescence.

From ALEXANDRA,
Buckingham Palace.

¹ Most Revd. John Baptist Crozier.

[FROM SIR GEORGE ARTHUR, LATE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
FIELD MARSHAL EARL KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM.]

CARLTON CLUB,
PALL MALL, S.W.1.

27th March, 1919.

MY DEAR LORD FRENCH,

Pray let me say how glad I am to hear of the recovery of your health, which I hope is now established.

I venture to ask if you could grant me a few minutes—it shall not be more—at your convenience. Any time any day except Saturday. I am very anxious to submit for your counsel and consideration, one or two matters appertaining to my book¹ which is now maturing. And there are one or two points as to which I would take your decision with regard to publication.

I need hardly say what a pleasure it is to me to emphasise, what is indeed very obvious, my Chief's intense pride in your work and absolute confidence in yourself.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE ARTHUR.

[FROM LIEUT. COLONEL THE HON. JOHN DAWNAY (A.D.C.
TO LORD FRENCH) AFTERWARDS 9TH VISCOUNT DOWNE.]

HILLINGTON HALL,
KING'S LYNN.

20. 4. 19.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

It was with a very sore heart that I said good-bye and came away from Ireland and left you, as, although I trust it does not mean that the chapter of my service with you is definitely closed, it is no good blinking the fact that the *active* part has come to an end.

I mustn't bother you with a long letter, but I do just want you to really know that these last years have been wonderfully happy ones for me, thanks to your great kindness and never failing friendship.

As long as I live, I shall always consider that it has been the greatest privilege to have been on your Staff, and so to serve a man who has played so splendid a part in the most tremendous crisis in our history, and whom I look upon not only as a very great commander but also as a very dear friend.

Yours ever,

JACK.

¹ Sir George Arthur's *Life of Lord Kitchener*.

[FROM MAJOR-GEN. (AFTERWARDS GENERAL) SIR JOHN SHEA.]

3RD LAHORE DIVISION,
PALESTINE.

July 23rd.

DEAR LORD FRENCH,

I have just read your book with absorbing interest. It brought back to me most vividly my daily visits to you in 1914 and the great kindness you always showed me. Your very kind mention of my name, which I greatly value, makes me venture to write to ask you if you will do me the honour of giving me your photograph.

I need hardly say how very greatly I would value it.

Hoping that you are well and wishing you good luck now and always.

Yrs.,

J. S. SHEA.

[Lieut.-Col. Shea, 35th Scinde Horse, was Liaison Officer between the Commander-in-Chief and the Cavalry during the early part of the Great War.]

[FROM THE HON. SECRETARY OF THE CLAN DONNACHAIDN SOCIETY.]

GLENDEVON, BY DOLLAR,
SCOTLAND.

6. 9. 19.

FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH,
MY LORD,

As we are proud to claim you as a clansman through your descent from the Robertsons of Kindeace, it is proposed to elect your lordship an Honorary Member of the Clan Society, at a meeting, Pitlochry, Perthshire, 26th Sept. If you approve might I ask you to be so kind as, send me a few words to read aloud to the clansfolk present?

We are also electing General Sir William Robertson. It is our first meeting, since the war began. It may interest your lordship to mention that I knew and know the members of the Kindeace family as friends—and most kind ones—especially the late laird of Kindeace, Charles Robertson.

He helped Dr. Aird in the family history book, where your family is shown, although not brought down to your own name. He was a thorough Highlander, and proud of his descent from the Chiefs of Struan, but called himself a stranger in Ross-shire, of course,—“We have only been here 300 years,” he said.

I am, my Lord,

Yours faithfully,

(Mrs.) S. ROBERTSON MATHESON,

Hon. Clan Secretary and Treasurer.

[FROM THE RT. HON. SIR HORACE (AFTERWARDS LORD)
MARSHALL, LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.]

THE MANSION HOUSE,
LONDON,
E.C.4.

October 2nd, 1919.

DEAR LORD FRENCH,

You will remember that quite early in the year, the Corporation decided to bestow the Freedom of the City, with a sword of honour, on a number of distinguished officers who had served in the War. Your name headed the list. It was the Corporation's wish to arrange the presentations chronologically, but events in Ireland and Lord Jellicoe's visit to Australia prevented this being adhered to and they have taken place in no special order.

The Corporation wish me to take your opinion as to what you would like done in regard to yourself? They wanted to make the presentation to you and Lord Jellicoe at the same time as being the heads of the army and navy at the outset and for a great part of the War. Will it be agreeable to you to wait till the Admiral returns or will you prefer some earlier and separate function?

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

HORACE MARSHALL,

HIS EXCELLENCY,

F.M. VISCOUNT FRENCH,
K.P.

Lord Mayor.

[FROM FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT ALLENBY, HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR EGYPT.]

9, UPPER CHEYNE ROW,
CHELSEA.

8. 10. 19.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

Very many thanks for your most kind letter of the 5th October, with its message of congratulation and appreciation.

I value your opinion above all others, and I can never be grateful enough for all that you have done for me. I feel that I owe all my success to your help and wise guidance. I sincerely hope that I may be able to come over next summer and accept your tempting invitation to Ireland.

As it is, I leave for France on Tuesday the 14th inst., and I sail for Egypt from Marseilles on the 19th.

With renewed thanks and all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

EDMUND H. ALLENBY.

[FROM THE BISHOP OF LONDON.]

FULHAM PALACE.

Dec. 20th, 1919.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Hearty congratulations upon your wonderful escape.

It is an awful problem what to do with these people—even worse than the ones we discussed at St. Omer in April, 1915. I can only pray that you may have a 'right judgment in all things' and I will.

May you have a happy Xmas in spite of all these anxieties! God will bring you through.

Yours very sincerely,

A. F. LONDON.

[This was one of many messages of congratulation received by Lord French, after narrowly escaping assassination at the hands of Sinn Feiners near Phoenix Park, Dublin, on December 19th.]

[FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.]

THE PALACE,

ARMAGH.

Christmas, 1919.

MY DEAR YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I want to send you my affectionate greetings with the earnest hope that you may have every Christmastide Benediction and the joy of knowing in the New Year that your Rule in Ireland has brought back law and order to our beloved and unhappy land. Mrs. Crozier desires warm and respectful regards.

Your Excellency's

most faithful and attached

JOHN B. ARMAGH.

[TO LADY ROBERTS.]

VICE REGAL LODGE,

DUBLIN.

Jan. 1, 1920.

DEAR LADY AILEEN,

I was deeply touched by your most kind letter of Dec. 21. Thank you ever so much. It is kind of you to think of me and my difficulties sometimes.

Will you accept my warmest wishes for the New Year.

Yours very sincerely,

FRENCH.

You told me I might address you as I have.

[Lady Roberts' letter was one of congratulation on Lord French's escape from assassination.]

I regard the gift of the Freedom of the City of London as one of the greatest rewards which can be given to any subject of His Majesty the King, and when I recall the illustrious names which are inscribed on that great Roll of Fame I am proud indeed to think that such services as I have been able to render are thought worthy of so great a reward.

This is one of the red letter days of my life, and I rejoice to have received the signal honour which you have conferred upon me in the company of the great and distinguished Admiral.¹ It is always a great pleasure to me to recall that I served for five years in the navy, and that it was in that service I received my first training in the art and science of war.

When in August, 1914, I was selected by His Majesty's Government to command the Expeditionary Force which was sent from this country to support the armies of France and Belgium in the Great War I certainly hoped that it might be my good fortune to remain in the field until victory—the attainment of which I never for an instant doubted—had been achieved.

Fate ruled otherwise. It was decreed that there were younger men better able to carry on the work begun by the first Expeditionary Force, and you all know how after years of strain and trial they joined with our Allies in bringing the war to a triumphant conclusion.

Those valorous commanders,—headed by the distinguished Field Marshal who had the great privilege of leading them to final success—have already answered the invitation of the Corporation of the City of London and have attended here to receive your appreciation and reward. They have found, as we find to-day, that the City of London always recognises with the most generous and lavish hands those who have tried to serve their country in the hour of danger and trial.

It is not my purpose to-day to give you anything in the nature of a detailed account of my stewardship. It was a small army which I took to France at the outset of hostilities, and many of those who were my comrades in those early days have fallen. The flower of our old regular army perished in the war; but their spirit survived and animated their successors who brought the war to so glorious a conclusion. I feel confident that the memory of the courage and self-sacrifice displayed by those who first took the field will be permanently enshrined in the annals of our nation.

¹ Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Jellicoe.

It is far too soon to pronounce a verdict upon the teeming episodes of the greatest war the world has ever witnessed. Our deeds can only be accurately and faithfully judged at the bar of history, and to that tribunal I confidently leave the task of assessing the merits and demerits of our work.

Long before such considered judgment can be delivered I shall personally have passed away, and I hope all the heart burnings and differences invariably engendered in a mighty war will have faded into oblivion. Of one thing I am certain, and that is that no judgment can ever dim the valour of that incomparable man, the trained British soldier, upon the battle field. In him is summed up the spirit, the vigour and tenacity of our race. When I think of the steadfast virtues of the men who died at the First Battle of Ypres, and in many other fierce encounters I feel that we have in their glorious sacrifice a proof that in a thousand years the qualities of the people of Great Britain are not impaired. Those men went forth silently and almost unseen. They fought and died before the nature of the struggle in which they were engaged was fully understood in this country. They cheerfully and quietly laid down their lives to preserve the security which we enjoy to-day.

Peace has not brought with it the calmness of the earlier life we well remember. We are living in troublous times and there are many apprehensions about the future of our land. I do not share those apprehensions. Conditions may change, our internal political balance may be altered; but when I recall the unfailing devotion of millions of Britons in the Great War I am confident of one thing, and that is, the spirit of our people which has won for us a foremost place in the world has not changed, nor will it change.

When we are inclined to despondency let us look back upon the record of this people in the war and take heart of grace. This old and proud nation, repository alike of good tempered courage and of political common sense, will never breed disaster and collapse out of victory.

We must be careful not to deceive ourselves with the thought that success was lightly attained, or was inevitable. To entertain such ideas would be a bad omen for our future which more than ever rests upon preparedness.

Though I was always confident of ultimate victory there can be no doubt that we had some narrow escapes, and often the issue seemed to hang perilously in the balance. Although from the day this country drew the sword the achievement

by Germany of her gigantic aims was impossible of attainment, there can be no doubt that a careful review of the events of the past few years will show us that we owe something to the mistakes which were made by our enemies. One of the greatest lessons of the war is that indecision or divided aims spell ultimate defeat. The Germans had three great tasks before them when war was declared. They had to overcome the armies in the West, to seize the Channel Ports, and to mask the Russian forces in the East. As they have themselves admitted, they were torn asunder by the conflicting claims of East and West. The events which occurred in East Prussia in the early part of the war clearly showed them that their own civil population could not stand the shock of invasion, and from that moment they alternated between the claims of the two fronts.

Though I shall not attempt to anticipate the verdict of history, my personal impression has always been that for them, as for us, the decisive field was always in the West; and I believe it is quite possible that they might have greatly prolonged the war if they had stuck to this view from the outset.

Their cardinal mistake, I believe, was their failure to seize the Channel Ports at the beginning, and it was our salvation that whilst they were dealing their principal blows against the Allied armies they did not simultaneously establish themselves on the coast.

I believe the truth to be that the Germans never expected that the British Empire would take part in the war, and that their plans were made almost entirely upon this assumption. Fortunately for us one of the defects of the German temperament in war is an inability to change plans readily; and they found to their cost what a risky thing it is to run a war on preconceived grooves, and irrespective of any new factor which may enter into the problem.

What also told heavily against the German attack was the lodestone of Paris. Whether they marched South with the primary object of destroying the Allied armies, or of seizing the Ports, it is a point much disputed; but I believe some of their commanders at any rate were magnetised by the French capital. It was only after they were driven back from Paris and defeated at the Battle of the Marne that they made their first attempt on the Channel Ports which was foiled, as you know, at the First Battle of Ypres.

Long after I had left the field they tried once more in 1918 to reach the Channel Ports, but again they could not stay the course. Then once more the lodestone of Paris again exercised its magnetic effect, but thanks to the genius of my old comrade in arms, Marshal Foch, it proved to be their undoing. The fascinations of Paris are proverbial, but that fair city successfully eluded the German embrace and we can truly say that her lure was ultimately fatal to the enemy.

It cannot be said that on our part we were entirely free from divided aims, and while I recognise the immense importance of our interests in the Near and Middle East I shall always think that we might have masked Turkey just as Germany could probably have masked Russia, and concentrated all our forces on the Western front.

I hope I have not wearied you by this small excursion into the great issues of the war; but I have now another duty to perform.

Speaking in the centre of the great life of the Empire I wish to express the everlasting debt of gratitude I owe to all those who were my associates and colleagues in the field. I am rejoiced to see many of them are present here to-day.

I said a short time ago that I accepted the great honour you had conferred upon me in the name of my comrades. It is due to them more than to me that I stand here to-day.

In all the history of war the Commander-in-Chief has had to rely for success on those who carry out his orders. If this was ever true it is ten times more so now. The huge armies of to-day and the enormous extent of modern battle fields have made it necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to repose much greater trust in his subordinate commanders, and delegate a much greater responsibility to them than formerly. They have consequently a far greater share in the glory of success, as they must bear a larger portion of the blame in failure. This principle prevails throughout the whole military hierarchy. Even in the private soldier in the ranks a greater power of initiative is demanded and required.

How then can I find adequate words to express the gratitude I feel towards all, from the highest rank to the lowest, who served with me in those fateful years of 1914-1915!

I cannot close these few remarks without requesting you, my Lord Mayor and the Corporation of the City of London, to accept through me our warmest thanks and the expression of our heart felt gratitude for all that was done for us during the years of 1914 and 1915.

cannot wrinkle his brow nor mar the youthful brightness of his face. Sickness cannot now dispoil him. He lives imperishably fair, crowned with the garland of immortal youth.

"In all life laid down at the call of duty there is something imperishable, because self-sacrificial!"

[FROM QUEEN ELIZABETH OF BELGIUM.]

LAEKEN.

July 1st, 1920.

DEAR LORD FRENCH,

I am not sure whether you have got all these snapshots I made during your visit to La Panne in 1915. In any case I send them to you thinking you will like to have them as a souvenir. I was so sorry you could not come to Bruxelles on your visit to Ypres because it would have been a very great pleasure for me to see you. But I quite understood, your time being so short, how impossible it was for you to come to Bruxelles.

I thank you very much for the kind letter you wrote me on that occasion.

Believe me, dear Lord French,

Yours sincerely,

ELIZABETH.

[FROM QUEEN ALEXANDRA.]

TO FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH,
VICE REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN.

1st Dec., 1920.

I am so touched at your kind message of congratulation on behalf of my Hussar Regiment,¹ please tell them how deeply I value it, and I am greatly touched at this personal remembrance from you in the midst of all your anxieties.

ALEXANDRA.

[FROM THE RT. HON. WALTER LONG, (AFTERWARDS VISCOUNT LONG).]

ROOD ASHTON,
TROWBRIDGE.

February 18th, 1921.

MY DEAR LORD LIEUTENANT,

I pray you will forgive a typewritten letter but I am confined absolutely and literally to my bed on my back and I find writing myself really impossible.

¹ The 19th Hussars, Queen Alexandra's regiment.

I cannot tell you how much I appreciate and value your letter. From one whose name stands so high and whose work has been so real, it is something to be proud of to have such a record to place amongst one's memoirs.

Personally, I am content if people will believe that I have done my best and have never worked for my own end.

Once more, all my thanks.

I am,

Your Excellency's

Faithful and obedient servant,

WALTER H. LONG.

[THE REVD. JAMES HOUGHTON KENNEDY, RECTOR OF
STILLORGAN AND CANON OF ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL,
DUBLIN.]

13th March, 1921.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LORD LIEUTENANT,
DUBLIN.

Calvary will be re-enacted if Moran and Whelan are executed.
REV. KENNEDY.

[The two men referred to in this telegram were Sinn Feiners under sentence of death.]

[FROM LADY DE FREYNE.]

FRENCH PARK,
CO. ROSCOMMON.

April 6th, 1921.

MY DEAR LORD FRENCH,

I must write you a line from us both to tell you how sorry we are that you are leaving the Lodge, but we must not be selfish and much as we shall miss our delightful visits to you, we and all your many friends must feel glad that your lot is to be cast into less troubled waters!

I expect you will be coming to Drumdoe¹ later on, and we look forward to seeing you then. I hope you will now have a good rest after the great strain you have had on you for so many years.

With love from us both,

Yours ever,

VICTORIA DE FREYNE.

¹ Lord French's home in County Roscommon.

[FROM THE MOST REVD. JOHN HENRY BERNARD, PROVOST
OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.]

PROVOST'S HOUSE,
TRINITY COLLEGE,
DUBLIN.

7th April, 1921.

MY DEAR LORD,

For many reasons the announcement that your Excellency is giving up the Viceregal reins will be greatly regretted by your friends, but I think everyone must realise how thankless the position of the Lord Lieutenant is, and how difficult it was for you to act in accordance with your own judgment, during these last sad years.

I hope that . . . you will often be in Dublin, and that we may be permitted to welcome you to the Provost's House no less heartily, if less formally, than when you came as Lord Lieutenant.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

J. H. BERNARD,
(Bp.).

HIS EXCELLENCY,
THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,
K.P.

[FROM THE RT. HON. SIR JOHN ROSS, BART., LORD CHAN-
CELLOR OF IRELAND.]

OATLANDS,
STILLORGAN,
CO. DUBLIN.

11th May, 1921.

MY DEAR LORD FRENCH,

At the risk of troubling you with another letter I really must write to thank you from my heart for your most kind and touching letter.

I feel that no matter what happens, I have not lived in vain, when I have won such esteem from one who is a great judge of men.

It was a constant grief that I was not in a position in which I could give you more real help.

Your letter will be handed down as a precious possession to my family.

Always, my dear Lord,

Most gratefully and sincerely yours,

JOHN ROSS.

[FROM THE HON. MRS. ARTHUR HENNIKER, NOVELIST.]

2 HYDE PARK SQUARE,

W.2.

Aug. 2nd, 1921.

MY DEAR LORD FRENCH,

It was *very nice* of you to write me such a charming letter. Best thanks for it. It is a real pleasure to me to hear that any of my stories appeal to you.

I should have been delighted if you could have looked in here again before starting on your tour, as, after all, I did not go away. . . . I am sure you must be finding your journey full of interest. I wonder what will strike you most? I daresay you will hear something of Mr. Bourchier¹ when you are in Sofia. He really was, I think, a great *Ambassador*, though not nominally in the diplomatic service, and it must have been rather heart-breaking to him to see, at any rate the *temporal* failure of his work. But the *incompleteness* of life is, I suppose often as mysterious as its *sadness*, or would be, if one did not believe the work is going on still somewhere.

Vienna must be dreadfully sad, a sort of place of ghosts, I should think. Ireland is very strange and perplexing, but our friend, the new Lord Chancellor, writes to me in a hopeful strain and I think feels that he can be of real use. He spoke affectionately of *you* in one of his recent letters.

It seems to me impossible to feel the *slightest* interest in De Valera. One can understand Lord Edward FitzGerald and Parnell, in their utterly different ways, inspiring devotion. Sinn Fein, in addition to the horror of their methods, seem to have an unreal and *absurd* side.

I shall hope to see you when you are back in England.

With repeated thanks for your kind words.

Very sincerely yours,

F. HENNIKER.

[Mrs. Henniker was widow of Major-Gen. the Hon. A. H. Henniker-Major.]

[FROM MISS MARGARET FFOLLIOTT.]

HOLLYBROOK,

BOYLE.

3rd August, 1921.

DEAR LORD FRENCH,

We have been doing a lot of clearing out of old letters and papers lately, and to-day came upon such an interesting little

¹ J. D. Bourchier, Esq., M.A., F.R.G.S., special correspondent of *The Times* in Roumania and Bulgaria, 1888, and subsequently represented *The Times* in South-Eastern Europe. In 1895 investigated atrocities in Macedonia.

paper-bound history of your family, that I felt I must instantly sit down and tell you where Rebecca Lady ffolliott comes in! She was a daughter of Patrick French, the first of French Park, so aunt to John French "Tierna More" who commanded the Enniskillen Dragoons at the battle of Aughrien, and great-aunt to your ancestor John French of Highlake, (his third son).

Moreover I see that Margaret French, sister of "Tierna More," married one John ffolliott of the County Sligo, so was aunt to John of Highlake.

I can't quite make out who this J. ff. was but shall probably run him to earth in time.

The owner of Hollybrook then was "Robert," and not a direct ancestor of ours, for his branch of the family died out, and our forebears who were their cousins, inherited the property later. Possibly John may have been a brother of Robert who died before him. It really would be funny if we found you had had a great-great-aunt at Hollybrook!

Besides this I find that your ancestors had very large estates in Co. Sligo, for Patrick French, Lady ffolliott's father, who died in 1667—"was seised of not less than 85 quarters of land in the Barony of Carbury, 23 in that of Lency, 29 in Tyrerill, 15 in Tyreragh, and 10 in Coran, all situated in the County Sligo, as appears by sundry leases and documents of the years 1632 and 35 in the custody of Lord De Freyne."

(Hollybrook is in the Barony of Tyrerill.) But after the manner of the time, Stafford's Commission, sitting at Boyle in 1635, took possession of these lands and parcelled them out to various people—Sir Philip Percival amongst them. However, Patrick French appealed to the English Parliament, who to their credit passed a vote saying "that the lands had been taken unjustly, and without any colour of law"—and were to be promptly restored, together with the "mesne profits during the time" a little trifle of over £26,000.

Cromwell, however, stepped in later, and again took away the lands which were never restored, although Dominick French, son of Patrick "obtained in lieu those quarters in County Roscommon, which were afterwards constituted a Manor."

There was a "James French" too who represented the Borough of Sligo in James II's Parliament in Dublin. So you see that your family had a good many associations with Co. Sligo!

It is altogether a very interesting little book, and next time that you are here or that we meet in London you must see it, it is too precious to trust to post in these days!

I wonder if you are coming to Drumdoe under present altered conditions. We shall be so very pleased to see you here if you do, and we have a little "offraside" for you if you will accept it, in the shape of a small portrait of Rebecca Lady ffolliott, with the



LORD FRENCH, WHEN VICEROY OF IRELAND,
WITH GENERAL SIR NEVIL MACREADY IN DUBLIN, APRIL, 1921



same pearl necklace on as in the large portrait, but "no widow's peak" so she looks a little different.

I hope all this family history will amuse you!

Kindest regards from us both.

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET FFOLLIOTT.

[Hollybrook was subsequently purchased by Lord French—then Earl of Ypres.]

[FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY, BRITISH LEGION.]

LORD FRENCH,
DE VERE HOTEL,
KENSINGTON.

31st October, 1921.

Fourteen hundred branches of the British Legion salute their former Commander-in-Chief, in memory of the glorious event of this day 1914.¹

GENERAL SECRETARY,
26 Eccleston Square.

[FROM MR. W. J. TALBOT, H.M. LIEUTENANT OF COUNTY ROSCOMMON.]

CASTLE DILLON,
ARMAGH.

Jan. 27th, 1922.

DEAR LORD FRENCH,

I am writing to ask you if you would care to be a Deputy-Lieutenant of Co. Roscommon. There is now a vacancy owing to the death of Mr. Pakenham Mahon, and I shall be so glad if you will accept it. We have been obliged to come here as they put 100 men and 3 officers in Mount Talbot. We stuck it out for nearly two years with 40 men and one officer, but this last touch sent us on the run. They are now leaving Mount Talbot to-day, so I suppose we shall go back soon. My wife wishes to be remembered to you.

Yours sincerely,

W. J. TALBOT.

[SPEECH AT TORONTO ON 29TH MAY, 1922.]

I am deeply sensible of the great honour you have done me in asking me to visit you in this great Canadian city. I am rejoiced to be able to accept your invitation, not only

¹ Final repulse of the German Army in the First Battle of Ypres.

because of my personal appreciation of your kindness, but also because I feel that you are desirous of paying this honour to our mutual comrades in arms whom I represent.

I should like to emphasise the fact that I am visiting America simply as a private citizen on his travels. I have no mission of any kind which, perhaps, is a somewhat unique position for any soldier or statesman in these days. As for over fifty years I have been constantly engaged in missions of various descriptions, I am rather glad of the change.

I have been honoured by several invitations to visit various parts of Canada, and I deeply regret being obliged to forgo the great pleasure it would have given me to meet many old friends, but the shortness of my stay on this side of the Atlantic precludes the possibility of my going beyond Toronto. However, I think there could be no more representative city in Canada in which I could fulfil the main purpose I have in coming on to Canadian soil. That purpose is to send a warm and heart-felt greeting to all my comrades of the Canadian army, and with all my heart to thank those who fought so splendidly in the ranks of the army which I commanded in France in 1915.

In all the splendid fighting throughout that year I would particularly mention their glorious conduct at the Second Battle of Ypres.

In 1910 I was Inspector-General of the Forces and the Canadian Government were good enough to ask our Government to send me to inspect the Canadian Army. I have the most vivid and pleasant recollection of that interesting time. In this very city of Toronto I remember inspecting one of the finest of your regiments, the Royal Canadian Highlanders. Their physique, their soldierlike appearance, their turn out on parade, and their movements filled me with wonder and admiration. I found very much the same degree of efficiency in Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, your Camps of Instruction and all the places I visited.

Your Military College at Kingston was a model of what such establishments ought to be, and this reminds me of an inspection I made at Kingston (stopping my train at four o'clock in the morning to do so) of a most efficient brigade under the late General Sir Samuel Hughes.

The scheme of manœuvre and the orders and instructions turned out by him were so clear, concise and to the point that I could not believe any man who had not had a regular

military training could have composed and written them. But I found out that he alone was responsible for them.

I think all the Empire owes a deep debt of gratitude to this great Canadian who has now passed away. Everyone knows how hard he struggled to bring the Canadian forces into the highest state of efficiency during his term of office as Minister of Militia, and there can be no doubt that his administration helped largely to enable the forces of Canada to fulfil the splendid rôle and establish the glorious record which they did in the Great War.

At the time of my inspection Sir Frederick Borden was Minister of Militia and I well remember how earnestly he threw himself into the same work.

[FROM MR. LIAM T. MACCOSGAIR (WILLIAM T. COSGRAVE),
ACTING CHAIRMAN, IRISH FREE STATE GOVERNMENT.]

RIGHT HON. JAMES MACMAHON,
UNDER-SECRY'S LODGE,
DUBLIN.

18th Aug., 1922.

Kindly convey to Field-Marshal Earl French sincere thanks of Irish people and Government for his kind expression of sympathy with them in great loss they have sustained by death of President Arthur Griffith.

LIAM T. MACCOSGAIR,
acting Chairman,
Irish Government.

[Mr. Arthur Griffith, first President of the Irish Free State, was murdered by Sinn Feiners in August, 1922.]

[FROM COLONEL SIR HENRY STREATFEILD, EQUERRY AND
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO QUEEN ALEXANDRA.]

SANDRINGHAM.

October 20th, 1922.

MY DEAR FIELD-MARSHAL,

I have shown your letter of the 18th inst. to Queen Alexandra and Her Majesty wishes me to thank you most sincerely for your kind sympathy on the death of Arthur Davidson.¹

He is a great loss to Her Majesty whom he has served so devotedly and he will be deeply mourned by many friends in all stations of life.

Personally I feel his death acutely. We have been like brothers working together for more than fourteen years and always in complete harmony.

¹ Colonel Sir Arthur Davidson, Equerry to Queen Alexandra.

I saw him in his coffin on Wednesday and he looked very peaceful. He had a long and very distressing illness, but no one ever heard him complain and he passed very peacefully away.

He always spoke in terms of affection of you and I know you will miss him.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

HENRY STREATFEILD.

[FROM FIELD MARSHAL LORD ALLENBY, HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR EGYPT.]

CAIRO,

30th December.

MY DEAR LORD YPRES,

I have met your friends, the Maguires, mentioned in your letter of the 9th November. They lunched here to-day and we like them very much. They are staying at the Semiramis Hotel three hundred yards from here. We have been having a quiet winter here but the atmosphere is charged with politics, as with electricity. A day or two ago, after a long spell of quiet, an English official, a teacher at the law school, was shot dead, bicycling home to lunch, at midday, on the main road. No arrests, as yet. I have resumed cavalry (British) patrols in the streets, and am taking other measures, and shall take such as I deem requisite. You, better than I, know the difficulty of dealing with assassination connived at by the public.

Mustapha Kemal's victory over the wretched Greeks has had a bad effect on the prestige of Europeans here, and in all the Near East. We, especially, are regarded as having backed the Greeks, and are looked on here as having suffered a crushing defeat. The dislike, hitherto, felt for the Greeks, has been in great measure, transferred to the English. If we come well through Lausanne, this will be altered. If not, not. However, we keep cheerful, and the lessons I learnt, of old, under you, my Chief, stand me in good stead.

With every good wish for 1923,

Yours very sincerely,

ALLENBY.

[FROM SIR GEORGE GRAHAME, BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN
BRUSSELS.]

BRITISH EMBASSY,
BRUSSELS.

November 16th, 1922.

DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 14th inst. in which you enclose a copy of the one which you told me you were going

to write to the Foreign Office. I hope they will take it to heart and not trouble you with a retort, but I gathered that the prospect of this does not alarm you!

I hope that you had a comfortable journey back to Paris. Your visit here has left a most agreeable impression on every one. The Belgians, from the King downwards, were delighted to see your well-known figure once more among them, and the English Colony as you saw for yourself, was brimming over with enthusiasm.

As regards myself, I thoroughly enjoyed having you as my guest. Every moment of your stay was a pleasure to me.

Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE GRAHAME.

[SPEECH AT RECEPTION AT DEAL TOWN HALL, ON MAY 27TH,
1923.]

TOWN HALL,

Tuesday, 27th May.

MR. MAYOR, AND WORSHIPFUL MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL
COUNCIL.

It is impossible for me adequately to express my appreciation of your kindness. Deal and its neighbourhood have always occupied a warm place in my heart. It is within two or three miles of the house where I was born,¹ and I am bound to it by many happy childish recollections.

When, therefore, I return to pass my remaining years in your beautiful old castle,² after a long life which includes some periods of stress and strain, it touches me very deeply to receive your warm and kindly reception.

Before I say any more may I express my heartfelt sympathy with you all in the departure from amongst you of the last Captain of Deal Castle, Lord George Hamilton.

During the twenty-two or twenty-three years he occupied that position he and Lady George Hamilton made themselves beloved by all with whom they were brought in contact. I have known Lord George Hamilton for many years, and am old enough to retain vivid recollections of his great career as a statesman, and of the splendid work that he did for his country in the administration of the late Lord Salisbury. Such a distinguished man was a worthy occupant of the ancient castle of Deal as its Captain, and I can well understand how much he will be missed.

¹ Ripple Vale.

² Lord Ypres had been recently appointed Captain of Deal Castle.

As regards my own services in war I have always tried to do my duty but I accept your generous words of appreciation most gratefully on behalf of the comrades who fought side by side with me. As regards the conduct of the war on land, it was the man in the trenches who won it, and no words can express the deep admiration I feel for him. The whole manhood of the nation was tried as it was never tried in war before, and they came gloriously through it.

I am reminded of the naval heroes of the war, and how splendidly they fought and won. In connection with these, there were some of whom we heard less, yet whose courage, devotion and endurance alone enabled our glorious fleet to carry out its tasks. I mean those gallant crews of the mine sweepers, the trawlers, the transport boats and many other services. It was in this work that the ancient prestige of Deal seamen shone out most conspicuously. Here was the share taken by this town in the winning of the war, and a great share it was.

Who shall assess the danger and the ceaseless toil of this tremendous work? The constant watch, the hourly exposure to death by torpedo or by drowning. The necessity for carrying on the work at all times, at all seasons, and in all weathers. It was these terrible tasks which mostly fell to the lot of Deal and her famous boatmen. They were well qualified for such work, for they have been born, bred and brought up in an atmosphere of risk and danger, for is not the life-saving fame of Deal boatmen known throughout the world?

Mr. Mayor and gentlemen, I thank you with all my heart for this kind reception. I hope we may very often meet, and that you will allow me to do all I possibly can to help you in forwarding the interests of this old town which I hold very dear.

[ADDRESS TO THE PENSIONERS AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL,
CHELSEA ON FOUNDATION DAY, 29TH MAY, 1923]

In the first place, I wish to express my warmest thanks to one whom I am proud to be able to call an old friend and an old comrade, the distinguished general¹ who is Governor of Chelsea Hospital, for the great honour he has done me in

¹ General Sir Neville Lyttelton.

asking me to come here to-day to inspect the veterans of the British army.

Besides being a great honour, it is also a great pleasure. Many of my old comrades have passed through this institution and some are still here to-day and I am truly glad to meet them again.

Like all of you I am also an old soldier and we are all growing old together. We may not have as much active employment as we could wish and perhaps our capacity for doing work is not so great as it was. This is inevitable. But there is one great pleasure which we, who have grown old in our country's service, only can enjoy. We can look back with real pride and satisfaction to the days we have spent in the great army we have all loved so well.

I am talking to men, some of whose experience of soldiering covers sixty or even seventy years. During that time the army has been subjected to some severe tests of its efficiency, culminating in the part which it took in the greatest war the world has ever seen. How the British army has met those tests is a matter of history.

There are a few here still, I believe, who can look back to the days of the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny. One can well understand the pride and satisfaction they must feel in recalling the glories of the Alma, Inkermann, Sebastopol, Balaclava, Delhi and Lucknow.

Afghanistan, Egypt and South Africa furnish glorious memories for all of us.

The army that embarked for France in August 1914 was described by military critics of foreign countries as the finest military force for its size and extent that the world had ever known. As you know, this army which bears the proud soubriquet of the "old contemptibles," was almost wiped out in the task it had to perform of holding back the German hordes. But its ranks were recruited and re-filled by the splendid manhood of the country and materially helped, as you know, in bringing the war to a successful conclusion.

Surely, it must be an immense source of pride and gratification for everyone of you to know that you spent the best years of your life in that small, but perfect, army and that each of you in his own way helped to build up the splendid efficiency which it finally attained.

The main source of all our strength was the fine spirit of mutual understanding which has ever existed between officers,

non-commissioned officers and men, and it is this spirit, which each one of you has helped to impart to it, which has enabled the British army to attain its glorious record.

I heartily congratulate you on your fine appearance on parade. Wearing all those distinguished medals and clasps, you present a splendid spectacle worthy of the army in whose ranks you won them. I wish you with all my heart the utmost measure of happiness, rest and peace to the end of your lives.

[FROM M. MAURICE LEROY, PRESIDENT OF THE 75TH SECTION
OF THE HOLDERS OF THE MILITARY MEDAL OF FRANCE.]

VAUX-LE-PÉNIL.

July 29th, 1923.

TO FIELD MARSHAL FRENCH—MEMBER OF HONOUR OF HOLDERS
OF MILITARY MEDALS IN FRANCE.

On the occasion of their visit to the Castle of Vaux-le-Pénil, the Holders of Military Medals of round about Melun met on Sunday, July 29th, 1923, in the workroom, where Marshals French and Joffre stopped on September 5th, 1914, and made their plans for the victory of the Marne, to whom they send their deep admiration and kindest regards.

President of the 75th Section of the Holders of Military Medal of France.

M. LEROY.

M. Maurice Leroy—21, Rue Bancel-Melun,
Seine et Marne,
France.

[ADDRESS BY LORD YPRES, AT MEAUX, FRANCE, ON THE NINTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE, SEPTEMBER,
1923.]

I am deeply grateful for the invitation which I have received for the second year in succession from the Mayor of Meaux to attend this great anniversary of the Battle of the Marne.

A visit to those classic grounds at this season brings back to us those tragic scenes of September, 1914, and as the years roll on the memory of those glorious days remains with us in the same vivid intensity.

Years must elapse before we can understand the true history of events upon which have depended the fate of empires but every year that goes by finds us more accurately

informed and possessed of a more just appreciation of the great battle which we commemorate to-day.

As evidence accumulates and as facts come to light we realise more and more the stupendous task and the awful load of responsibility which lay on the shoulders of that great and glorious Marshal of France who led us to victory.

Marshal Joffre's rapid conception of the situation, his plans to meet it, his skilful execution of those plans and the great result which followed will cause his name to go down to history amongst the greatest of leaders.

I feel sure that every year we live we shall find this appreciation more clearly brought out.

Since we met here a year ago one of the greatest of his generals has passed away. Everyone who was then present must have been deeply impressed by the quiet dignified pathetic personality of Marshal Maunoury, so patient under his suffering, whose gallant and skilful leadership gave such splendid effect to the plans of the Commander-in-Chief.

I feel I am only expressing the thought of every British soldier who fought side by side with the army of France when I say that our hearts beat in the utmost sympathy with our glorious comrades on whatever service they may be engaged.

We, soldiers of the British army who fought in France can never forget that the august head of the French Republic¹ was Minister of War in those tragic days and how he, accompanied by your present President of the Council,² who was then himself at the head of the State, used to visit our camps and address words of hope and encouragement to us.

No more worthy successor could have been found to rule over the destinies of the army of France than the great and distinguished statesman M. Maginot, who is presiding here to-day.

He carries on his body the hall-mark of his qualification for that high office, having served in the field in the ranks of the French army, until wounds which were almost mortal compelled him to withdraw.

He is exercising his great functions with his eminent colleague Marshal Foch in a time of anxious stress and strain. Their old comrades in arms follow with heartfelt sympathy and good wishes those who fought by their side in the Great War.

¹ M. Millerand.

² M. Poincaré.

[ADDRESS ON 11TH NOVEMBER, 1923, AT THE UNVEILING OF A MEMORIAL AT MONS TO THE OFFICERS, N.C.O.'S AND MEN OF THE ROYAL IRISH REGIMENT, OF WHICH LORD YPRES WAS COLONEL-IN-CHIEF, WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR, 1914-18.]

In the first place I should like to express in the name of the Royal Irish Regiment our deep gratitude to His Majesty the King of the Belgians and the Belgian people for allowing us to erect a memorial to the memory of our fallen comrades on this classic soil.

Classic it certainly is to all whose business it is to study and practice war but more particularly to the Royal Irish Regiment whose great fighting fame has been largely won on Belgian soil.

No more fitting spot than this old city of Mons could have been found to perpetuate the memory of the glorious fallen heroes of the Royal Irish Regiment.

Belgian soil is no new place for their gallant dead to rest, for they fought gallantly and victoriously round Mons in 1709 and 1745, losing some 50 per cent. of their strength. At the commencement of the last great war the 2nd Battalion took a strenuous part in the Battle of Mons in August, 1914. They fought their way back to the same spot in 1918 having in the meantime been not merely disseminated but four times almost annihilated.

The six service battalions qualified for 52 battle honours of which almost half were earned by the 2nd Battalion.

Time does not allow me to give more than one instance in detail.

On the 19th of October the 2nd Battn. was ordered to attack Le Pilly in conjunction with a French attack on Fournes. The latter attack did not materialise, but the Royal Irish Regiment reached Le Pilly and drove out the Germans. During the night they dug themselves in where they were, and reported their isolated position, asking for support on both flanks. This, however, was not available, and next morning the battalion, which had already lost heavily in the attack on the village, was attacked in converging directions by the 16th German Regiment and one battalion of the 56th Regiment, supported by artillery. After a gallant defence which lasted till after 3.30 p.m. they were overwhelmed and the survivors captured. According to the statement of a German officer of the 56th Regiment,

barely 100 of these could walk. The strength of the battalion on the 19th was twenty officers and eight hundred and eighty-four other ranks. On the 21st there were present, at Roll Call, Lieut. E. M. Phillips, Transport Officer, and one hundred and thirty-five other ranks.

Years must elapse before the true history of the Great War can be known and understood. But when the time arrives, the part taken in by the soldiers of Ireland will stand out nobly. They were always to be found where the fighting was most severe and Irish regiments stood their ground with a tenacity which has never been surpassed in war.

Alas! The inexorable decrees of fate have caused them to disappear from the ranks of the army, but the memory of all they have done will, I feel sure, survive for all time.

This monument bears the names of the officers and men of the Royal Irish Regiment, who laid down their lives for their country. Surely no honour can be compared to that of a place in this glorious roll of fallen heroes.

I deeply appreciate the great honour which my comrades of the Royal Irish Regiment have done me in asking me to unveil this memorial, both as their late Colonel-in-Chief and their Commander-in-Chief in the field. It will always remain a deep source of pride and satisfaction to me to have been so closely associated with the regiment, for several years previous to its disbandment.

But still greater pleasure it is to be able to pay this last tribute of affection and respect to soldiers who fought with such glorious gallantry under my command.

[FROM M. JEAN LESCARTZ, BURGOMASTER OF MONS, BELGIUM.]

TOWN OF MONS,
BURGOMASTER'S OFFICE.

FIELD MARSHAL,

To the last moment I hoped my health would be sufficiently recovered to allow me the honour of receiving you in the Town Hall.

I am, alas! unable to do so, and assure you of my deep regret. We do not forget that it is the double and powerful support of England and France which gave victory to the heroic resistance that our little Belgian army made against the Germans, and that without such help it would have been overwhelmed.

It is a great joy, Field Marshal, to express our great gratitude

towards our two great Allies, and to remind you that if in 1914 we helped in the admirable resistance of your armies, we also had the good fortune in 1918 to see your same armies drive out of the town of Mons the Germans who had oppressed it for more than four years.

And I should like to add that people who have been united thus, during such a terrible war, should continue to be so after victory, when it is a question of reaping the rewards so hardly won.

I pray you to allow me to express my regret to all the eminent personages who surround you, and to accept my wishes that you may long preside over the British army.

In this hope I beg you to accept the assurances of my high esteem.

JEAN LESCARTZ,
Burgomaster of Mons.
11.11.23.

[SPEECH AT PRESS LUNCHEON IN PARIS, ON 7TH DECEMBER, 1923.]

I have to thank you very heartily for the great honour you have done me in asking me to join you to-day.

The invitation conveyed to me by Mr. Mendl came as a great surprise and a great pleasure. During my long and somewhat active life I have had a great deal to do with press men both in peacetime and in war and retain the most pleasant recollections of that association.

I have formed the most intimate friendships with members of the Press, and as I think over them, many cherished personalities present themselves to my mind's eye. Nearly all of them have, alas, passed away.

We meet here to-day in a foreign land, but in the presence of a great crisis in our national life. Terrific political warfare has proceeded in our country for the last three weeks, and at this moment we are awaiting the result of yesterday's decisive battle.

It reminds me of another decisive battle of a different kind that took place more than nine years ago very close to the ground on which we stand. A battle which was destined to decide the fate not only of the British and French but of the whole world. The Allies of the Entente and of Central Europe stood face to face on the Marne, their Northern flanks on the very outskirts of Paris.

How often one hears the question asked, "What have we got out of the war? What benefit have we derived from all this sacrifice of men and treasure?"

I sometimes wonder if these people ever sit down and think what would have happened if the Germans had won the battle of the Marne instead of losing it! It was indeed the crux of the Great War. On the one side the Germans had embarked upon a gigantic offensive, covering an enormous front, which required at all its stages, but especially at the moment of contact, that the army should be led by one highly skilled in war, of iron nerve, steadfast determination and inflexible will. The man was not there!

On the other side we had a Generalissimo, Marshal Joffre, who possessed these great qualities, who could manoeuvre with consummate skill, whilst disputing the ground yard by yard, above all who could outwit and deceive his enemy.

I believe the totally unexpected threat of Maunoury¹ on the Ourcq was one of the greatest and most skilful surprises in the history of war.

I need not dwell on the course of the battle, Maunoury's splendid attack, Galliéni's² heroic unselfish support with all the troops from Paris. It is all well known and now a matter of history.

The British soldier remembers all this. We remember the part we took ourselves. We remember all our long association with the French army throughout the long four years of the war, and so long as any of us are alive who can look back on that time we have the surest guarantee that the hearts of the two armies and of the two nations will ever beat in unison.

[FROM BRIG.-GENERAL LORD WARWICK.]

WARWICK CASTLE.

February 4th, 1924.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

Thank you so deeply for your very dear and charming letter. I do hope you will forgive a delay in writing at once, but I have been ill with 'flu and yet having to rush about and settle business here which is rather chaotic. Poor dear Father, he had suffered a great deal and lately he got much stronger but died quite peacefully from pneumonia. I fear if he had rallied he would have suffered much more pain from the numerous illnesses he had.

Dear General, there is only one general to me in the world and I do so much want to sometimes see him. Lately since the war I have been so much wandering about without a permanent home

¹ General Maunoury (afterwards Marshal) who commanded 6th French Army.

² General Galliéni, Governor of Paris.

that we somehow miss one another. Now things are changed a bit and I hope one day to settle down here and be able to entertain you suitably. All my grateful thanks and fondest good wishes.

Yrs. always,

GUIDO.

[ADDRESS AT THE UNVEILING OF THE CAVALRY WAR MEMORIAL
AT STANHOPE GATE, LONDON ON 21ST MAY, 1924.]

We have met here to-day on what I cannot but regard as one of the most impressive and solemn occasions in the history of the Cavalry Service.

I say this because never before have the cavalry forces of the Empire, Regulars, Yeomanry, Indian and Colonial been so closely united in a great war, nor have they fought side by side on an European battlefield.

Never have their joint services been recorded and the memory of their dead perpetuated by the erection of a monument in the heart of the Empire.

We stand before that monument to-day, a monument by which we seek to honour our glorious comrades who have given up their lives for their King and country, and for the honour of the great service to which we all belong.

They lost their lives in the greatest war the world has ever seen, a war in which the cavalry played a part which has never been surpassed in its history.

From time immemorial the work of the cavalry in a campaign has been especially marked and important during its opening phases, and toward its close. This was very apparent in the late war.

They began it by their splendid work before and during the battle of Mons, in the great retreat, at the Battle of the Marne, on the Aisne, and in the great turning movement towards the North which finally secured and covered Ypres and the Channel Ports, and led them into the valley of the Lys in pursuit of the retreating enemy. Then, as you remember, enormous German reinforcements arrived and the cavalry was obliged to fall back, but only to perform one of its greatest deeds of the war. For they held the Wychaate-Messine ridge almost unsupported against tremendous odds for forty-eight hours until powerful French reinforcements arrived.

These were great episodes and had great results.

Towards the close of the war we saw immense armies

entrenched and facing one another along lines of almost incalculable extent.

They reached indeed from the North Sea right across Europe into Asia. On the South Eastern flank of this line in Syria cavalry and mounted troops were again concentrated. Handled by their great leader¹ with consummate skill, nothing could resist their victorious onslaught. They crushed in that flank, rolled up the Turco-German armies, and without doubt it was the beginning of the end.

Thus from first to last the cavalry carried out their great rôle, but on a vastly extended scale.

This is only a very brief and incomplete summary of their work in the war, but it is all that time allows me to say.

Not only did they maintain their ancient prestige as regards the methods of their employment; not only did they vindicate and justify their great place in war; but the same élan and dash which has ever characterised them; the same vigorous leading; the same daring attempts to attain the seemingly impossible; the same glorious spirit was apparent in every part of the vast theatre of war.

France, the Dardanelles, Syria and many other places show vivid examples of this.

It was in the performance of these great deeds and in the carrying out of the work which I have briefly tried to describe that so many of our gallant comrades lost their lives. As I speak these words the recollection of many great cavalrymen who have fallen, both of those who led and those who followed will come to all our minds. They come of all ranks and of all units; from private soldier to general, from troop and squadron to brigade and division.

Doubtless in the midst of many successes there were some few failures to attain the object sought for; but whether successes or failures, we must ever remember that they were the inevitable essence and outcome of that great cavalry spirit without which cavalry is not worthy of the name. A spirit which, whilst demanding a great toll in casualties, often achieves the greatest results, and has sometimes turned apparent defeat into victory. It was in such an atmosphere that these glorious men died. Their bodies lie where they fell with so many more of our comrades, but their spirits will ever live in our hearts and are enshrined in this monument which we have raised to them.

¹ General Sir Edmund (afterwards Field Marshal Viscount) Allenby.

Even in this new mechanical age there are many indispensable tasks in war that only mounted men can still perform. No general would undertake a command in the field without the assistance of mounted troops. It is a significant fact that whilst we began the war with seventeen regiments of cavalry, there were no less than a hundred and fifty in the field at its close.

I suggest, therefore, that the best tribute we can pay to the memory of our fallen comrades is to sometimes turn our thoughts towards this sacred spot and remember the sacrifices which have been made and the spirit which they displayed, and renew our determination to keep that spirit ever alert, active and unimpaired and ready to emulate the great example they showed us when we are again called upon to take the field.

In conclusion let me in the name of the cavalry service express our deep gratitude to Captain Adrian Jones (himself an old cavalry officer) the sculptor, and Sir John Burnet, A.R.A., the architect, for the beautiful monument they have designed and completed.

[FROM MAJOR-GENERAL THE HON. SIR REGINALD TALBOT.]

STATES HOUSE,
MEDMENHAM,
MARLOW,
BUCKS.
May 27th, 1924.

MY VERY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I cannot fail to hasten to thank you very warmly for your letter shewing me that, notwithstanding all you have gone through, and the tremendous greatness of your position which you have filled so brilliantly, you have kept a corner for one of your oldest and best friends.

Your letter burned me right through and made me regret that I was not present at the Memorial Service of the cavalry when I should have met all the leaders and have shaken your hand the first of all.

Fancy you going back to the old, old days of Aldershot and Salisbury Plain. I naturally can never forget those happy days, but it is wonderful that you, who have done such great deeds, and can look back to them with pride and satisfaction, should not have wiped them out from your recollection.

I have followed all your steps in the war from the beginning when you made the grand stand near Mons, all through your

brilliant and victorious campaigns with the greatest interest and admiration.

However, your letter is ample compensation. I shall keep it as long as I live and I feel very proud and thankful to you for it.

Your very affectionate,

REGINALD A. J. TALBOT.

If you are in London next Autumn might I ask you to come and see me in York Terrace. I should love to shake you by the hand and have a crack with you.

[General French succeeded General Talbot in command of the 1st Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot in 1899.]

[FROM LADY ARNOTT.]

12, MERRION SQUARE,
DUBLIN.

8th July, 1924.

DEAR LORD YPRES,

If you approve of the accompanying letter, could you kindly send it to Lord Stamfordham with a covering one of your own?

You may like to refresh your memory by looking at a copy of your beautiful 'Foreword' in *Ireland's Memorial Records*—1914-1918. So I enclose this too.

As you know, the names of 49,435 Irishmen who fell in the Great War are collected into eight volumes.

One hundred sets have been distributed throughout the Empire.

All the cost of compilation, together with all administrative expense, has been met out of the accrued interest on the invested sum of £41,733.15.0., which was subscribed for the "Irish National War Memorial."

It would be splendid if the labours of the Committee for the *Records* could be crowned by your handing this specially beautiful set of volumes to the King at the British Museum—His Majesty then confiding them to the care of the Trustees of that venerable depository in the heart of the Empire.

Yours v. sincerely,

CAROLINE S. ARNOTT.

[FROM THE ASSISTANT PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
KING GEORGE V.]

16th July, 1924.

LORD YPRES,
ATHENAEUM CLUB,
LONDON.

Your letter to Lord Stamfordham of July 11th. The King will receive the eight volumes of the *Ireland War Memorial Records*

from you personally and will then send them to the Trustees of the British Museum. Will you please bring them to Buckingham Palace at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, July 23rd, and kindly confirm.

ASSISTANT PRIVATE SECRETARY,
*Jockey Club Rooms,
Newmarket.*

[Foreword written by Lord Ypres for the *Ireland Memorial Records, 1914-1918.*]

FOREWORD

The object of these volumes is to perpetuate the names and personalities of over 49,000 Irishmen who fell in the Great War.

Honours, decorations and rewards follow in the wake of every great and successful war. But what honour can be compared to that of a place in this glorious roll of fallen heroes.

Ireland weeps over the loss of so many of her gallant sons, but shining through her tears we see the pride and glory which she feels that through their sacrifice and devotion her splendid war record goes down to posterity untarnished.

When the true history of the Great War comes to be written and understood the part taken by the soldiers of Ireland will stand out in brilliant relief.

In the days of the first Expeditionary Force at the Marne, on the Aisne, at Ypres, and throughout the time during which the "Contemptible Little Army" was holding back the German hosts, the Irish soldiers were always to be found where the strife was hottest. Irish regiments stood their ground against terrific odds with a tenacity which has never been surpassed in war.

One battalion of the far famed old regiment which bore the time-honoured name of The Royal Irish, was practically wiped out in as gallant a stand as history records.

Later on there came those specially raised reinforcements which so splendidly maintained the record of Irish soldiers up to the final victory.

When each and all of the self-governing Dominions of His Majesty the King,—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland,—come to sum up and compare the part they have taken in building up the British Empire, what a share may Ireland rightfully claim!

These sacred memorial volumes form a valuable part of her charter to that claim.

One word as to the future. A new army is rising up in

Ireland. It is coming into existence in a period of strife and trouble. As an army its baptism of fire is being celebrated amidst sad surroundings,—but the soldiers are of the same blood, the same kith and kin. Many of them have not only fought side by side with the heroes whose names adorn the pages of the "Golden Records," but have shared their dangers and privation, and we believe that when they have fully attained to that standard of discipline and training which is essential to the existence of an army, they will gallantly uphold the splendid traditions of Irish soldiers.

I cannot better close this brief Foreword than by expressing the earnest hope that this Memorial will appeal to their generous Irish hearts and act as a beacon light leading them to emulate the great deeds of their predecessors and maintain the glorious records of the soldiers of Ireland.

[On November 16th, 1926, the following notice appeared in the *Irish Times*:—

A touchingly simple little ceremony which was interesting to many thousands of Irish people took place at the British Museum this afternoon when the Chief Librarian, Sir Frederic Kenyon, K.C.B., received Lady Arnott, D.B.E.; Lady (Oliver) Nugent, and the Right Hon. Sir. D. Plunket Barton, whose mission it was to place in his hands the eight beautiful volumes containing the names of the 49,435 Irishmen who fell in the Great War, with some documents and letters formerly in the possession of the late Earl of Ypres.

The great Irish Field Marshal, in 1924, on behalf of the Irish National War Memorial Committee personally presented the volumes to the King at Buckingham Palace, when His Majesty was pleased to command that they should be placed for safe keeping in the British Museum as historic relics.

The documents included a letter from Cardinal Gasquet, stating that a set of the volumes had been placed in the Library of the Vatican, His Holiness Pope Pius XI having graciously accepted their touching records from Ireland.

Every one of the Governments of the British Dominions, with those of the Allied countries in the great world struggle, have been placed in possession of *Ireland's Memorial Records*. This is an earthly assurance, if such were necessary, that "their name liveth for evermore."]

[ADDRESS AT RE-UNION OF MEMBERS OF THE YPRES LEAGUE
AT YPRES ON 4TH AUGUST, 1924.]

In the first place I must refer to the fact that we English people have once again to offer our hearty thanks to our

Belgian brothers and comrades in arms for extending to us the hospitality of this glorious old city of Ypres for another great re-union of our League.

We English celebrate this day because it is the tenth anniversary of the declaration of war by the British Empire against Germany and Austria. The great day upon which we became the active allies of Belgium and France.

Our Belgian friends have just and painful reasons of their own to commemorate this day. For was it not on this day that the Germans, having torn treaties to scrap and ruthlessly violated Belgian territory, commenced the siege of the fortress of Liège?

Was it not this day which saw the opening of that magnificent defence of the fortress of Liège which, maintained with the most dogged determination and glorious devotion by its garrison, delayed the German armies beyond all their calculations, and thus at the very outset of the war proved of inestimable value to the Allies.

How vividly can we Englishmen recall that wonderful 4th of August, 1914. For days the whole country had watched with breathless interest the spread of the European conflagration.

During that time there was but one thought in the mind of every Britisher, "are we going to take our due share in this world struggle for justice and right? What will our Government do?"

The answer came true and clear on that momentous 4th of August. "The neutrality of our ally Belgium has been insolently violated. She has nobly and actively resented this unjust invasion and we are going to her aid."

Can anyone who lived at that time ever forget the magic sudden change which came over the whole country on that 4th August. One saw the whole population of towns gathered in groups in the streets with triumphant faces discussing the situation. It was clearly shown everywhere by the bearing and demeanour of the people that it was the unanimous voice of the Nation which had declared war.

For some days private interests seem to have been completely forgotten and the only thought in every one's mind—men and women alike—was how best to assist in this great work. Then came that wonderful, rapid mobilisation, the swift and sure transit of the army over the Channel, and the concentration in the line of battle.

Time does not allow me to do more than glance at what followed. Mons—the Great Retreat—the Belgians gallantly defending their territory foot by foot—the fall of Brussels and Antwerp after the most gallant resistance—then the victory of the Marne—the battle of the Aisne—the successive attempts to outflank the enemy all culminating in the first battle of Ypres and repeated repulse of the enemy, and the first establishment of that stronghold which stood firm as a rock against four years' recurring attacks and remained strong and unbroken on the day the last shot was fired. Ypres and its Salient!

I earnestly wish my old friend and comrade, Field Marshal Lord Plumer, was here to-day, for it is owing to his determination, bravery and skill that we can make this boast.

It is from Ypres and its Salient that our League takes its origin and its name, and it is to perpetuate and to hand down to those who come after us the glorious deeds performed here, that it exists. There was no place in the whole war where true comradeship in arms was so grandly exemplified as at Ypres. No place where Belgium, France and England fought so often side by side—always against superior odds but always with victorious results. It is that bond of brotherhood in the cause of 'right' that we wish to commemorate to-day and to pass on to our children.

The objects of the League are well known to you all, and I need not recapitulate them here, except to mention one or two fresh points.

We are making historical points in the Salient for the information of the pilgrims. We are issuing a tourist guide with a map showing the cemeteries as now concentrated and the available roads by which to reach them, and I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Historical and Geographical Section of the War Office for the invaluable help they have given us in this matter.

Now I wish to speak of—to emphasise rather—a need which I am told is being increasingly felt here. There is no English church here for the many pilgrims who come from home and overseas to visit the place where our dead soldiers have been laid to rest. It would be a great boon to them to find such a place into which they could come for prayer and remembrance of their dead, and there, in peace and quiet, feel that appeal to service and sacrifice of which we are all so conscious to-day.

Our Roman Catholic brothers will have more than one church, as well as the Cathedral always at their service. But the Church of England has no place of a permanent character, I am told, anywhere in the whole battle field area.

The authorities of our Church are, however, well aware of this need and will, I feel sure, gladly take the steps towards supplying it, if we and the army give them—as it is right we should—this invitation.

[ADDRESS TO THE 2ND BATTALION WORCESTERSHIRE
REGIMENT AT WORCESTER, ON 22ND OCTOBER,
1924.]

Some three or four years ago, when we were serving together in Ireland, you were kind enough to invite me to be present on this great anniversary. I am very glad indeed that the fates have been so propitious as to enable me to be with you to-day.

Ten years have elapsed since the events happened which we are now commemorating and there can be but very few on parade to-day who participated in them.

However, whether you were there or not, your hearts thrill with pride when you think of that glorious 31st of October, 1914, and all your battalion accomplished on that day. Every one of you has heard the story over and over again. You know it by heart.

Perhaps as the years roll on you are beginning to think of it and class it in your minds as just one of the many splendid deeds which make up the glorious war record of the Worcesters. I trust, however, that the achievement of 'Gheluvelt' has a very special significance which no man belonging to the 2nd Battalion of the Worcesters should ever lose sight of.

The nature of the operation and the results which followed it should be cherished by all concerned with special care. I will tell you why. You are celebrating to-day one of the most momentous events in the history of the British Empire. That day the enemy broke our line by the capture of the village of Gheluvelt.

The same day the village was retaken by the successful attack of the Worcesters. Now, in the ordinary course of war, the capture of a village and a break in the line might be very gallantly performed and worthy of perpetual remembrance, but it would be an event of only military importance.

The recapture of Gheluvelt on the 31st October, 1914, was a very different affair. We had sent in our last reserves, ammunition was falling short, French reinforcements were yet far away. Had the enemy been able to establish himself in Gheluvelt he could have passed on to the almost easy capture of Ypres itself. This would certainly have entailed the subsequent loss of the Channel Ports and the Empire would have been faced with a great possibility of disastrous defeat with all its terrible consequences.

Surely then it is no small thing to remember what tremendous issues were at stake, when you recall the important part which your battalion took on that day and how splendidly you fought and won!

It is the sacred duty of every officer and N.C.O. to keep the true meaning of that great day alive throughout all ranks of the battalion.

Turning from the living to the dead, the memory of your gallant comrades who fell on that memorable day must ever be dear to your hearts. There is also one great and honoured name outside the ranks of the Worcesters, but which they must ever think of with gratitude and affection. One who lies in the Ypres salient now. It was General FitzClarence who entrusted the Worcesters with this great task and himself fell gloriously some days after.

I will read you the words of Major Hankey who led the attack:—

"I feel perfectly certain that by shoving us in at the time and place he did, the General saved the day. If he had waited any longer I don't think I could have got the battalion up in time."

I feel sure I need not urge on you to keep up these great traditions. You can do so by each one of you doing his utmost to secure the efficiency of his battalion. Each one of you in his own sphere should strive to understand his duty and carry it out. That is the only way you can certainly maintain your great record.

What was the main reason for your success that day? It was the mutual trust and understanding which existed between all ranks in the battalion. The pride of the leaders in the splendid men they led and the confidence of the men in their leaders. It is the mutual trust and understanding between officers and men which has ever led the British

army to victory. I implore you to foster and cherish it to the utmost of your power.

Translation

[FROM LT.-GENERAL DE SELLIERS DE MORANVILLE, BELGIAN ARMY.]

152 AVENUE MOLIÈRE,
BRUSSELS.

23.2.1925.

FIELD-MARSHAL,

Although ten years have passed since August 21, 1914, I have not forgotten the friendly welcome you gave me that and the next day at your Headquarters at Le Cateau-Cambresis, when I came to confer with you about the operations of the Belgian army with a view to helping the Allies to the best of our ability.

Also I am very glad to remind you of me by my book, *From the Top of the Tower of Babel*, which I am sending you at the same time as this letter. I wish you, Field-Marshal, good health and long life in your glorious retirement and beg you to accept my sincerest expressions of military fraternity.

CHEVALIER DE SELLIERS DE MORANVILLE,
Lt.-General.

[FROM THE BISHOP OF LONDON.]

FULHAM PALACE,
1925.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I was glad to see you yesterday. I'm so glad my visit helped you. Would you like to receive the Holy Communion on Easter Day? The Vicar of the Parish is an old friend of mine. Will be in to the Hospital that morning and will gladly give it to you. Let them telephone to me about it. I will arrange it. It will be a help to you.

God bless you and give you a happy Easter.

Yours affecty.,

A. F. LONDON.

[This was written shortly after the Field Marshal's second and more serious operation and only a few weeks before his death.]

[FROM SIR ROBERT MUIRHEAD COLLINS¹]

GRAND HOTEL BELLEVUE,
BAVENO,
LAC MAGURE,
ITALY.

MY DEAR FRENCH,

I like to call you by your old name, so excuse it. As an old shipmate, I write to express my congratulations on the good news that you are recovering from your operation and to wish you a speedy restoration to health. All our lot are now old stagers, and how diversified our careers. I shall be glad to hear you are as vigorous as ever. I heard from Niblett² the other day, and also met Swetenham³ who retired to live on inherited property. We are spending some time here in Italy.

Good luck to you and speedy recovery is the wish of,

Yours sincerely,

MUIRHEAD COLLINS.

[FROM MAJOR-GENL. J. BURTON FORSTER, LATE COLONEL
THE ROYAL IRISH REGT.]

ST. BRIDE'S,
ALUMHURST ROAD,
BOURNEMOUTH.

23rd March, 1925.

MY DEAR LORD YPRES,

Indeed I am very sorry to learn from the papers that you have had to undergo another operation, but I know I am voicing the wishes of all ranks of the late Royal Irish Regiment, when I wish you a speedy recovery and many more happy and restful days, truly earned by your very important National work, that led to the success of the Allies in the Great War. It must be a trial for an active man like you to have to rest a while in bed in London, but the climate is so trying out-of-doors this winter, that really bed is not at all an unsuitable place to be in! . . . Our heartiest best wishes and kindest regards from the late Royal Irish Regiment, and I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

J. BURTON FORSTER.

[The Field-Marshal had been Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Irish Regiment before it was disbanded.]

¹ Retired Lieut.-Commander R.N. and retired Captain Australian Naval Forces.*

² Admiral H. S. F. Niblett, R.N., retired.*

³ C. W. Swetenham, retired Lieutenant R.N.*

*All the above were in H.M.S. *Britannia* with Lord Ypres—then Naval Cadet John Denton Pinkstone French.

[FROM COLONEL L. DE LA PANOUSE, MILITARY ATTACHÉ,
FRENCH EMBASSY, LONDON.]

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE,
L'ATTACHE MILITAIRE,
LONDRES.

6th April, 1925.

DEAR MONSIEUR LE MARÉCHAL,

I was so pleased this afternoon when calling at the Empire Nursing Home I heard that you are much better.

I expect that, in a few days, you will be well enough to receive visitors and I shall be so pleased to pay a visit to you.

You know that I don't forget our friendly collaboration before and at the eve of the war, nor your great kindness towards me.

Please accept my best wishes of quick recovery, and believe me

Yours sincerely,

— DE LA PANOUSE.

[FROM THE HON. LADY LYTTTELTON, WIFE OF GENERAL THE
RT. HON. SIR NEVILLE LYTTTELTON, GOVERNOR OF THE
ROYAL HOSPITAL, CHELSEA.]

GOVERNOR'S HOUSE,
THE ROYAL HOSPITAL,
CHELSEA, S.W.3.

7th April, 1925.

DEAR LORD YPRES,

It is wonderful to hear you are going on so well. It is just like you to have won through—to have kept your flag flying.

This is just to send you Neville's and my love. We are going away on Thursday for a fortnight and it looks as if you will be out of range by the time we come back. But we shall look forward to welcoming you back to us all (who owe you so much) before long.

Yours ever,

KATHARINE LYTTTELTON.

Translation

[FROM MARÉCHAL FOCH, PRESIDENT GENERAL OF THE
SOCIETY OF HOLDERS OF THE MILITARY MEDAL.]

TO FIELD-MARSHAL LORD FRENCH, EARL OF YPRES,
ONE-TIME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE BRITISH
ARMY.

PARIS.

April 16th, 1925.

MY DEAR FIELD-MARSHAL,

The Society of Holders of the Military Medal, over which I preside, has not forgotten the interest you have taken in it by



Photo, Daily Mirror

ENTERING WESTMINSTER ABBEY, MAY 26TH, 1925



accepting to become a Member of Honour, and the generosity with which you have subscribed to the Monument which, placed in the Hall of the Dome at the Invalides, is consecrated to the memory of all those Holders of the Military Medal who fell on the Field of Honour, without the distinction of dates or names.

The unveiling of the Monument will take place in the afternoon of the 24th May next, and will be presided over by the President of the Republic, members of the Government, Ambassadors, and representatives of the Sovereigns who hold the Military Medal.

The Society will be specially honoured if you will add to the brilliance of the ceremony by your presence.

It will be very gratifying if you will also attend a banquet which will take place the same day at the Hotel Lutetia at 7.30, under my Presidency.

Very sincerely yours,
F. FOCH,
F.M.

[FROM COLONEL SIR LAUNCELOT ROLLESTON.]

WATNALL HALL,
NOTTINGHAM.
22.4.25.

MY DEAR FRENCH,

We have had some difficulty in discovering your address, but I hope the one we use will find you.

I need not tell you how distressed we were on hearing of your severe illness, and with what relief we hear of your progress towards recovery, which I hope has by now gone far enough to enable you to receive letters.

We always from the first had the best hopes that anyone so fit as you have always been would get the better of anything from which recovery was possible, and we are now looking forward to seeing you some day before very long looking as fit as ever. Maud asks me to send you her dear love, and to say that when you are able to move about, if you want a really quiet place where you can sit in a garden and not be bothered by strangers we both hope very much you will come to Watnall.

You need not hesitate to write and accept this, for I think you know Maud's love of looking after a patient and that if anything could increase that taste of hers it would be the fact that the patient was you.

We shall be here till the middle of July and delighted to see you here at any time before then, and with our best wishes for your complete recovery.

I am,
Yours ever,
L. ROLLESTON.

SOME WAR DIARIES

[FROM MR. W. RADCLIFFE.]

BEECH COURT,
UPPER DEAL,
KENT.

Apr. 23, '25.

DEAR LORD YPRES,

When in the West Indies I read with great regret of your serious illness, but am rejoiced and relieved to find on arrival home such favourable bulletins.

"So mote it be!" if only in order that the Captain of Deal Castle, under the orders of the Warden of the Cinque Ports (for this I believe is your official position—fancy Beauchamp directing your operations!—) may truly defend the castle and town for many years to come.

It may interest you to know that the sympathy and hopes for a perfect convalescence of *all* classes here are very sincere and very frequently uttered.

With all good wishes,
Yours sincerely,
W. RADCLIFFE.

[FROM LIEUT.-COL. M. ARCHER-SHEE, LATE 19TH HUSSARS.]

CARLTON CLUB,
PALL MALL, S.W.1.
29th April, 1925.

MY DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

I am calling to enquire, having only heard the other day from Philip Chetwode of your address. I am sure I am only one of thousands who have watched the reports about you with anxiety and lately with some relief.

I have been racking my brain to think of a book which might amuse you in the dull hours of convalescence, and am told by a friend that Hooley's *Impressions* are most amusing, so am leaving that. Please do not dream of writing to thank me, I shall call again to enquire later on. In the meantime, as one of your old regiment who owes a great deal to your kindness in the past, allow me to say how fervently I hope that you may soon be very much better.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN ARCHER-SHEE.

[FROM THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT HALDANE OF CLOAN.]

28 QUEEN ANNE'S GATE,
WESTMINSTER.

3 May, 1925.

MY DEAR YPRES,

It was indeed a pleasure to see you again and so full of interest in life.

Thinking things over it appears to me that you might write a military study of great interest of Hannibal's campaigns. I would not trouble to write a history—the materials are too elusive.

But if you move to Deal you would find . . . 's account of Hannibal in his *History of Rome* (which is admirably translated) a real stand-by. This book will enable you to judge what a soldier can contribute to the military exposition.

Dodge's *Life of Hannibal* in two vols. in the Wolesley series (I think) has all the details there are and there are other books.

With best wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

HALDANE.

[FROM MAJOR P. J. WALDRON, LATE 15TH HUSSARS.]

EAST HAUGH,
PITLOCHRY,
SCOTLAND.

May 14th, 1925.

DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

I was very sorry to see that you had to have an operation . . . I have been very pleased at seeing the reports on your improvement in the papers and to-day, as you were able to receive H.M. The King, hope you are going on all right. You will remember Reggie Wilson, who had a great hunt, now nearly fifty years ago, on a fine chestnut horse you had—he, I am sorry to say, is in a bad way. Besides being nearly blind, he now suffers from the loss of his toes in Japan in the snow.

With my kind regards and hopes for a speedy recovery,

Yours faithfully,

P. J. WALDRON.

[FROM BRIG. GENERAL SIR DOUGLAS DAWSON.]

REMENHAM PLACE,
HENLEY-ON-THAMES.

17.5.25.

MY DEAR "CHIEF,"

I was so thrilled to get a letter from your Secretary giving me such cheering news of you. It is indeed a joy to hear you are able to go home, and all to-day I have been thinking of what it means to you getting away for the change after all those dreary months. I hope the new surroundings will soon bring about a lasting benefit, and continue the recovery. I have often wanted to write but down here I see no one who could tell me, and I was chary of intruding. . . .

Ever your old friend,

DOUGLAS DAWSON.

[FROM FIELD MARSHAL LORD PLUMER.]

22, ENNISMORE GARDENS,

S.W.7.

May 18th, 1925.

DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

I was delighted to hear that you managed to journey to Deal all right, and were none the worse.

It must be lovely down there this weather.

I was so sorry not to be able to come and see you again before you left London, but my tiresome complaint, 'shingles,' has kept me in the house.

My wife sends kindest remembrances.

Yours,

PLUMER.

[Four days later, at the Castle of which he was Captain, Lord Ypres died.]

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