

Brest to Constantinople. 80-100 in duplicate.

Look up p. 79

The harbor at Brest was covered with an early morning fog, but as this lifted ^{of} ships/ the Allied nations appeared: - a Japanese battleship, French battleships and cruisers, and a number of American transports. We came ashore on lighters together with our baggage, and were escorted to a Red Cross canteen for sandwiches and cocoa. The men of our party then took on the duties of dock workers, unloading some six hundred trunks onto trucks, and from these into two box-cars at the railway station. After three hours of this labor in the rain, we took advantage of the trucks for a sight-seeing tour of Brest -- said to be one of the two cities in Dickens' Tale of Two Cities-- and especially the twelfth century chateau with its dungeons, which one could enter only by ladder through the ceiling. These were grim enough to make us shudder, wet as we were from the rain.

Returning to the station we found ^{that} New York's 27th Division had just arrived from eastern France to embark on the Leviathan for the homeward journey. They stacked their rifles on the station platform, waiting for the order to march to their quarters for the night, three miles distant in the rain. They proudly showed us souvenirs -- helmets, weapons and watches -- 'captured' from the German soldiers.

For the next leg of our journey -- to Marseille -- a U.S. Army Hospital train was standing there for us. Each coach was provided with thirty six cots in tiers of three, suspended so that they could swing with the motion of the train. Meals, prepared in a special kitchen coach, were brought to the bedside.

Because of frequent stops during our three-day journey across France, we had been advised to guard our baggage, and my turn came for a ten-hour stretch of police duty.

As our train moved slowly through the picturesque villages of Brittany, each of us, I believe, vowed that some day in the future

he would repeat this journey by motor car. The small villages with red-tiled steep-sloping roofs and white-washed walls, and with fruit trees just beginning to bloom, gave the impression of peace, while reminders of the recent war were more in evidence at the larger cities in the form of encampments and military hospitals, as at Le Mans. German prisoners of war, labeled with a large PG on the back of the jacket, were working on the railroad. At Lyons I chatted with an American soldier of the 28th Division and found that his home in ^{West} Philadelphia was close to mine in Darby, and that we had a mutual friend -- Art Swisher. Tarascon and Arles were ablaze with almond blossoms. The shades of color in which the houses were painted called to mind the attraction this region had for Van Gogh.

Arriving in Marseille we walked from the station to the dock where H.M. Armed Transport Gloucester Castle had waited two days for us. Even this brief glimpse of Marseille near the sea-front was enjoyable. The streets were filled with soldiers -- English in shorts, Algerians with red fez, huge black Senegalese, and turbaned Indians. Here dog carts were used for transport.

The Gloucester Castle was the resurrected HMS Southampton. During the war it had been torpedoed in the English Channel while carrying three hundred wounded British soldiers, but the captain had succeeded in beaching it on the Isle of Wight. Now camouflaged with black and white zebra stripes it again served as a hospital ship.

The moment our baggage had been brought aboard, the ship sailed for the eastern Mediterranean, bound for Salonika, Constantinople, and Batum in the Caucasus. ^{Traveling to} ~~Bound for~~ the latter port was a distinguished passenger, General Gough, formerly commander of a division of General Byng's Fifth Army, through which the Germans had broken near Cambria. One evening he lectured to us on these experiences, and later acted as guide for a number of our party around Salonika, which he seemed to know well.

On board the Gloucester Castle were also the Royal Army Medical Corps men -- a group of attractive young men who had earlier served with the famous 'Old Contemptibles' in France. They entertained us under the stars with songs of the British army.

We lay at anchor for three days in the harbor of Salonika, not far from the White Tower. As we roamed around this old Macedonian city and the hills beyond it, we were reminded that its inhabitants nearly nineteen hundred years earlier were the Thessalonians with whom the Apostle Paul corresponded. None of us were aware of the fact that this was the birthplace of Mustafa Kemal and of the Young ~~Turks~~



Turk movement. Kemal was already known to the British and the Anzac troops as the outstanding leader of the Turkish defenders of Gallipoli. Unknown to us also was the role he was still to play in the liberation of Asia Minor from the victorious western Allies -- a drama in which a number of us were to participate.

The crew hoisted anchor ^{on the} in mid - afternoon March 6 for the journey through the Aegean Sea. At dawn the next day we were awakened by the sudden silence of the ship's engines, for sweeps were being extended on each side of the bow to deflect mines. Our captain had not forgotten the loss of three battleships in the Dardanelles on March 18, 1915, caused by mines laid there by an audacious Turkish officer after British mine-sweepers had cleared the channel. * Gallipoli. Alan Moorehead, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1956.

Our ship now lay south of Lemnos and its harbor at Mudros, where four years earlier two hundred Allied ships had assembled for the assault on Gallipoli. In Mudros harbor, too, on HMS Agamemnon, the armistice ending the war with Turkey had been signed only four months earlier.

By 9 o'clock we had passed Lemnos on our starboard and were approaching the entrance to the Straits, where on the Asiatic side lay the plains of Troy. Half submerged on the beach at Cape Helles, tip of the Gallipoli peninsula, lay the wrecks of two ships. One of these was the troop-ship River Clyde from which the British had attempted to land 2000 soldiers on the morning of April 25, 1915 in the face of Turkish fire. On the beach of Sedd-el-Bahr ^{half of the} nearly a thousand were killed.

Next we passed the Bay of Erenkeuy where the British battleships Irresistable and Ocean and the French ship Bouvet had been sunk by mines during the naval attack of March 18, 1915.



The Gloucester Castle stopped at Chanak Kale - a town on the Asiatic side, just below the great Hamidieh fort, and across the Narrows from Fort Kilid-el-Bahr -- these two being the most powerful of the Strait's defences.

In the rugged mountains of the Gallipoli peninsula, just opposite Chanak Kale where our ship lay, Lt.Colonel Mustafa Kemal had earned fame by stopping the advance of Anzac soldiers who had landed at Ari Burnu on the northwestern shore of the peninsula. On reviewing the history of his dramatic rise to power and to the title of Father of his Country -- Ataturk -- one notes the many crises in which he appraised the situation quickly and correctly, then at once acted decisively and sometimes beyond his authority. *(Ataturk. Lord Kinross, Wm.Morrow & Co., New York 1965.)

Since I was to experience tragic episodes associated with Kemal's "revolt" against his own government some ten months hence, it seems appropriate to describe his encounter with the Anzac troops on April 25, 1915. By mistake the Anzacs had landed in the dark a mile from the intended beach at Gaba Tepe, a place so forbidding that the Turks had not bothered to defend it. By eight o'clock in the morning 8000 men were ashore and some had climbed the ridges dominating the Narrows, which was their objective.

Mustafa Kemal, commanding a reserve division near the Narrows, had been ordered to oppose the Anzacs with one battalion of his own regiment. None of his officers knew this rugged country. Kemal himself, with two or three of his officers, went scouting ahead of his troops, whom he had ordered to rest, and climbed to the crest of Sari Bair, where he was able to look down on the Allied warships and transport landing troops. Ahead he saw Turkish soldiers retreating towards him. Shouting at them to stop, he learned that they had no more ammunition. A detachment of Australian soldiers



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then appeared in pursuit of the Turkish soldiers. Kemal ordered the retreating soldiers to fix their bayonets and to lie on the ground, and at the same time he sent his orderly on the run to call his own battalion forward from their resting place beyond the ridge. Realizing the strategic importance of this very ridge, and the inability of his own battalion to stop the advance of the Anzacs, he ordered the entire 57th regiment to support the position, without any authority to do so. These troops were reserves under the command of Liman von Sanders.

Kemal's audacity and genius saved the situation for the Turks. He remained in command of this front until the Allied troops, after losing 50,000 men trying to capture these same hills, abandoned the campaign.* (Gallipoli, by Moorehead.)

Leaving Chanak Kale our ^{ship} proceeded during the night beyond the Narrows into the Sea of Marmora, and at sunrise anchored off the Golden Horn in the Bosphorus. The colorful panorama fascinated us. There lay the warships of the Allied fleet which on November 13, 1918 had passed in a convoy sixteen miles long through the Dardanelles and into the Bosphorus. The small boats moving across the Golden Horn, the slender minarets of the mosques in the distant city, the palaces along the shore of the Bosphorus -- all gave the impression of medieval grandeur.

An American submarine-chaser transferred us to the Galata side of the Golden Horn, and our party was distributed to various centers where accommodations had been prepared by Dr. Peet -- a member of the Commission which had left New York before us to prepare the way. The nurses were quartered on Prinkipo -- one of the beautifully situated Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmora. Those who had been attached to the American Congregational Board



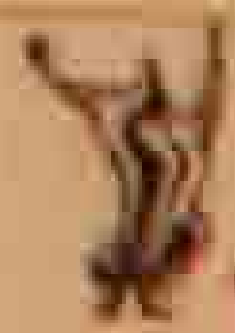
of Missions were accomodated at the Board's headquarters, known as 'the Bible House'. Most of the men were guided to the Sirkedje station - the terminus of the Berlin- Constantinople railway, where a number of Wagon Lit^s coaches stood on a siding. These became our hotel, with some of the benefits of first-class travel on the Orient Express. Meals were served at the station restaurant.

Each of ^{us} had been obliged to carry his own hand baggage from the dock where the sub-chaser had deposited us. Carrying this across the Galata bridge we mingled with the colorful pageant of humanity-- Turks with red fez and baggy trousers, veiled women, soldiers of the Allied armies, including English tommies and French poilus, Moroccans, and black Senegalese. It soon became apparent that we Americans were likewise objects of interest and amusement, for in the Near East only the native hamal carried burdens, and here we were - men and women - carrying our own baggage!

Our heavy luggage was unloaded from the Gloucester Castle and deposited on the station platform, and that first night I was assigned to guard it. With a Colt -38 strapped to my hip I was formidable enough to discourage any would-be thieves.

While our headquarters staff busied themselves with the organization of groups to be moved into the interior of Turkey, we had several days free to become acquainted with the city. John Dunaway, Jim Magee, Dr. Byron Harman and I had been drawn together as alumni of the University of Pennsylvania, and at Robert College discovered another colleague in Robert Way, its Treasurer. He took us to dinner at the Pera Palace Hotel, a favorite meeting place for officers of the Allied forces and

and also for the



likewise for the Turkish officers. Mustafa Kemal, now a general and Pasha, waiting for reassignment, was a frequent guest.

On another occasion the Ways invited a group of us to their home for tea. One of the ladies of our party had arranged with Mr. Way for the purchase of a small automatic pistol, and he asked me to deliver it to her. While I was chatting with his wife in the dining room he handed me the weapon without informing me that it was loaded, and that the safety catch had not been secured. As I took it in my hand it fired, the bullet passing through the flesh of the fourth and the joint of the little finger of my left hand. Way anxiously investigated whether the bullet had damaged his oriental carpet. Dr. Harman insisted on taking me by ambulance to a military hospital, where he scrubbed and dressed the wounds and gave me a shot of tetanus serum. The wound did not interfere with my normal activities, but it alerted our leaders that even the women of our organization were arming themselves and having target practice! We had been warned that the city streets were not safe at night, for the municipal services had become disorganized as a result of the defeat of Turkey and the Allied occupation.

In a letter written to my parents on March 14 I had noted that a sensation had been created in Constantinople a few days earlier by the arrest of about twenty Turkish officials. The rest of the page was blocked out by the censor, but a study of the history of those days reveals what had happened. The British authorities had already begun deporting to Malta those accused of political or military offenses, including the planning or direction of massacre of Armenians, but had not caught the top leaders Enver, Talaat and Jemal, who had fled to the Black Sea.