

CHAPTER XII

SALONIKA¹

DURING the summer of 1915, the Russian colossus was staggering under a series of blows from the Teutonic Powers, and a defeatist movement was beginning to taint the army. Our operations in Gallipoli were progressing badly, and our attempt to reach Constantinople began to seem doomed to failure.

Ferdinand, the wily King of Bulgaria, influenced by these events, decided that it lay in his interests to enter the lists on the side of the Germanic Powers and, on the 10th October, 1915, declared war against Serbia, the small Kingdom on which Austria had forced the quarrel which directly caused the outbreak of war.

In reply, the Allies sent an expeditionary force to Salonika with the object of saving Serbia, though it arrived too late to do so. Thereafter, for close on three years, the war in this theatre languished without the opposing troops being able to do much more than contain each other from their opposing trenches.

Nevertheless, if the Allied force could accomplish little in a strictly military sense, its presence influenced the situation in the Balkans politically. Combined with an Allied Fleet at the Piræus it overawed the Greek Government whose King, a brother-in-law to the Kaiser, was intriguing with the object of forcing his country to side with Germany. Eventually, after a revolution at Athens, the faction under Venizelos, who throughout believed in the ultimate triumph of the Allies, got the upper hand, and Greece entered the war on their side in October 1916. Our presence prevented Germany from forming a submarine base at Salonika, and it was one of the factors that induced Roumania to declare war against the Austro-Germanic Powers.

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¹ This chapter is based on a narrative compiled by Brigadier General Usher Smith, who relieved Brigadier General Mathew as Director of Ordnance Services Salonika Field Force in August 1917, and held that post for the rest of the war. For the last portion, dealing with events at Constantinople, I am indebted to Colonel Wortham for details.

From an Ordnance point of view a chief lesson of this campaign is the primary importance of setting to work at the very outset on sound principles, with a site for the future base depot and all its accessories carefully chosen and planned on a scale commensurate with the force to be supplied. The failure, at Salonika, to grasp some idea of what would be wanted resulted in a confusion that it took many months to convert into something like order, during which time Ordnance services were thoroughly disorganized. Seeing that the headquarter staff remained at Salonika, where it was able to oversee the whole situation, this neglect can only be ascribed to there being at first no senior Ordnance officer present with sufficient knowledge of what would be required and of sufficient standing to be able to claim attention to the necessities of his service. Not till January, three months after our first troops arrived, was a Director of Ordnance Services appointed.

Major Bernard Darwin¹, who was present as a temporary Ordnance officer, has written a graphic account of the inception of the depot at Salonika. "There were not enough officers or men," he says, "not enough room, not enough transport, not enough labour and not enough stationery—this last a very important matter when any kind of storekeeping and accounting has to be established. Besides all these deficiencies there was one very serious surplus—mud.

"On the 26th October, 1915, there landed at Salonika two companies of the A.O.C., a small party having arrived a few days earlier from Mudros. This band of pioneers had its mobilization equipment, a little paper, a few pencils and for the moment no great amount of stores. The spot chosen for the depot was on the Monastir Road and here the pitching of tents was begun by the dim light of lanterns on a night of drizzling rain. There were two store tents for each group and the ammunition

¹ Well known as a golfer and writer on that subject. In his few and scanty intervals of leisure he laid out a golf course which was a very popular resort despite the mosquitoes with which it was infested.

was kept under tarpaulins in the open. It soon became obvious that the original site, which only measured about 120 yards by 80, was not nearly big enough, and No. 2 depot, of about the same size, was laid out about four hundred yards further up the road, the two being divided by the then R.E. Base Park. This was something of a buccaneering business since there was apparently no particular authority to allot any particular piece of ground. New claims were therefore staked out with wire stealthily and in the dead of night.

“It was not long, however, before there was another cry for space and General Jackson, who arrived on a fleeting visit from Alexandria in November, decided that a third start should be made on the site of what became the eventual depot, then a bare hillside, some of it recently ploughed, looking down upon a road that was destined after the winter rains to degenerate into a river. The inconvenience of having three depots linked by no telephone and one abominable road needs no emphasizing. The process of moving depots Nos 1 and 2 to No. 3 was necessarily a slow one, and meanwhile stores were dumped at whichever depot best suited the dumpers. Units, informed that what they could not find at No. 1 doubtless awaited them at No. 2 or 3, returned from their quest, sadder, wiser, and muddier. The situation would have been sufficiently trying if it had been merely a question of putting things on a proper working basis before units in any quantity came to draw; but before this could be done there were masses of stores and troops clamouring for them. In November the stores may be said to have trickled; in December they came flooding in at a pace impossible to cope with.

“The difficulties began at the docks. There was practically no wharfage and the sudden inflow of stores was so overpowering that they had to be stacked in the public streets. The strained political situation made things worse, since space near the docks, which would have been invaluable, was taken up by a large body of Greek troops who evinced no desire to make room. The Ordnance staff was far too small and three or four men might

be seen trying to load as many lorries with any stores that came handy, continuously harried the while by frenzied military landing officers. Moreover, apart from everything else, there was the inherent difficulty of troops and their stores being landed simultaneously. This may be illustrated by one example out of many. A ship called the *Stork* contained a cargo of tentage—the actual tents easily accessible, the poles at the very bottom of the hold. The tents were landed, but then the *Stork* had to put out into harbour again to make way for the disembarkation of troops; and so long did she have to wait that in one division the troops cut down trees to make their own tent poles.

“The weather was as bad as it could well be. At the end of November the bitter Vardar wind brought with it a blizzard that raged for three days. Work was practically out of the question, and this incidentally at a time when some of the divisions had no winter clothing. Later again, in December, just at the time when the move to No. 3 depot required the pitching of a number of store tents, a furious storm blew down the tents, exposed the stores to the gale and buried some of them for ever in the mud.

“Such weather, of course, had a disastrous effect on the transport of stores from the docks, which could then only be carried on by road. The road from Salonika to the depot was so bad that a lorry setting out from the docks one day very often did not return till the next, and the digging out of lorries was a common occurrence. As to the roads in the depot itself, they were boggy and foundrous, and many of them of but a temporary character. Where evening had seen a road, morning would find a heap of stores covered with a tarpaulin that had sprung up like a mushroom in the night.

“It was nearly three months before the two main artery roads were metalled, and meanwhile stores could be brought no further than to a transit dump—a most unsuitable spot at some distance from the dock itself and lying at the foot of a long slope down which the rain drained pitilessly. From this dump the stores had to be man-handled, a tedious process aggravated by lack

of labour. There were Greek labourers, but there were not enough of them and the Greek labourer, though he is at his best capable of a certain sullen steadiness of application, can do nothing quickly. He was moreover responsible for many of the losses by theft which for some time baffled all measures taken against them. His weakness for pilfering is ineradicable and his national costume affords almost unique opportunities of indulging in it. Stores disappeared at every stage of their journey from ship to store tent, nor were they safe even there, for the Greeks were not the only culprits; units believed that once on active service there was a community of goods. Though men were detailed to sleep in the store tents and an Ordnance guard was mounted to watch the infantry guard, small articles, more especially of clothing, continually vanished. *Custodes quis custodiet?*

“On the 9th January, 1916, General Mathew arrived as Director of Ordnance Services and it was only during the early months of that year that something like order was gradually evolved out of the chaotic conditions at the base Ordnance depot owing to the bad start made.

“By January 12th, the transit dump, which in December had been one solid mass of unsorted stores, was cleared by heroic exertions. On January 21st the first broad-gauge train brought stores into the depot, and on the 23rd it was first lit by electricity. This last event was really symbolic, for from this time light began to shine through the gloom. The roads improved; Greek labour was more plentiful and was now reinforced by men of the A.S.C. Labour Company, and towards the end of February a decauville railway was laid. It became possible to check and identify stores, to post vouchers—even to take stock. Indents ceased to be scraps of paper in the figurative as well as the literal sense. Although the groups were still far too busy to disentangle old puzzles ‘their retrospection,’ to quote Mrs. Malaprop, ‘was all to the future,’ and they had at least time to turn round in and to turn over a new leaf. A sound and proper system of accounting was set upon its legs and remained firmly planted there.

“Once this first winter was passed, the more stirring adventures of the depot may be said to have been over. Henceforth the history of the depot, as regards its ordinary functions, was one of normal and steady expansion, of the running of a machine, well oiled and well guided, which requires no particular comment. Hangars took the place of store tents and everything took on a more durable shape. The shipping staff was increased, a better system of check was introduced and police provided, whereby Greek labourers could be watched and searched, and the losses by theft greatly reduced. Labour difficulties became much less acute. The Greeks were supplemented for a while by Maltese but ultimately were very largely supplanted by Bulgarian prisoners of war, of whom some 630 were employed by the end of 1917. On the whole the Bulgars worked better than the Greeks; they could not be driven but if they were treated in a friendly spirit and given periodical rests they worked on the whole well. They had none of the inborn lassitude of the Macedonian and their fine physique made them very useful in any heavy work. Some moreover were skilled workmen and employed on their respective trades.”

The workshops consisted originally of three light mobile shops which accompanied divisions sent to Salonika; they were installed at the first site selected for the depot and later transferred to the third and permanent site. The equipment of these shops was quite inadequate for a base establishment framed to deal with five divisions, and in November a cable was sent to the War Office demanding some three to four thousand pounds' worth of engines, dynamos and machinery, together with corrugated iron sheds to hold them. The machinery began to arrive in February, but the sheds not till three months later; and it was only then that properly equipped workshops could be constructed and work undertaken in an efficiently organized manner.

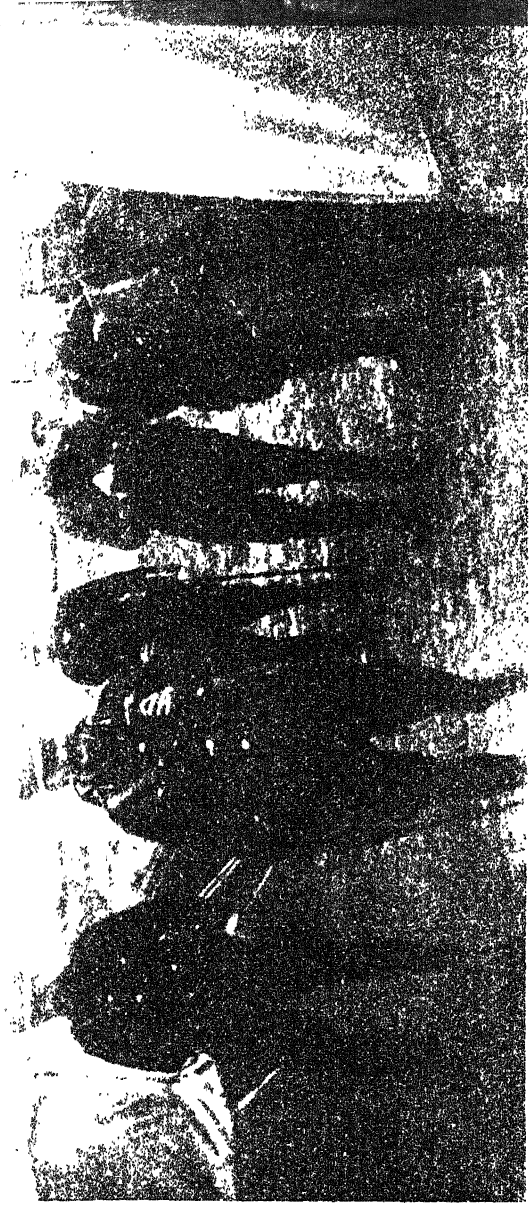
Ammunition also formed one of the original groups at No. 1 base depot in October 1915, and shared the vicissitudes of those picturesque and uncomfortable

times. Then, in January 1916, it was decided to form an ammunition depot at the docks, and 26 stone sheds were taken over for the purpose from the Standard Oil Company. There was a pier with a decauville line laid along it; but the pier was too short and the lighters too often aground, so that the arrangement was very far from ideal.

Next, in the early summer of 1916, it was decided to make a new and larger depot immediately adjoining the store depot. This made it possible to carry on much needed laboratory work for the first time on a proper scale. By the autumn of 1916 the necessity for still further expansion was realized and in October the erection of another ammunition depot of still larger capacity was decided on. This stood on the southern side of the Monastir road, on that unending track of grey-green marsh that stretches away towards Mount Olympus. It was roughly speaking a mile square and had a capacity of 25,000 tons.

Altogether it took long before Ordnance establishments at Salonika fully found their feet, much longer than need have been the case had more foresight been displayed when first we landed. It was not as if experience were wanting. The war had been raging in France for over a year before we set foot in Macedonia, and the heavy rate of expenditure of materiel in modern warfare was not an unknown quantity.

Some delay in building up an efficient organization was inevitable and must always occur in war; especially where, as here, the expedition was hastily organized, the attitude of the local authorities hostile, and where constructional materials had to be imported and everything created. But even so, to be satisfied at first with such a makeshift and cramped site for a depot was a grave error. A bolder policy would have been more economical in the end, both directly and, by adding to the efficiency and health of the troops, indirectly. The first precious month was wasted and by then the mischief had been done. Stores began to pour in and no arrangements had been made to house them.



GENERAL SARRAIL, IN COMMAND OF THE ALLIED FORCES AT SALONIKA, INSPECTING THE ORDNANCE DEPOT

It is not without good reason that General Usher Smith says the moral of Salonika is "that one should never at the commencement of a campaign be satisfied with a site that is incapable of expansion."

Mathew's experience in France, combined with his bull-dog grit and tenacity which were only stimulated by opposition, soon bore fruit ; and, a state of stationary warfare having developed, Ordnance services were gradually organized on the same lines as on the Western front, though with certain differences in points of detail.

Our lines of communication being short, G.H.Q. stayed at Salonika and the D.O.S. had the advantage of being in close touch, not only with the headquarter staff, but also with the base establishments whose work he and his staff could directly oversee.

But though shallow the zone occupied was comparatively wide. In France a division might hold a front of four miles, while in Macedonia one of the two Corps, the 16th, composed of two British and one Greek division, stretched from Stavros on the sea to Tasli, and thence, following the valley of the Struma, to Lake Doiran—a distance in all of some 65 miles ; and this wide dispersion had its effect on the system of supply.

In France there was hardly ever more than one rail-head for a division, from which all the stores for that division were brought to a central dump for distribution to the troops. The whole of the Ordnance staff within the division worked as one body and for Ordnance supply work the brigade organization was largely, if not entirely, short circuited. But at Salonika, where a division might hold a front of 20 miles, a number of small lines of communication stretched out from the base like the rays of a fan and distribution was on a brigade basis.

In the 16th Corps, for instance, stores for the brigade on the right flank went to Stavros by sea. Then came the Greek division with which we were not concerned. For the British troops next in the line stores travelled by rail to Guvesne, a railway terminus where they were transhipped to lorry or wagon and, after a journey along

the Seres road, reached a decauville railway branching to the right and left through whose means the brigades were reached. Still further to the left the last two brigades were reached via another railhead at Sarigol after further journeys by light railway and road.

This, however, was only after 1916 when a light railway system was laid down at the front. Before then the journey from the broad-gauge railhead was entirely over roads, only two of which were metalled, and the others mere tracks fit only for horse wagons or pack transport, and in bad weather practically impassable.

Thus the system adopted in France had to be modified to suit local conditions ; methods of transport were more varied and difficult and the brigade Ordnance warrant officer was placed in a position of much greater responsibility. He received his stores direct from the base and had his own dump of clothing and equipment from which he distributed to the units of his brigade.

The short distance separating the front from the base encouraged enemy air raids. The docks were attacked in February 1916, but happily an ammunition ship which was unloading at the time escaped. Extensive raids were carried out at Salonika in February and March 1917 under Richthofen, the celebrated German airman. There was however very little loss of ammunition as the storehouses had been cut into the hill and the ammunition was covered by oil tins filled with sand. These acted as bursters for the bombs and cooled their splinters sufficiently to prevent cartridges from being fired.

Captain Donovan's railhead, Janesh, was bombarded in March 1917, when he and two men put out the fired stacks of ammunition under a rain of bombs.¹ Lieutenant Hornan's railhead at Karasuli was raided the following month and this time, in spite of every effort, the ammunition was lost.

To retaliate, Verchoyle Campbell, who was C.O.O. Ammunition, devised an aerial mine, to be fired electrically from the ground, which was sent up in a captive balloon on the Struma front in November 1917. A

¹ Donovan was awarded the M.C. and two D.C.M.'s were given.

German pilot attacked the balloon and when he was distant from it 300 feet, the mine was exploded and the machine crumpled up and fell like a dead leaf.

An important piece of laboratory work consisted in finding a cure for exudation in amatol shell. The method was worked out by Campbell in conjunction with Captain Finch, a temporary gunner officer employed with the Ordnance.¹ It consisted in filling the cavity with molten paraffin wax after it had been cleaned out and the old exploder replaced by a new one.

Another rather unique piece of laboratory work is worth mention. Just on the eve of the final offensive in 1918, the supply of ink ran dry and operation orders could neither be typed nor duplicated. Here Lieutenant Baker, a temporary infantry officer and chemist working in the laboratory, came to the rescue. He obtained blue aniline dye in Salonika and, with glycerine produced at the Ordnance soap factory plus other ingredients, manufactured ink which was sent to the front by motor-car.

Except for low-lying belts bordering the rivers Struma and Vardar, the whole of Macedonia is mountainous, and the positions in which artillery were sited, often accessible only by rugged paths, added to the difficulty of keeping gun equipments in order. Much of the work of inspection and repair, usually carried out at a mobile workshop, had to be effected at the gun position which could often only be reached on foot.

Broken country, bad roads, and a climate hot and dry at one time, cold and damp at another, played havoc with wagon wheels which, by 1917, were being repaired at the base workshop to the tune of 1500 a week. Then, to save the enormous amount of transport needed for their

¹ It was Finch who fired the aerial mine, Campbell being ill at the time. The Ordnance was fortunate in possessing such a distinguished man of science, a Professor of electro-chemistry at the South Kensington College of Science and Technology. Finch is best known for the part he took in the Mount Everest expedition of 1922 when he and Bruce climbed to the altitude of 27,300 feet making a record in the history of mountaineering. Finch received a reward of £200 for his work on exudation, but Campbell's claim was unsuccessful as it was held that work of this nature formed part of the duty of an Ordnance officer.

carriage to and from the front, two Mobile Wheelwright Workshops were demanded from home, one for each Corps; the plant, which included a tyre-heating furnace and shrinking plate, being carried on eight 3-ton lorries, with a staff of 40 men under an Ordnance mechanical engineer. These workshops only came out in July 1918; but they were able to do very good work prior to and during the final advance into Bulgaria.

The nature of the country also led to changes in the scales of transport. Owing to the scarcity of roads and the mountainous nature of the country in Serbia and Bulgaria, wheeled transport could not be relied on. The Greek Army used pack-transport entirely, supplemented by a few two-wheeled carts. To overcome this difficulty, many units were converted entirely to pack-transport. Subsequently, in 1917, there was a conversion from pack-transport to a modified wheel and pack scale, in which all off-horses were equipped with pack-saddles.

The climate of Macedonia is subject to great heat and cold. Malaria was the chief foe and there were few men in the Salonika force who did not suffer from it at one time or another. Anti-malarial measures included the provision of bivouac mosquito nets for all troops in the front line, special nets for circular tents in the base area, and nets for all hospital beds. In addition sentries wore veils with gauntlet gloves and a special pattern of khaki shorts with flaps which could be turned down and kept in place by the puttee in the evening when the mosquito became active.

Credit must be given to the Ordnance in Salonika for success in a high degree in a very useful form of salvage operation on service—the manufacture of soap, which was undertaken on a large scale. Waste fats from rations and the carcasses of slaughtered animals, together with any margarine, cheese, etc., that might be condemned, were collected and a plant erected which made, from these by-products, all the army needed in the way of hard soap, soft soap and dubbin. The output between August 1917 and April 1919, during which time the

factory was in full working order, amounted to one thousand five hundred tons.

Tablets of superfine quality were also made and supplied to the Expeditionary Force canteen; and the French army was only too pleased to patronize the factory, sending in its waste and receiving soap in exchange. Besides saving a substantial shipping tonnage the profit from this plant, which cost only £3000, actually amounted to £36,000 after taking into full account expenses of supervising staff, labour, raw materials and fuel.

Not content with soap making, the idea was extended and a further by-product produced—glycerine, an essential munitions ingredient, of which sufficient was sent home to make up a quarter of a million 18-pr. cartridges.

Conditions in Macedonia, where everything was concentrated in a small area, were more than usually favourable to such an enterprise; and the same may be said of the central officers' clothing depot, whose ledger headings numbered over 700 including ladies' clothing for the nursing staff, and whose turnover in cash amounted, in the last year of the war, to £120,000. This highly popular institution had some very distinguished patrons, such as the King of Greece and later the new King of Bulgaria, the Crown Prince of Servia, Venizelos and the commanders-in-chief of the French, Italian, Greek and Serbian armies in the Balkans. The first issue of clothing to Bulgaria, after the armistice, was made by an aeroplane which carried a parcel to Sofia for King Boris after Ferdinand, the late ruler, had abdicated.

In September 1918 the period of stationary trench warfare in Macedonia at last ended, and events followed close on each other's heels. Our troops were rapidly overrunning the whole of Syria where Turkish resistance was being crushed, the Austrian Empire was disintegrating and Bulgaria was beginning to find it had climbed down on the wrong side of the fence, being the first of our enemies to sue for peace.

The final blow in this campaign was dealt on the

17th September when a general attack was launched on both sides of Lake Doiran. The Serbians and French on our left pressed forward with great success and threatened the Bulgarian lines of communication, and on the 21st September the Bulgars north of Lake Doiran set fire to their dumps and commenced their retreat through the Kosturino Pass to Strumitza, closely followed by our troops.

In these operations six-inch howitzers manned by Greek troops took part, which needed a lot of attention to prevent their breaking down, and the excellent work of the mobile workshops was mentioned in the complimentary orders of the day.

On the 29th September one of these workshops and one of the mobile wheelwright shops had arrived at Kosturino, and by the 30th September it was established at Strumitza with the Ordnance staff and dump of the 16th Corps Troops.

An armistice with Bulgaria was signed on the 30th September; but though this put an end to hostilities it was only the prelude to renewed activity. Mobility was fully restored and great difficulty found in supplying the troops during their advance into Servia and Bulgaria until rail communications were re-opened.

At the same time the work of clearing the old battle area was taken in hand and, by the end of October, 3700 tons of salvaged stores had arrived at Salonika, a very large proportion being ammunition garnered under Ordnance supervision.

During October, most of the troops were withdrawn once more to Salonika with a view to starting operations against Constantinople. These, however, were rendered unnecessary by the signature of an armistice with Turkey at the end of October and the Allies occupied Constantinople without opposition, being supplied with equipment and ammunition through the medium of a dump formed there by the Ordnance officer 12th Corps Troops, which was maintained by sea from Salonika.

It was next decided to send a division to occupy the Caucasus, and a depot, together with a mobile workshop,

was formed at Batoum in December 1918. This had an offshoot still further to the east at Baku which supplied, amongst others, British troops in North Persia, hitherto maintained from Baghdad, supplies being sent across the Caspian Sea. A heavy task in this area was the sorting out of all the Russian military stores and ammunition abandoned after their revolution, what was fit for use being required for the use of anti-Bolshevist Russian troops. The depot remained open till the autumn of 1919, when the Caucasus was evacuated and its contents were sent back to Constantinople.

A neutral zone had been formed by the Allies round Constantinople pending the settlement of peace terms with Turkey, and till the end of February 1919 this area was supplied from Salonika. But we could not prolong our stay in Greece indefinitely. Part of the stock was transferred to Constantinople, part was sent to South Russia to equip anti-revolutionary troops, and the balance either shipped home or sold on the spot to the Disposals Board.

A depot and workshop was installed at Tophane, a Turkish arsenal immediately to the north of Galata Quay, and an officers' shop in the Grand Rue de Pera. Ammunition was at first held in an old Turkish magazine at Bostanjik, five miles from Haidar Pasha on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus; but in 1921 half was transferred to a depot formed at Yildiz on the European side, a wise precaution in view of the crisis that arose later.

The transfer of stocks from Salonika to Constantinople illustrates once more, if further example be needed, how necessary are intimate relations between the Ordnance and the carrier of its goods. Vessels discharged their cargoes in the Bosphorus into barges which sometimes lay for weeks at the Golden Horn before being discovered, and much went astray. Among missing items, four anti-aircraft guns were eventually located at a Flying Corps depot where they were being used as ornaments for the camp; and it was only the absence of any demands that led to the discovery that a reserve of 10,000

gallons of lubricating oil had found its way by mistake to the A.S.C. depot.

Many troublous years were to elapse before peace with Turkey was at last declared.

The first outbreak at Constantinople occurred in June 1920, when the new National Government at Angora, after presenting an ultimatum, launched three attacks against the Allies which were repulsed with the aid of warships. Meanwhile Greece had occupied Smyrna and penetrated into the hinterland of Anatolia. As a result of these Turkish attacks, the Supreme Allied Council engaged at Paris in putting the world straight, encouraged Greek pretensions in Asia Minor, while a Greek division replaced part of our dwindling force at Constantinople.

The next event was a party revolution in Greece. Ex-King Constantine was recalled to the throne in November 1920, and Venizelos went into exile. The next summer Constantine, anxious to add to his popularity, renewed the war in Anatolia, placed himself at the head of his troops, attacked the Turks, but failed to reach Angora.

Then followed a lull of nearly twelve months, during which the Turks, under the able leadership of Mustapha Kemal, were busy reorganizing and re-equipping their army. They then attacked and routed the Greeks, driving them into the sea at Smyrna. Constantine, to restore his loss of prestige, thereupon determined to attempt, from the European side, the capture of Constantinople, that perennial bone of contention in international politics. This bubble was quickly burst by General Harington, in command of our army of occupation, who threw his troops into the Chatalja lines, a series of fortified posts guarding the land approaches to the city.

Following upon this the Turks, elated by success, determined to try and regain lost territory in Europe, and advanced against Constantinople.

It cannot be said that this recrudescence of war reflects credit on the Supreme Allied Council which, by

its vacillating policy, first supported Greece under Venizelos, a pro-Ally, and then deserted her under Constantine, a pro-German; and which, even at this serious juncture, could not agree on a common line of conduct. France and Italy refused to defend the neutral zone. France indeed, anxious to establish good relations with Turkey, had supplied her with those munitions that enabled her to renew the war. We alone, with the few troops still left, barred the way.

Almost it seemed as if we were about to undertake single-handed a new war on a large scale. Our troops were concentrated round Chanak, on the Asiatic shore opposite Gallipoli where, having command of the waterway, they threatened from a flank any attempt by Turkey to throw troops across the Bosphorus. Certain regiments were brought up to war strength and sent out from England, making the force equivalent to about a division. Reinforcements of munitions, etc., were hastily collected and despatched, and the strength of the R.A.O.C. under Colonel Wortham was brought up to 25 officers and 250 other ranks.

Constantinople now lay in the projected line of advance of the Turks. Its stocks were withdrawn and a fresh Ordnance depot was formed at Kilia, half a mile from the coast of the Gallipoli peninsula opposite Chanak. A regular war supply organization was re-introduced, with a D.A.D.O.S. whose dump was replenished by barge or launch across the Narrows.

For long the situation remained critical, and it looked as if a renewal of hostilities was almost inevitable with the rival forces glaring at each other at such close quarters. But eventually the tact of Sir Charles Harington, who proved himself as able a diplomatist as a soldier, won the day and the tension gradually relaxed.

Thus matters drifted on for the space of nearly twelve months longer while fresh peace negotiations were in progress, which resulted in Turkey regaining Constantinople and much else she had lost. Only then, in October 1923, did the R.A.O.C. with the last of our troops sail home.