

CHAPTER IV

THE THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

(Maps 1, 2 ; Sketches 2, 3, 4, 5)

By the end of May the British and French positions at Helles May. had been brought within assaulting distance of the nearest Turkish trenches.

No news had yet been received of the new Government's intentions with regard to the Dardanelles. But if progress was ever to be made it was plainly suicidal for the invading army to remain inactive. The Turkish defences were daily becoming stronger, and streams of Turkish reinforcements were known to be reaching the peninsula.

Sir Ian Hamilton would have preferred to postpone his next attack till more men and munitions had arrived from England. But both the British and French corps commanders at Helles were confident that with the troops already at their disposal they could capture Achi Baba, and were eager to make the attempt. Lord Kitchener, too, in his telegram of the 19th May, had urged Sir Ian to push on; and the recent Turkish defeat at Anzac was fostering the belief that the moment was ripe for a successful advance in the south.

In these circumstances Sir Ian Hamilton decided on the 31st May to fight a general action in the Helles zone. This time, however, no attempt was to be made to reach Achi Baba in one day. The task of the troops was to be limited to capturing the enemy's forward system of trenches right across the peninsula. At a conference held at G.H.Q. that day Generals Hunter-Weston and Gouraud produced a definite plan for the attack, and this plan was accepted then and there.

Two days later orders were issued by G.H.Q. for the attack June. to be launched on the morning of the 4th June.

It is easy to realize the intense anxieties of the Commander-in-Chief at this period—anxieties made all the greater by the Government's total, and to him inexplicable, silence on the question of reinforcements. The strength of the Turks in and

June. near Gallipoli was now placed at between 80,000 and 100,000 men. Yet since his appreciation of the 17th May, setting out his requirements as four fresh divisions or a new Ally, the only news from England was that one division was coming to him, and that the Russian landing at the Bosphorus had been definitely abandoned.

On the 2nd June Sir Ian Hamilton again telegraphed to Lord Kitchener, calling attention to his unanswered cable of the 17th May. "The movement of a quarter of a million men "against us", he added, "seems to be well under way . . . and "the positions we hold are not such as to enable me to envisage "with soldierly equanimity the probability of such large forces "being massed against my troops without let or hindrance."

At home it was still impossible to reply to this message, for the newly organized Dardanelles Committee had not yet assembled to discuss their policy in the Dardanelles. Even Lord Kitchener had not yet made up his mind into which side of the scale his weighty influence should be cast. But he doubted more than ever the possibility of a decisive success on the peninsula at this late hour. "Are you convinced", he cabled to Ian Hamilton on the 3rd June, "that "with immediate "reinforcements to the extent you mention you could force the "Kilid Bahr position and thus finish the Dardanelles operations?"

This categorical question could not be lightly answered. The situation in war does not stand still. The position was already far more serious than on the 17th May, and there was now no chance of reinforcements arriving till the middle of July. Sir Ian Hamilton's reply was short. "To-morrow", he cabled, "I am fighting a general action. I feel sure you will wish me "to defer my answer till I see the result."

Sketches
2, 3.

The battle of the 4th June, officially named the Third Battle of Krithia, was the first to be fought on the peninsula under conditions of definite trench warfare. All along the front from shore to shore the opposing forces faced each other with continuous lines of trenches, protected in some places with wire. Here and there, in parts of the Turkish position, were strong-points, capable of all-round defence.

To meet these changed conditions the scheme of attack was different to that attempted in the earlier battles. Detailed instructions for every step in the advance had been worked out, and the objectives allotted to the troops nowhere entailed an advance of more than 800 yards.

Map 1. The British scheme was explained in special instructions issued by VIII Corps on the 1st June. The assaulting troops

were to be divided into two waves. The first wave, with a June strength of five men to every four yards of front, would capture the enemy's front line, including outlying works, for each of which special parties were to be detailed. As soon as the front line had been captured, the second wave, strength one man per yard, was to leapfrog over the first wave, and capture the second objective, 400-500 yards ahead. The second wave was to be followed by special digging parties with R.E. personnel attached,¹ to assist in strengthening the captured lines and to dig communication trenches back to the old British position.

Other parties—fore-runners of the "mopping-up" parties subsequently used in France—were to round up enemy snipers left behind in the captured areas. To assist the artillery in the later stages of the attack red screens were to be carried forward by infantry and placed in rear of captured trenches to mark the progress made.²

Units were warned that the best means of clearing a traversed trench was by squads of bombers, but this warning was distinctly academic. The art of bombing was unknown to most of the troops, and few of them had ever handled a live bomb. Bombs, moreover, were still very scarce,³ and most of those available were of the locally-made variety, consisting of old jam-tins filled with scrap-iron and an explosive charge. The Turks were better off in this respect, and were already supplied with a far superior weapon.⁴

In this attack an attempt was made to use some armoured cars, which the Admiralty had sent to Gallipoli with the Royal Naval Division. This armoured car unit⁵ was manned by personnel of the Royal Naval Air Service, and consisted of a heterogeneous collection of armoured cars, Ford cars, motor lorries, motor-cycles with side-cars, and a mixed assortment of machine-guns. Some of the machine-guns had been put to splendid use in the bows of the *River Clyde* at the original

¹ A good deal of R.E. energy was wasted in these early days by employing sappers to carry forward material for consolidating captured trenches.

² This plan was not very successful and often did more harm than good when trenches captured in the first rush were subsequently reoccupied by the Turks.

³ The allotment to the 42nd Division for the attack was 8 bombs per platoon.

⁴ Throughout the months of June and July the British supply of bombs was woefully small, and the 7th July found Sir Ian Hamilton telegraphing to the War Office: "Anything made of iron and containing high-explosive and a detonator will be useful. It should be greatly relieved if a large supply could be sent overland via Marseilles. . . . The Turks have an unlimited supply, and our deficiencies place our troops at a disadvantage both physically and morally."

⁵ Called by the misleading name "R.N. Armoured Car Division".

June. landing, and in subsequent actions ashore. No work had yet been found for the armoured cars themselves, but, at the earnest wish of their personnel, eight of them were to be allowed to try their luck in the coming battle. The three roads and tracks leading towards the front line were to be specially bridged beforehand,¹ and the British trenches levelled where the cars would have to cross.

As the details of the attack had already been worked out by the corps commanders at Helles, the orders issued by G.H.Q. on the 2nd June were in the nature of general instructions. The French corps was to secure the high ground overlooking Kereves Dere—an advance of some 450-600 yards—and to establish a footing at at least two points on the left bank of the ravine. On the British front the task of the Royal Naval and 42nd Divisions² was limited to the capture of the enemy's forward line, but every opportunity was to be seized for exploiting any success. The 29th Division³ on the left was allotted a slightly bigger task, including the capture of three lines of trenches and entailing a total advance of from 500 to 800 yards.

During the action G.H.Q. were to be established ashore. But once again the position of the Commander-in-Chief could be only that of a spectator, for all the available troops were from the outset of the battle at the disposal of their respective corps commanders.

The VIII Corps orders, in effect a resumé of the instructions sent out 48 hours earlier, were issued on the 3rd June, and were for the first time accompanied by a trench diagram⁴ showing the various objectives to be reached.

The corps orders differed from the instructions issued by G.H.Q. in that the 42nd Division and the left of the R.N.D. were ordered to push forward to the enemy's support line. In order to form a corps reserve the 87th Brigade (less the 1/K.O.S.B.), the Royal Marine Brigade, and the 1st Naval Brigade (less the Drake Battalion), together with two field companies and the 29th Divisional Cyclist Company, were withdrawn from their respective divisions, and placed under the

¹ This work was carried out by the 1/1st West Riding Field Company R.E. (I.F.), 29th Division.

² The orders for the 42nd Division were subsequently amended by VIII Corps, and the objective increased.

³ See *loc. cit.* 1, page 32.

⁴ The Royal Naval Air Service had at last been able to take some good photographs of the Turkish trenches, and though the recording of aerial photographs was still in its infancy, the diagram compiled from them was extremely accurate and proved of great value to the troops. This diagram was made at 29th Division artillery headquarters by a New Zealander, Captain Chrystal, and reproduced by the printing section at G.H.Q.

orders of Br.-General W. R. Marshall, commanding the 87th June. Brigade. The 1/Royal Munster Fusiliers and two newly arrived battalions of Gurkhas were also placed in corps reserve, which thus consisted of thirteen battalions.¹ Owing to the difficulty of finding covered positions at the southern end of the peninsula these battalions had to be widely scattered, and they were given no warning as to their probable action in the battle. Sketch 4.

General Gouraud's orders, also issued on the 3rd June, detailed the French 1st Division to attack on the right, and the 2nd Division on the left. If the progress of the battle allowed, both divisions were subsequently to obtain a footing on the left bank of Kereves Dere. One regiment in each division was to remain in corps reserve.

The British artillery, 78 guns² and howitzers² formed into four groups, was to provide a preliminary bombardment and then cover the infantry assault in accordance with a detailed programme drawn up by the 29th Division artillery staff. As the proportion of guns to yards of front in the French section was considerably greater than in the VIII Corps area General Gouraud had put six batteries of French 75's to support the advance of the British right and right centre.³ The French attack—on a front of 1,000 yards—was to be supported by the remainder of the French artillery, consisting of nine field batteries, two mountain batteries, and a few medium and heavy guns and howitzers.

On the British left two destroyers (*Wolverine* and *Scorpion*) lying close inshore would support the advance with their fire; but owing to the fear of German submarines a great deal of assistance could not be expected from heavy naval guns. Two battleships (*Swiftsure* and *Exmouth*) were to manoeuvre off W Beach, firing at any targets given to them by wireless from the shore; but both these vessels were to maintain a speed of twelve knots throughout the operation, and to change their course 16 points every ten minutes. A third vessel, the cruiser *Talbot*, was to be stationed off Kuni Tepe, to watch for the approach of Turkish reserves; but this vessel, too, was to maintain a continuous speed of twelve knots.

In the Straits, off the mouth of Kereves Dere, the small French cruiser *Latouche-Tréville*, two destroyers and two mine-

¹ One of these 13 battalions was engaged in beach fatigues.

² Fifty-six 18-pdrs.; six 15-pdrs.; four 10-pdrs.; four 60-pdrs; four 4.5-inch howitzers; four 6-inch howitzers. The grouping of these and the French guns is shown on Map 2.

³ Kirte Dere was to be the dividing line of British and French artillery support.

June. sweepers armed with machine guns, were to support the advance of the French.

The assault was to be delivered at noon, and the attack was tabulated in orders as follows:

- 8 A.M. to 10.30 A.M. . Bombardment of strong-points. Final registration by field batteries.
- 11.5 to 11.20 A.M. . Bombardment of enemy front line.
- 11.20 to 11.30 A.M. . All guns cease fire, except those on enemy's line of approach. Infantry cheer, and show fixed bayonets above trenches to induce the enemy to man his parapets.
- 11.30 to noon . . Intensive bombardment of enemy front line.
- 12 noon . . Batteries increase their range. Infantry, first wave, assault 1st objective.
- 12.15 P.M. . . Infantry, second wave, assault 2nd objective.

The strength of the attacking force amounted to about 30,000 men,¹ of whom some 20,000 were to take part in the first fighting, and 10,000 to be held in the two corps reserves. Not even an approximate estimate of the enemy's numbers was available.²

In view of the careful preparations for this attack the issue was awaited at the Allied headquarters in rear with considerable confidence. On the evening of the 3rd June General Gouraud reported to G.H.Q. that everything on the French front was ready, and the prospects of success good.³ This general confidence on the part of the higher formations seems to have been shared, with scarcely diminishing conviction, by brigades and battalions in the line. "It was the first time", wrote a company commander in his diary, "that I had seen such elaborate orders. Every detail was provided for, and the plan seemed invincible".

The 4th June was a brilliant summer's day, with a stiff

¹ 20,000 British, 10,000 French.

² Actually the Turkish force consisted of the 9th and 12th Divisions in front line and the 7th, 11th, and 15th Divisions in reserve. Owing to their losses all these divisions were intermixed, and included battalions from many other commands. It is a better guide, therefore, to count the Turkish strength by battalions. There were apparently from 17 to 20 battalions in the trenches and about 21 in support and reserve, or a total of some 25,000-28,000 rifles in all.

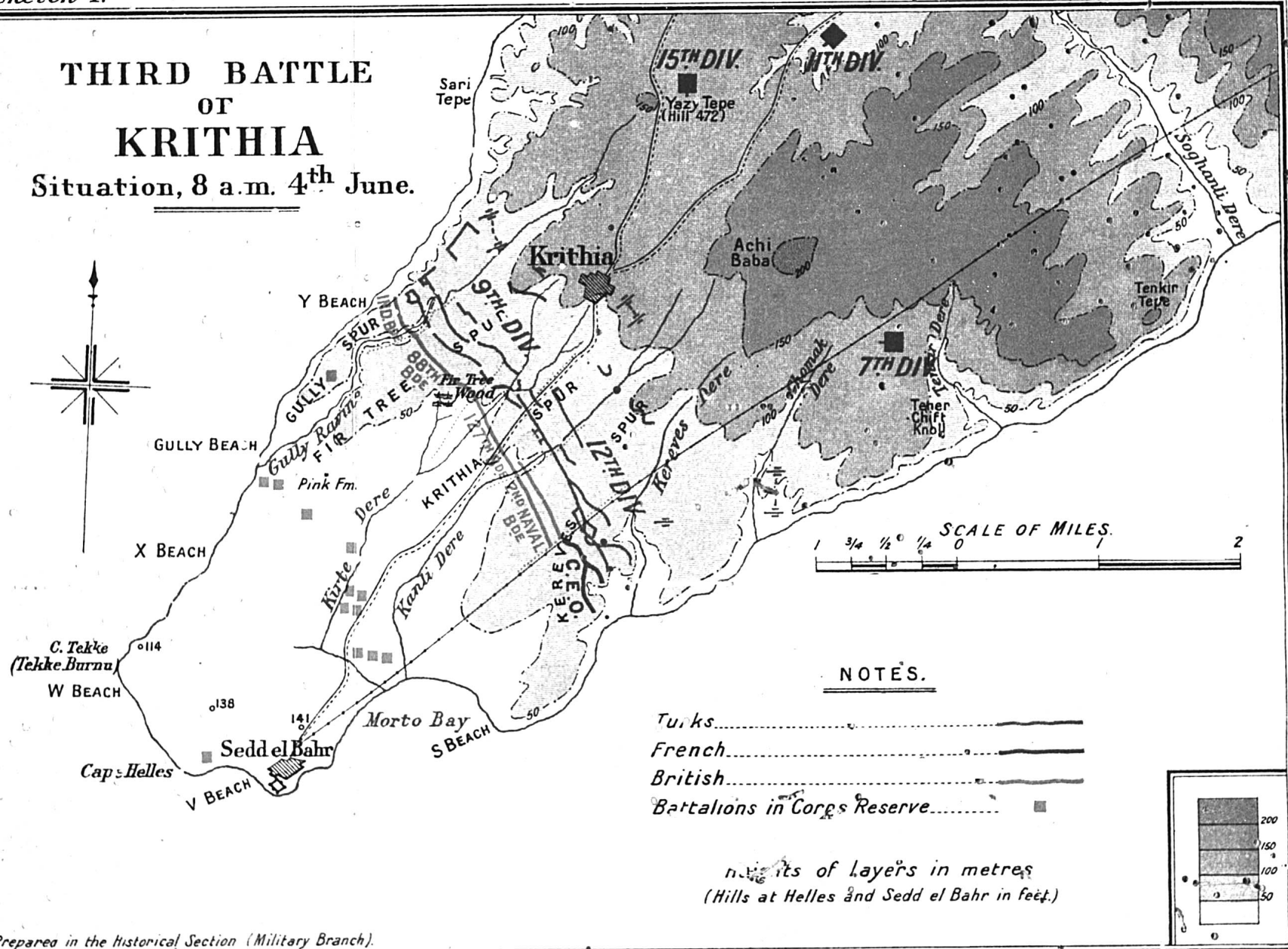
The Turkish artillery comprised 64 field and mountain guns and 22 guns and howitzers of medium and heavy calibre. Of these the greater proportion were posted in the neighbourhood of Chomak Dere, on the Turkish left.

³ "Nous sommes à bonne distance d'assaut. Les communications avec l'arrière sont assurées, les dépôts constitués, les tirs de réparation d'artillerie faits. Je crois en un mot que l'affaire est mûre, et se présente bien. Il n'y a plus qu'à s'en soumettre à la volonté du Dieu des Armées."

Sketch 4.

THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

Situation, 8 a.m. 4th June.



NOTES.

- Turks.....
- French.....
- British.....
- Battalions in Corps Reserve.....

heights of layers in metres
(Hills at Helles and Sedd el Bahr in feet.)

Prepared in the Historical Section (Military Branch).

breeze from the north-east. The preliminary bombardment **4 June.** was heavier and more prolonged than anything hitherto attempted on the peninsula. But its result was disappointing, and on many parts of the front of attack the damage to the Turkish trenches was almost negligible.¹

At 11.20 A.M., when the bombardment temporarily ceased and the attacking infantry showed their bayonets as though about to assault, a storm of rifle and machine-gun fire broke out from the Turkish line, and the Turkish batteries, hitherto silent, burst into action. At half past eleven the Allied artillery reopened with increasing intensity; but the dust and smoke of the bombardment was drifting in dense clouds towards the British lines and it was hard to gauge the accuracy of the fire. To those watching in rear it seemed as though no one could be left alive in the Turkish front-line trenches. But for the troops in front there was room for no such illusions. From most sections of the Turkish line the rifle and machine-gun fire was as heavy as ever.²

At noon the guns increased their range, and all along the front the Allied troops scrambled over the parapets and advanced steadily to the assault.

On the French front the attack was an almost complete failure. Here the opposing trenches were little more than 100 yards apart. The French gunners, to avoid accidents, had been firing far beyond the Turkish front line.³ The garrison of the Turkish front trenches had been untouched by the bombardment, and the French position was raked by machine-gun fire. The attacking troops suffered heavy casualties as soon as they began to advance, and a few minutes later were back in their own lines. In the left centre a small party reached the Haricot redoubt, but was promptly driven out. It must be admitted, indeed, that though the French corps was brilliantly staffed and commanded, the proportion of French infantrymen was insufficient to "leaven the lump" of coloured troops who formed the bulk of the infantry rank and file, and whose conduct under heavy artillery fire again proved unreliable.

¹ The British had only eight howitzers all told, and the French only six. The French 75's were well-supplied with high-explosive shell, but the British 18-pdrs., except for a few experimental rounds of H.E., were provided only with shrapnel. In the course of the day the British expenditure of ammunition was: 18-pdr., 11,000 rounds; 4.5-inch how., 600 rounds; 6-inch how., 280 rounds; 60-pdr., 350 rounds.

² It was subsequently found that the Turkish fire trenches were strongly loop-holed, thereby minimizing the effect of shrapnel against their riflemen and machine gunners.

³ This was reported to Sir Ian Hamilton by General Gozraud after the battle.

4 June. On the front of the Royal Naval Division the attack was carried out by the 2nd Naval Brigade (Commodore O. Bachtel-house) with the Anson Battalion on the right, the Howe in the centre, and the Hood on the left. The newly arrived Collingwood Battalion was to advance a quarter of an hour later to assault the second objective. The Drake Battalion (1st Naval Brigade) formed the divisional reserve.

On this front the French 75's had done great execution in the Turkish front-line trench, and though, at twelve noon, a few machine-guns were still firing from the enemy's support line on higher ground in rear, the initial attack succeeded. But casualties were very heavy, and the new line soon came under a hot enfilade fire from the high ground on Kereves Spur, where the Turks, after crushing the French attack, were turning their attention to the intruders on their inner flank.

At a quarter past twelve, in a long extended line, the Collingwoods moved forward as steadily as if on parade. But just before reaching the Turkish trenches they were caught by a murderous fire from their right flank. Practically the whole battalion was annihilated. The few survivors, with parties of the Howe and Hood, pushed steadily forward, and captured the brigade's second objective. But there, too, enfilade fire made the position untenable, and by a quarter to one the remnants of the brigade were back in their old front line. In this unfortunate attack, in the space of three quarters of an hour, the 2nd Naval Brigade lost 60 officers out of 70 and over a thousand men out of nineteen hundred. The ill-fated Collingwood Battalion had literally ceased to exist.¹

On the front of the 42nd Division the attack was carried out by the 127th (Manchester) Brigade² (Br.-General Noel Lee). Two battalions of the 125th Brigade³ (Br.-General H. C. Frith), with two companies of engineers,⁴ followed the attacking waves, and the other two battalions⁵ formed the divisional reserve. Of the 125th Brigade (Br.-General D. G. Prendergast), the 19th Manchester was occupying the reserve-line trenches; the other three battalions had been temporarily split up to reinforce the units of the 82nd Brigade.

On this part of the front the attack opened well. Thanks

¹ As no drafts were immediately available for the R.N.D., the survivors of the Collingwood Battalion were transferred to the Howe, Anson and Hood. The Rainbow Battalion, though not engaged in this fighting, was also disbanded after 4th June, in order to replenish the ranks of other units, and the two Naval Brigades were reduced to three battalions apiece.

² The 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th Manchester.

³ 15th and 16th Lancashire Fusiliers.

⁴ 1/1st and 1/2nd E. Lancs. Field Coys. R.E.

⁵ 1/7th and 1/8th Lancashire Fusiliers.

to the havoc wrought by the French high-explosive shell in the 4 June. preliminary bombardment practically the whole of the divisional objective was carried with little loss, except on the extreme left. For the first hour, indeed, everything went well in this section. Parties of the 127th Brigade penetrated the enemy's line to a depth of at least 1,000 yards; 217 prisoners were captured; the Turks were on the run; and the Manchester Territorials, fighting like veterans, were all in high fettle. Their right had been exposed by the withdrawal of the 2nd Naval Brigade, but the 1/8th Lancashire Fusiliers had been ordered up from divisional reserve to protect this flank. Only on the left, against the low-lying trenches near the Kirtle Ravine, had the first assault suffered heavily, and there the ground was thickly strewn with dead.

To the left of the 42nd Division the 88th Brigade¹ attacked with the 2/Hampshire, the 2/Royal Fusiliers, the 1/K.O.S.B., and the 4/Worcestershire in that order from right to left. The 1/5th Royal Scots was in support, and the 1/Essex in reserve.

In this sector the British artillery, with some Australian batteries attached, had done considerable damage to the hostile lines. But shortage of howitzers and high-explosive shell was to tell its inevitable tale. Several of the Turkish strong-points—including one occupied by German machine-gunners from the *Breslau*—had been untouched by the bombardment, and in the first few minutes of the attack very serious losses were inflicted on the assaulting troops. The first wave of the King's Own Scottish Borderers was practically blotted out, only a handful of men reaching the enemy's parapet; and the commanding officer, seeing that for the moment a further effort was hopeless, decided on his own initiative (the telephone line to the brigade being broken) to postpone the advance of his second wave. The Hampshire casualties and those of the Royal Fusiliers were also terribly severe, but the conduct of all the troops was superb. Not a man in the first wave faltered, and even after the majority of their comrades had fallen, individual survivors pressed gamely forward till they themselves were killed.

On the left, fighting with equal gallantry, and under slightly more favourable conditions, the Worcestershire was able to

¹ This brigade had been made up to six battalions by the attachment of the 2/Royal Fusiliers (86th Brigade) and the 1/King's Own Scottish Borderers (87th Brigade), and had been further strengthened by splitting up amongst its battalions the 1/4th and 1/5th East Lancs. and the 1/10th Manchester of the 126th Brigade. The brigade went into action nearly 4,000 strong, but scarcely one of its six battalions had more than 3 officers left of those who had landed on 25th April.

Br.-General V. Doran, in command of the brigade, had only arrived from home on 26th May, and was invalided a few days after the battle.

4 June. make better progress. In a few moments the first wave had established itself strongly in the nearest Turkish trenches, and, helped by this success, the troops on the right were eventually able to push on. By one o'clock the brigade had secured the greater part of its first objective; a large portion of H12—a shallow half-dug trench—had been occupied; and 250 prisoners had been captured, including a German machine-gun officer and several men of his detachment. Small parties had even reached H14, a very important trench on high ground. But the good progress made by individual detachments was not realized at brigade headquarters, and the advanced troops in H14, being unsupported, were eventually forced to retire. The Worcestershire, too, enfiladed from the J trenches on Gully Spur, was unable to hold out in H12, though farther to the right a less exposed portion of this line was held for the next two days.

Despite the gallant enthusiasm of their crews, the armoured cars could effect nothing in the difficult conditions prevailing. They were consequently withdrawn into reserve, and were not again employed in active operations on the peninsula. The losses amongst their personnel were only slight, and the cars, though all were heavily fired at and some had side-slipped into trenches, received no serious damage.

To the left of the 88th Brigade the Indian brigade attacked with the 14th Sikhs astride Gully Ravine, the 1/Lancashire Fusiliers (attached from the 86th Brigade) in the centre on Gully Spur, and the 1/6th Gurkhas below the cliffs. No howitzers had been allotted to bombard the trenches in this sector, as the H trenches opposite the 88th Brigade were considered the more formidable and there were not enough howitzers to fire at all targets. Further, some of the field guns originally detailed to support the Indian brigade were diverted at the last moment to fire on a strong-point reported in H12. As a result, the Turkish trenches on Gully Spur had suffered little damage at zero hour, and their garrisons were unshaken. On the eastern side of the ravine small parties of the Sikhs succeeded in getting forward with the Worcestershire. But in the deep bed of the ravine, and on its western side, the troops could make little progress. In the centre of the line the Lancashire Fusiliers were driven back by rifle and machine-gun fire; and though on the extreme left one company of Gurkhas, working forward under the cliffs, reached an enclosed work in J10, they were unsupported and soon forced to retire.

On the Allied front, therefore, about 1.30 P.M., the situation was roughly as follows: on both flanks of the attack no progress had been made, and the Indian brigade, the Royal Naval

Division, and the French corps, after suffering very heavy losses, were back in their own lines. In the left centre the 88th Brigade had captured most of its first objective, and had penetrated H14, and (though this was not known at the time) there were at the moment very few Turks between H14 and Krithia. On the 42nd Division front the Territorials had captured all their objectives on a front of 1,200 yards, and small parties had pushed forward to within three quarters of a mile of Krithia. But both flanks of this division were in the air, and the two nullahs—Kanli Dere and Kirte Dere—offered the enemy covered lines of approach for a counter-attack.

Despite the failure on both flanks, therefore, the centre of the Turkish main line had been pierced on a comparatively wide front. The Lancashire Territorials had fought their way clean through the enemy's defences, and there was scarcely another trench between their leading troops and the top of Achi Baba.

The success or failure of the day now depended on the use to be made of the eighteen battalions in corps reserve: twelve at General Hunter-Weston's disposal and six at the disposal of General Gouraud. It is interesting, therefore, to study the situation as it must have appeared at this critical period—about 2 P.M.—to the two corps commanders at their headquarters in rear. Communications had been working well, and, except from the 88th Brigade front, the information sent back to the two headquarters had been remarkably full and accurate. It was known that the two flank attacks had failed, and that the 42nd Division had captured all its objectives. The Turkish artillery had apparently been mastered, and was only firing fitfully. What was now to be done with the corps reserve?

To send all eighteen battalions forward into action would have been to stake the fortunes of the Expeditionary Force on one final throw. Apart from them, and such of the divisional reserves as had not yet been engaged, not another fighting unit was available, and the number of Turkish reserves was an unknown factor. Prudence, therefore, would dictate the retention of a small reserve under corps control. It was justifiable, however, to use at least half the available reserves in immediate offensive action. Should they be thrown into the gap made by the 42nd Division, in order to exploit the Territorials' success? Or should they make another frontal attack where the first attempts had failed?

There can be no question as to which of these two courses offered the greater prospect of success. But this was the first time the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force had been engaged in definite trench warfare, and the broad principle of using

4 June. reserves to exploit successes rather than to redeem failures had not as yet been established.

In the event, therefore, both corps commanders unfortunately determined on a second effort to capture the trenches which had defied the first assault, and nothing was done to reinforce the section where all was going well. It was arranged that the French, supported on their left by the Royal Naval Division, should renew their attack on the Kereves trenches at 4 P.M. For this purpose the three battalions of the 1st Naval Brigade were released from corps reserve and restored to their own division. The 1/5th Gurkhas was sent up to the left to reinforce a simultaneous renewal of the attack by the Indian Brigade on Gully Spur.

An hour later it was reported that the French could not be ready at the hour arranged, and at 5 P.M. General Gouraud informed Hunter-Weston that his troops were in no fit state to renew the attack that day. In these circumstances the advance by the Royal Naval Division was cancelled, but one battalion (Hawke) was ordered to swing its left forward to get into touch with the exposed right flank of the 42nd Division.

Meanwhile on the extreme British left a second most gallant attempt had been made by the Indian brigade to push forward along Gully Spur. But the Turkish infantry in this part of the field were still unshaken; their shooting was fatally accurate; and the attacking troops, after a heroic advance, were driven back with heavy loss, including, in the care of the 1/5th Gurkhas, the whole of its British officers. Astride Gully Ravine the losses of the 14th Sikhs, who, like the Gurkhas, fought with distinguished bravery, amounted to 12 British officers out of 15, 11 Indian officers out of 14, and 380 men out of 514.

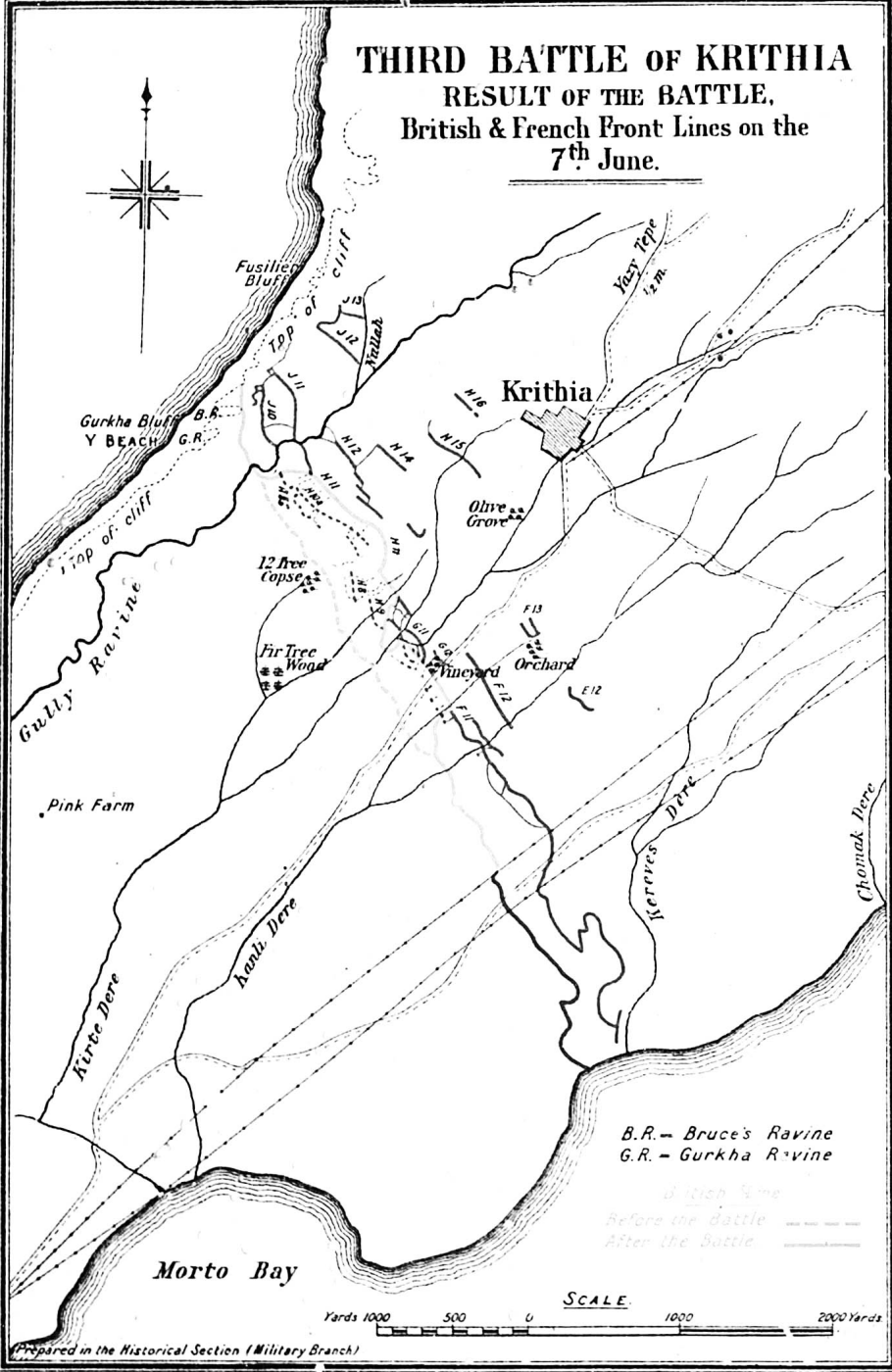
Later in the afternoon two more battalions from corps reserve were placed under General Cox's orders on the left flank, and another battalion was sent forward to the 88th Brigade sector, to be used in case of emergency. Thus, by 5 P.M., out of the twelve available battalions in VIII Corps reserve, seven had already been frittered away and only five remained in corps control.

At 5.15 P.M. orders were issued by General Hunter-Weston to consolidate for the night on the ground already gained. Up to this hour the frequent and clear reports from 42nd Division headquarters had given no cause for anxiety, and though the division's losses were known to be severe,¹ little doubt seems

¹ Amongst the many officer casualties Br.-General Noel Lee had been mortally wounded about midday. Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Heys, who succeeded

THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

RESULT OF THE BATTLE, British & French Front Lines on the 7th June.



B.R. — Bruce's Ravine
G.R. — Gurkha Ravine

— — — — —
Before the Battle
—————
After the Battle

SCALE

Yards 1000 500 0 1000 2000

Prepared in the Historical Section (Military Branch)

to have been felt that the Lancashire Territorials would be able to hold on. 4 June.

On the Turkish side, meanwhile, reserve troops were hurrying to mend the breach in their line. Pushing forward under cover, the first Turkish reinforcements came into action about 4 P.M. Soon after 5.15 P.M. the news reached corps headquarters that the 127th Brigade was hard pressed, and from that time forward the situation grew steadily worse. At 6 P.M. the brigade was being attacked on three sides, and half an hour later, with General Hunter-Weston's approval, the divisional commander issued orders for his leading troops to withdraw.

In most cases the retirement was carried out successfully, and a line was taken up in E11 and along the northern edge of the Vineyard¹ to cover the consolidation of the first objective. But the losses suffered during the late afternoon were very severe. By nightfall the greater portion of the ground gained by the 42nd Division had been given up, and the day's fighting had only resulted in a gain of between 250-500 yards on a front of about a mile. These meagre results had cost the VIII Corps 4,500 officers and men out of a total of some 16,000 actually engaged. The French losses in their fruitless morning attack amounted to 2,000. Sketch 5.

According to Turkish accounts the enemy's losses were even heavier—one account places them as high as 10,000;² and according to a trustworthy eye-witness³ the situation in the Turkish lines on the night of the 4th June was regarded as highly critical. "Had the British continued the attack the next day "with the same violence", this officer writes, "all would have been lost." This view, moreover, is corroborated by the German General H. Kannengiesser,⁴ who at that time was attached to the Turkish 9th Division: "I felt", he writes, "that another energetic attack by the English would have the worst results."

But neither the British nor the French had the power to renew the attack for many days to come, and the Turks were again given time to organize a new line.

The night of the 4th/5th June was spent by the VIII Corps in clearing the battlefield and placing the new line in a state of

him, had been killed, and the 127th Brigade was now commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Lord Rochdale.

¹ Trench G12. This trench was evacuated about 9.30 P.M.

² The Turkish official figure is 9,000.

³ Mehmed Nehad Bey, who was on the staff of the Southern Group.

⁴ "Gallipoli," pp. 124, 150-1.

5 June. defence. The task of getting the large number of wounded down to the beach was particularly arduous,¹ and high praise is due to the stretcher-bearers and regimental doctors, who were working all through the afternoon and the following night and day. Special recognition is also due to the infantry transport personnel, the Indian mule-cart drivers, and the Zion Mule Corps for their untiring energy in this action—bringing up ammunition close to the forward positions, and carrying back the wounded under heavy fire.

Up in the front line, with the enemy counter-attacking, there was no time at first to bury the hundreds of dead, and in one case, on the front of the Scottish Borderers, they were piled up on each side of the new communication trench to the captured position, where they made a ghastly avenue. By an unfortunate mistake in psychology a Territorial battalion of the Scottish Borderers, arriving shortly afterwards on the peninsula, had to bury these corpses as their first task on shore. It was not a good beginning.

6 June. The Turks carried out a series of ineffective counter-attacks throughout the 5th June, and on the morning of the 6th, more reinforcements having reached them, they launched a determined attack on the new British line. On the 42nd Division front the attack succeeded in some places in gaining ground, and on the front of the 88th Brigade the whole of the awkward salient in H12 was recaptured.² Confused fighting continued for some hours at the junction of the two branches of Kirte Dere; but a strong British line was finally constructed in this neighbourhood, and a second attack in the afternoon was repulsed without difficulty. In his report on these operations General Hunter-Weston remarked that the retention of their positions by the weary Territorials was an even finer performance than the taking of them on the first day of the battle.

On the evening of the 6th June Sir Ian Hamilton replied to Lord Kitchener's cable with regard to the chance of victory if adequately reinforced. "I am convinced", he said, "by this action that with my present force my progress will be very

¹ Major-General H. de B. de Lisle arrived from France on the evening of the 4th to assume command of the 29th Division. The scene on his arrival—the beach crowded with wounded, and under fire from the enemy's guns—must have been in strange contrast to the spacious conditions he had just left on the Western front.

² Lieut. G. R. D. Moor, Hampshire Regiment, showed conspicuous courage and resource on this occasion, by rallying a detachment of a neighbouring unit which, after losing all its officers, had been driven from its trench. Moor rushed back 200 yards, stemmed the retreat, led back the men, and recaptured the lost trench. He was awarded the V.C.

“ slow, but in the absence of any further important alteration
“ in the situation such as a definite understanding between
“ Turkey and Bulgaria, I believe the reinforcements asked for
“ in my telegram of 17th May will eventually enable me to take
“ Kilit Bahr and will assuredly expedite the decision.”