

**Memoirs of
Dr Ernest Northcroft Merrington
(1876-1953)**

WW1 1914-1919



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Transcribed by
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CHAPTER 9

To The Front

On Sunday 2nd August, 1914, during the morning service at St Andrew's, a press reporter sent up a note which I read to the awed congregation, 'Germany has declared war on Russia.' For days past the newspapers had told of the gathering of war clouds. On the following Tuesday 4th August, Britain declared war on Germany. The Kaiser's sabre-rattling had changed into a drawn sword. I wrote to the Rev Dr Rentoul at once offering my services as an overseas Chaplain, irrespective of rank or pay. As the Senior Presbyterian Chaplain of the 1st Military District (Queensland and Northern Rivers of NSW) and as one who had regularly attended the camps of the Moreton and Wide Bay Regiment, I felt an official duty to volunteer for active service, but the fortunes of freedom or tyranny hung in the balance.

The closing lecture of the Theological Hall was held during that eventful week; so my duties as lecturer ceased for the session. Flora's birthday on the Saturday was celebrated by attendance at the Exhibition Hall, where Mr V.E. Galway took part in a fine orchestral concert. On Sunday 'National Services' were held in the churches, and a Church Parade took place at Lytton in connection with the War. A Patriotic Committee was formed, and a fund started at a meeting held in the Mayor's Room. A Science Congress was held near the end of August and Sir Oliver Lodge gave the address in St Andrew's Church on the Sunday evening. I conducted the service, and Sir Oliver gave a magnificent exposition of theistic philosophy in relation to science. Many of the visiting scientists had to hurry off to their distant countries in view of the outbreak of hostilities. Steps had been taken to form the Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force, and on that Sunday afternoon I gave the address at Enoggera Camp Church Parade. At a meeting of the Kirk Session, my action in volunteering for service was approved, and it was agreed that if I was appointed, the church would make suitable arrangements for leave of absence and pulpit supply.

On Friday night, 4th September, we had Principal Meiklejohn as our guest at 'Talmoi', as well as Mr Galway, who gave us some delightful music. During the evening, the telephone rang. I left the room to answer it, and I heard the following telegram read out to me: 'This is to inform you that you have been appointed Chaplain to the First Expeditionary Force. Official. Please reply as to acceptance immediately. Rentoul.' I returned to the drawing-room and the music continued. I saw Dr Meiklejohn down to the ferry at the close of the party and returned to break the news to my wife, who took it very calmly and bravely.

Needless to say, preparations went on apace after I had given my affirmative reply. Uniforms, gear, Church Parades with the Light Horse Regiment at Enoggera, etc. occupied much of my time, although church duties continued. The General Assembly of Australia was to meet in St Andrew's Church on 23rd September.

A great trial came to us in the illness of our little son, Harvard, who contracted broncho-pneumonia just at this juncture. Flora's sister Mollie Livingston, came to nurse him, and was a comfort and ministering angel. Two doctors, Morgan and Love were in attendance. It was a very anxious time. A few days before he fell sick, the little chap sat on a horse which I had ridden in from the Remount Camp, and was supposed to be for my use. I took a snap-shot of Harvard on the big horse; and that picture remained in my mind afterwards.

On Thursday 24th September I received a telephone call to proceed to Pinkenbah for embarkation. There had been one or two false alarms about departure, but when I reached the wharf I saw that this was the real thing. I hurried to a telephone box and rang up home to inquire about the little son. My wife said, 'the doctor has just brought him oxygen for administering to him.' 'Isn't that very serious?' I asked. 'Dr Morgan says it is often helpful usually'. And so, Good bye... What a heart rending farewell! It was not till we reached Albany at the end of October that my anxiety was relieved by news that Harvard was out of danger. I learned later that the General Assembly remembered us in our anxious time when I was taking my leave for service, and that were prayerfully commended to the God of all comfort.

Although my official attachment was to the 1st Australian Light Horse Brigade, I was allotted to the transport Omrah which carried the 9th Battalion of infantry and A.S.C. details. I believe that our ship was the first to leave Australian shores for the European scene of war. Other expeditionary units had left for New Guinea. As a fact, however, we did not reach European ports, for we were diverted to Egypt, as Turkey had joined our enemy.

We sailed down the coast, and at the southern extremity were signalled to turn into Port Phillip, and we berthed at Port Melbourne, the infantry remaining on board for over two weeks. I was glad to meet Father's relatives, the Kings at 'Wallingford', and at Sandringham. Alongside us, on the opposite side of the wharf lay the 'Orvieto' the flagship of the convoy, and on the final Sunday before leaving, we had a combined Church Parade on the wharf, Lieutenant Colonel Rosenthal's artillery joining with Lieutenant Colonel Lee's 9th Battalion for this impressive service, at which I gave the address. We sailed from Port Melbourne on the 21st

October and had a calm passage across the Bight to King George's Sound. The assembling of the Main Body took place there, including the New Zealanders, who had been held up by Mr Massey, and rightly so, on account of the presence of German warships, Gneisenau, Scharnhorst and Dresden in the vicinity of the Pacific. The British Cruiser Minotaur led the large convoy, with the Australian cruisers Sydney and Melbourne and the Japanese battle cruiser 'Ibuki' bringing up the rear.

There is no need to recount the incidents of the voyage, which resembled other such events at sea. We called at Colombo after the 'Sydney' had sunk the 'Emden' and we had received two officers, two petty-officers and about 40 other ratings from the doomed enemy cruiser. The German engineer was a decent chap, and I saw him frequently. When we arrived at Port Said the German prisoners were taken off to the Hampshire. We disembarked at Alexandria. Padre Plane and I were instructed to stay at the Continental Hotel, Cairo, until Colonel H.G. Chauvel should arrive from England. I was then allotted to the 1st Regiment, Plane to the 3rd (S. Australian) and George Green (Anglican) to the 2nd (Queensland). We were soon settled down at Maadi camp under the personal command of Brigadier, Colonel Chauvel. My regiment consisted of men from New South Wales and the O.C. was Lieutenant Colonel Meredith, a medical man in civil life, and an individualist in military activities. He gave me a very grudging kind of reception when I reported for duty, but that was soon found to be characteristic. My companion in the tent at first was the Vet Captain Oliver, a former South African veteran, but I was removed to share a tent with Major H.V. Vernon (second in command) who knew my Aunt Vernon and was a man with high ideals and good qualities. The English residents at Maadi were very good to us. A 'Presbytery' was formed in Cairo, under the civil Chaplain of the Church of Scotland (Rev James Gillan, B.D.) who was elected Moderator. Other members were Rev William Grant, Rev G.S. King, Rev Angus MacDonald, all Chaplains of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force; Rev J.K. Miller, Rev A. Gillison, Rev J.C. McPhee (elected Cleric of Presbytery) and myself, of the Australian Imperial Force; Rev K.I. MacIver (Y.M.C.A.) of New Zealand and Dumbarton U.F. Presbytery, Scotland; Rev Dr S.H. Kennedy, of Alexandretta, Missionary in Syria; and Mr Andrew Stewart (Y.M.C.A. Glasgow, Agent of United Free Church). The Presbytery cordially accepted an offer by Mr Gillan to hold 'Rallies' of Presbyterians in St. Andrew's Church, Cairo, followed by a Social Hour in the large Hall of the Continental Hotel. These services and Rallies proved to be very successful and were well attended by the officers and men of the A.I.F. and N.Z.E.F. They filled a good social and spiritual function in a city which offered many temptations to men away from home. I have photographs of the Presbytery and also of groups outside St. Andrew's Church, Cairo.

I had conducted services in camps before leaving, on board the Omrah, and also in the Maadi encampment. The men were cordial and responsive. I made it a point of custom to visit tents of the men and chat with them. Exercises in the desert were regular features of the training. Hospital visiting also brought one into contact with men from the Homeland as well as the Dominion Forces. Communion services were held after each Sunday service in the mornings. At night we had an informal service with a straight Gospel talk and much singing of well-known hymns, chosen by the audience. Padre A.C. Plane and I held Bible Classes with keen groups.

At the end of January we were moved to Heliopolis Aerodrome, where the Y.M.C.A. had a large hut, conducted by Mr Bell and Mr MacIver. The Church Services were usually held there. Mr and Mrs Williamson, our Maadi friend, continued to ask us over occasionally, and Colonel and Mrs Knaggs (English) also showed us hospitality. Letters from Australia were eagerly sought for and mail days were always times of rejoicing. The news from Flora told of steady improvement in little Harvard's health, and the girls were going to school.

In January, Plane and I, with a few officers had a splendid trip to Luxor, and we saw the Karnak and Luxor temples, also the tombs of the ancient kings and queens Of Egypt. Three days were occupied in this sight-seeing, and I obtained some good photographs of the monuments. Naturally, we visited Mena Camp, where the Infantry were located, and I renewed acquaintance with the fine M.O., Graham Butler and other friends of the 9th Battalion. I accompanied the troops of the 1st A.L.H. Brigade under Colonel Chauvel on night exercises in the desert. I gave some talks with copious quotations on the Australian Poets in Heliopolis Y.M.C.A.

When remount horses arrived, my batman and I chose an upstanding bay of 16 hands. I went for a ride to Abassia with Plane, who had a regular lady's hack. My horse was unruly and needed the curb. On the way back he was very fresh. Suddenly from around a sand-dune appeared a donkey with a basket on each side of its back, led by an owner! My horse jumped high into the air, and then bolted like mad for the camp. I tried to turn him into the wide open spaces, but all in vain. He came thundering up to the precincts, and I thought he would stop dead at the long water-trough; but he dashed straight for an outhouse, dodged it with an S turn round a wireless pole, and I was thrown. My body just missed a tent-peg by inches. I had a severe shaking. I went to the cold shower. Afterwards I was very stiff and sore, and I think I had an injury to my back. I was glad to exchange horses with Lieutenant Harris, but the horse was still an outlaw. However, as the result of the exchange I secured a very useful and sturdy horse, which would walk, trot or canter as required. One thing that I learned with the mounted was that most of the time the regiment is at the walk, and that a good walking horse is a grand asset.

CHAPTER 10

At Anzac Cove

Meantime some of the Infantry brigades had left Egypt. Everybody knew that their objective was Gallipoli. We of the 1st A.L.H. were on trek to Helouan on the 25th April, and we had three days of desert experience. On the following Thursday (29th) hundreds of wounded men arrived and we heard of the famous Landing, since annually remembered on Anzac Day. Hospital duties were urgent, but the heroism of the wounded was above praise. We heard answers to many questions about friends in the fray, some were tragic, some were humorous. Units became mixed on the heights in the advance towards Hill 971. One sergeant told me that he was far in front with a few men, and he considered that his own officers were some distance off. 'But', said he, 'I saw a lieutenant in front with some men lying on the ground, and I called out, is that a private show, or can anyone have a cut at it?' He called back, 'Anyone can have a cut at it'; so, I went forward and joined up with him.' 'And then' he added 'I got knocked, and had to crawl back to the beach.' Another patient told me that the hospital surgeon extracted a bullet from his body, and asked him if he would like to keep it as a souvenir. He answered, 'No, you keep it, sir, I'll soon get another.'

Colonel Chauvel called a meeting of officers and announced that he had offered the brigade for service on Gallipoli, not as reinforcements, but as a unit of Light Horsemen, but without horses, and that his offer had been accepted. Busy days of hospital visiting, some funerals, and preparations for departure followed. We left Heliopolis Camp on Saturday, 8th May, and arrived at Alexandria the following day. On the wharf, we had to leave our leggings and put on puttees. We embarked on the Devanha, and on the following day we passed Rhodes, Karpathos and deserted Patmos far ahead in the distance.

We arrived off the entrance to the Dardanelles on the 11th and a stirring scene confronted us. A huge fleet of warships and transports lay offshore. The guns flashed and roared; overhead an aeroplane was signalling the targets which were mainly the battered forts beyond the stranded River Clyde. Ashore, troops were advancing up the slopes towards Krithia, while the coveted height of Achi Baba rose in the background. As I looked at Kumkale on the southern point I thought of the Greek ships described in the Iliad when Troy was the goal. Darkness was falling, and our ship drew away from the base of the gallant 29th Division of British troops and we proceeded to the more lonely area where the Australians and New Zealanders were engaged. A mist off rain aided to the feeling of 'a world forgot'.

Next morning we passed the Turkish fort of Gaba Tepe and saw the grim slopes above the small cove that was later to bear the historic name of Anzac. A few sunken ships lay near the scene of the landing, and some rough little wharves jutted out at intervals. On the high foreshore we could see dugouts with waterproofs flapping over entrances to keep out the rain. The beach was piled with boxes and men were moving to and fro on the narrow strip of sand. A destroyer came alongside the ship, and we were taken in her some distance towards the shore; then we were transported into barges or punts which were towed in by pinnaces. We could see the shrapnel bursting on the beach and whipping up fountains of spray near the landing-stages. As I came under fire for the first time, I analysed my feelings. One of the little jetties was catching most of the bombardment, and I found myself saying: 'I hope the man in charge of this show has the sense not to land us at that particular wharf!' However, although we had one man wounded, the landing was effected and we were herded to the northern cape (Ari Burnu). Major H.V. Vernon, our acting C.O. on the Peninsula disposed us for our next movements. Our men were milling about at this place, for there was a pile of infantry web-equipment, and as it was preferred to the poor stuff with which we had been hurriedly supplied from Egyptian make, our Light Horsemen began putting it on. No doubt it had become available through the many casualties which had occurred. But an officer came up and ordered that the web-equipment was to be put back where it was before. Major Vernon also warned us sharply that the spot where we were had been plastered with shrapnel half-an hour beforehand, and these two orders sobered the men. Presently the regiment moved up from the beach to take a position on Pope's Post, and much baggage was left for future removal. I was asked to stay near it with my batman, Paton. I was directed to sleep for that night in Captain Littler's hospitable dug-out just above the busy Casualty Clearing Hospital tent. It was a weird night, with the distant sound of ceaseless firing, and occasional bursts nearer at hand. Littler improved the opportunity by telling fearsome tales of death just round the corner! Padre J. Green and I conducted a burial at Hell Spit before nightfall on that eventful day of our landing, 12th May.

Next morning Paton and I moved up the track and up Shrapnel Valley, being warned by Indian troops 'Igarree, igaree, (Hurry)!' We had to dodge from side to side, as one plays 'puss in the corner', for the snipers were at work from the heights at the eastern end of one area. We reached Pope's Post, which was the most advanced peak of the salient. I was fortunate in getting a good dug-out just below the fire-trenches, high up above the valley, and affording a good view of the blue sea. On the way up I met Chaplains Wray and Gillison, and Major Carter of Brisbane. After laying down our heavy baggage in the dug-out, I went round some of the trenches, and then down to the beach, visiting the tent hospitals. I had a signal sent to the Padre (asking for Communion Wine) of HMS London lying in the offing, and later on it arrived. The firing never stopped. I was busy attending to wounded men on my way down and back. At night I buried two of our regiment. There was a small burial ground then on the

lower part of Pope's, but later it was abandoned in favour of the main cemetery near the western end of Shrapnel Valley. The 2nd Regiment held Quinn's post, separated from Pope's by a declivity, and Major Graham was killed leading a desperate sortie on the near-by Turkish trenches. Casualties also befell some of our men. There was no service on that first Sunday, as conditions did not permit of gathering any men.

On Monday I visited the wounded on the Hospital ship 'Sudan'. The news that Major-General Bridges had been seriously wounded by a sniper's bullet was depressing, and there was an orgie of sniping about this time, the Turks having been ordered to drive the Australians into the sea. The force of this effort was shown on the following day when huge eleven-inch shells began coming over. These were fired by the 'Goeben' from the Sea of Marmora. The Shrapnel Valley winding track was buffeted and earth was thrown up. As a small party in front of my dug-out were making breakfast a burst of shrapnel whisked among us, and Lieutenant Edmonds was hit by a pellet that passed through his arm. It was a close call for us all. I went down to the beach with Edmonds. On the following day a terrific battle raged round our post following on a night attack by reinforced Turkish divisions. But the attack was repulsed by rifle and howitzer opposition. Lieutenant Nicoll had his arm shattered, and I went down from the trenches to the beach with him. He gave me his revolver, ere he left, and I kept it loaded in my dug-out. We had 9 killed. Our Regiment was relieved and went into a possie by the side of the valley. A heavy task of burials from the carnage awaited padres. Through a misunderstanding (or over-sleeping) the other chaplains failed to meet me at dawn, and I found myself alone with 42 bodies of Australians who had been killed, also 10 Turks, on the Shrapnel Valley burial ground; a trench had been dug, and I laid the fallen in their graves, placing the identity discs and contents of pockets at the head of each. An officer who was near (with a fatigue party) came over and assisted me in this terrible duty, especially in the lifting of the bodies and placing them side by side. Later, we padres agreed to have men of units buried together, and that was done. The date of this interment described above was 20th May at dawn. An abortive truce occurred on that date, and as I returned from a swim I was astounded to see men standing up on the sky-line!

On 24th May a genuine armistice was arranged. At 4.30 pm I went with other chaplains over the lines to bury the dead, our own and enemy. There were far more of the latter than the former. It was extraordinary to see Generals Birdwood and Godley with officers standing near the delimitation line marked by flags, and also on the other side Turkish officers, who looked down on our besieged 'village', as it were, with significant observations for future use against us. One Turk in blue uniform of a sergeant stood near where I was working. I recognised him from photographs I had seen in the illustrated papers as Enver Pasha! He had the Red Crescent (equivalent to our Red Cross) on his sleeve. Enver's presence at the Armistice was later announced in the press. At nightfall the usual hostile orchestra was heard, 'the hymn of hate' due to aggressive warfare.

On the day after the Armistice, the cruiser 'Triumph' was torpedoed - a tragic event, for she had been our most faithful attendant. The sight of the sinking was grievous from the shore. I cannot describe it. There is no doubt that, while the Armistice was on, the German submarine used the opportunity to get into a favourable position for early attack. One of our Queensland engineers on Plugge's Plateau saw the submarine half-an-hour before the blow fell on the ship, and hastened down to the Beach Naval Officer telling him what he had seen. The English officer said; 'Probably a blinking biscuit-tin floating on the water!' (Unofficial evidence seems to be ruled out by the Navy and other devotees of red tape).

So May passed away with fusillade and many a minor attack with frequent casualties. The 2nd Regiment made a sortie on Quinn's Post enemy trenches (only a few yards away) held the front opposing them for a couple of hours, but had to return, suffering casualties. Major Quinn himself was killed. Letters from home cheered us. A few odd books were passed from dug-out to dug-out, and were a welcome relief.

The chaplains established a roster of duty for burials. The 'morgue' - a rough cave on the side of the track, was first visited about midnight; then the Indian mule-carts would convey the bodies to the cemetery near the beach, thus relieving the stretcher-bearers of the heavy task previously performed. The padre with the Burying Party walked down, held the sad rites, collected the identity discs and returned to his dug-out, later handing in the discs to the adjutant. It was a great event when, later on, I found no body awaiting our ministrations on visiting the morgue. The zip of bullets in the scrub of the cemetery was a constant evidence of the activity of enemy snipers from Dead Man's Ridge at the head of the valley.

In June the fusillade from trenches eased off a little, and I heard the croak of frogs - not that there was much water, for that was in very short supply. Wells were sunk in Shrapnel Valley, but with slight return if any. One well down 40 feet, had a notice at the top, 'We have not yet struck water'. The water was supplied in very small rations from water carts on the Beach. I think there was an arrangement for distilling water from the sea. Half a gallon per man was allowed as the water ration.

I conducted a little Bible Class with prayer each night in and around my dug-out. I used my pocket torch to flash along the verses of the Bible as I read the portion chosen. A big attack on Quinn's Post enemy trenches was made on 4th June; but after getting

a hold there our 2nd Regiment men had to return, losses being suffered on both sides, 28 Turks were taken prisoner. Late burials followed after this.

As a result of a talk with Colonel Chauvel, I obtained permission to hold the first Church Service in the Valley. It was held in Monash Gully, just north of Pope's Post, in front of the Medical Aid Post. No singing was allowed, by order of the Brigadier. Chaplains Luxford and King, of the N.Z. Division, led the devotions, and I gave the address on Galatians V.1. 'Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free'. Communion followed and was partaken of by 40 men. Padre Plane also took part. It was strange indeed to be speaking amid the sounds of firing, punctuating one's words, sometimes a bomb would whiz close by, with a loud burst. On one such occasion the whole squatting congregation leaned sideways hearing the approaching missile which buried itself in the other bank of the gully. No one was injured during the service. On the following Sunday we had another service followed by Communion. Later we had services, morning and night.

Chaplain Plane was not feeling well, and was returned to Alexandria. We raised some money for him to buy some foodstuffs for the troops. I gave a personal order. Later on, when the case of goods arrived addressed to me, it disappeared after it reached the Beach, and a futile inquiry was held to trace it. During the fortnight I visited Hospital ships 'Sicilian' and 'Gascon', finding the men of our Brigade who were casualties aboard them. I frequently met General Birdwood and had conversations with him. The greatest boons we had were the letters from home, also newspapers, and the evening swims in Anzac Cove. The cool, clean water seemed to wash away the grime of war in body and soul. When shells came over, we used to dive, often to the frothy circle where the last one plunged from the air. I moved up and down to the Beach and visited other posts around the Anzac area, including the lines of my old friends of the 9th Battalion on the right flank. Moving about was more dangerous than staying put. I was missed by inches scores of times. And so the daily routine of battle went on, alleviated by two things, the sense of God's presence, and the bright humour of our men. I lived so close to the front line trenches that I used to go round them, and stand to arms when the call came on our advanced Post, as it frequently did in the dead of night when attack and counter-attack began. Casualties occurred daily from sniping and shell-fire, also bombs, in addition to those caused by actual front-line battle. Chaplains visited the wounded at the C.C.S. and Aid Posts, and had a roster for burial duty at night. Padre Luxford was recalled to Egypt for hospital duties. General Godley officially recognised me as Senior Chaplain to the N.Z. & A. Division, and I was frequently in touch with his Deputy Adjutant-General about administrative matters (Captain Thoms held this post, and was most helpful).

The summer was growing hotter as July came in after a cooling storm had passed, which, by the way, washed over the Beach and smashed landing stages. Water was scarce, and rations did not always agree with one's digestion. Already men were going away suffering from dysentery and similar complaints. Despite careful sanitary precautions, the rough settlement of thousands of men on a small area, inhabited by myriads of flies not to mention centipedes and vermin, caused great hygienic perils. One was not allowed to throw water on the ground because of its attraction for flies. The little water we got for personal use had to be buried after it had served various purposes, and as I told Major Glasgow one day, it deserved a good burial. I used to clean my teeth, shave, wash face and hands, sponge my body, sometimes wash socks, etc., with the contents of an empty condensed milk tin, after the water for tea had been carefully set aside for boiling the billy.

McPhee, Senior Chaplain of the 1st Australian Division, holding the same classification as myself frequently conferred with me about services and hymn-sheets for general use. We devised a three-folding sheet with about a score of hymns printed on it, which should be carried in the soldier's pay-book, and was thus always available for worship when it was held. The permission to sing at Services had long before this been granted. These hymn-sheets were printed in Egypt and proved very useful. It was common for us to have three to four hundred present at the services in Monash Gully, with others sitting on the hillsides and joining in the singing. Some officers and men joined the Communion Services on profession of faith for the first time. It was a joy and a privilege to carry on the Redeemer's work amid such grim conditions. General Godley agreed with our suggestions on most points. He invited me to tea with him, and gave me a piece of cake sent by Lady Godley! I remained with my Brigade as before, attached to the 1st Regiment A.L.H. on Pope's Post. I had some books on Turkey and Greece, and gave a talk on Constantinople to about 400 men in Monash Gully, disturbed only by a mortar bomb which suggested a reprisal from that quarter, but which injured nobody.

The inquiry into the missing case of foodstuffs which I had ordered caused an official attendance at 4th Battalion (A.I.F.) Headquarters, 'Brown's Dip' - as it was named. It proved a thrilling experience, for the Turks shelled the right flank with enfilading fire, and we ran the gauntlet of shrapnel pellets and falling shell-cases all the way up, and were greeted at Headquarters with a burst right on top of the sandbagged roof, which filled the space with dust and the smell of powder. On the way back Paton and I had to cross an opening where the trench had been left exposed and we had to run across about 30 yards of the open. Bullets missed us but caught a man moving in the opposite direction after we had crossed on the way to Steel's and Courtenay's. 'Jack Johnsons', as the heavies were called, were used with damaging effect on the right flank that day. The inquiry traced the missing box to the Q.M. Store, but after that - silence and ignorance (?) ensued on the part of the Q.M. storemen.

There were few Chaplains in the central part of Anzac at this time, Plane and Luxford having gone away; Green the Anglican; King, N.Z. (Presbyterian), and Father McMenamin (RC) being the group on Burial roster list, with myself; James Green (Methodist) had gone to Egypt earlier in the show. Father McGrath had also left, with outspoken comments on the gory place! Grant was with the Auckland Mounted Infantry, and Father Power was with the 4th Infantry Brigade (A.I.F.) as was Gillison; but their units were on the left of our section (No.3) at this time (July). Co-operation was good in our section.

Constant attention was paid to the wounded and sick in the Casualty Clearing Station and Beach Hospital. I used to go down practically each day. After an engagement the wounded lay on their stretchers in front of the tents where the surgeons and orderlies worked, and one could always hand out cigarettes, etc., as well as giving a timely word of cheer and spiritual comfort. The little steam launch 'Keraunes' would take off the walking cases and tow the barges of stretcher cases out to the Hospital ships in the offing, sometimes followed by vicious enemy shells, which usually missed the targets. The first-aid packages we carried were often brought out in or near the trenches or in the lines of communication by the padre. The stretcher-bearers did a good job. Soon after my arrival on 12th May as I was standing by a traverse in the Valley a soldier came along with a donkey, having the red cross on his head. The sniping was very hot, and I said, 'You had better hurry, the bullets are flying about.' We were not allowed to wear rank badges in those days, and a private standing alongside said to me, 'He knows more about it than you do; he's recommended for the VC.' I answered, 'Well, he's just as good a target as anyone else.' That medical stretcher-bearer with the donkey was the well-known Simpson, who saved scores of lives by his care of the wounded from the day of the Landing. Unfortunately, he was killed a day or two after the incident to which I have just referred.

After the torpedoing of the 'Triumph' the cruisers were mostly withdrawn to Imbros, but the destroyers remained in our vicinity, and two of them occupied the positions opposite our two flanks. At night their search-lights were turned on full-blaze to illuminate the no-man's land on either side - a valuable protection against surprise attacks. The destroyers also hovered about like sheep-dogs and proved themselves the soldiers' friends. Naval shelling on the Turkish lines occurred at times when the cruisers made visits, and the destroyers Ribble and Hythe used their guns with good effect. The terrain did not give much scope for artillery; but an Indian mountain battery functioned from early days, and a few other gun-pits were used for our own weapons.

On Sunday, 18th July, at the request of Colonel Monash and Brigade-Major Glynn, I conducted a general Church Service in Rest Gully on the left flank. General Godley and his staff were present. Padre Gillison took part with me in the devotions. My address was from Gal.VI,9 - 'Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.' The General spoke to the thousands of the N.Z. & A. Division gathered on the ridges all round as well as on the floor of the gully, and it was an outstanding event in the campaign, held in a natural amphitheatre, the only safe spot in our restricted Anzac area. In the evening I took my usual service in Pope's Reserve Gully, and then wrote several letters in the long summer twilight.

It was customary to allow a chaplain to go from Anzac to Lemnos for a week to visit the hospital units there, and Colonel Leslie suggested that my turn had arrived, and I was glad to accept the suggestion. Accordingly I left with Paton on 26th July and travelled with Major-General J.G. Legge and staff, including Major Blamey and Colonel Sutton, who were all to form the nucleus of a newly formed 2nd Australian Division. General Legge was known to me as he had been one of my teachers at the Sydney High School, and I had met him and yarned with him while he was sojourning at Anzac prior to this departure. On arrival in the fine Mudros harbour, crowded with shipping, including many warships, I was unable to find accommodation in any of the A.I.F. Hospital tents, but with Paton, was taken on board the HQ ship 'Aragon', through the good offices of a British Padre, Hardy, a Methodist, and shared a cabin with Major Sampson, an Intelligence officer from Bulgaria who was enroute to Castro on the other side of the island, where a destroyer was to pick him up and convey him to British authorities.

My joy in finding myself under such a peaceful set of conditions was indescribable. I went ashore, visiting the Greek Church and looking round on the town and countryside. Jingling and decorated horses and pretty little carts came along the roads. I saw a Ford car bumping over a rough track. Next morning I had the pleasure of accompanying my strange room-mate, Major Sampson on a trip across the island, and he asked that my batman should go with us to watch his precious trunks in the back of the car. We stopped for lunch at Thermae enjoying the sunshine and the shade of an apple tree, where the Greek in charge had set a table for us. We reached Castro at 3 o'clock passing along vine-covered walls which barely allowed space for the car to pass. The Major reported himself to the British officer stationed there. Paton and I walked to the little harbour and thence along the beach, from which we saw the medieval fortress built by the Genoese. On our return journey, without the Major (who reached the destroyer) Paton and I had a hot bath at Thermae and reached Mudros and the Aragon after a wonderful day.

On succeeding days I visited the hospitals and took the names of our men who were patients, with a note of their state of health. A very pleasant surprise was the meeting with Major Lockhart Gibson, an elder of St Andrew's Church, and Dr. Stewart, a member of the same congregation in Brisbane. They had just arrived with the new No.3 Hospital party on board the 'Simla', where I had dinner with them afterwards. On Sunday I conducted service at the Australian Hospital. I visited the Greek Church also, and observed with interest their form of worship with candles and incense, also the ikons on the walls. By arrangement by General

Altham, G.O.C. of HQ I held service on the deck of the 'Aragon' in the afternoons and spoke at an evening service ashore in the Y.M.C.A. During the succeeding days at Mudros I met many old friends from my Brigade and elsewhere and I made some purchases for giving to the men at Anzac.

Ships were arriving crowded with troops, and it was evident that a big move was about to be made by General Ian Hamilton. I had already seen the A.G. several times about securing a passage to Anzac, and was becoming impatient, as a week had passed, and I wanted to be back for the battle that was imminent. On Wednesday I left with officers of the new Army, the 13th Division, on the 'Abbassieh'. My worn uniform revealed that I had been at Anzac and the staff questioned me about the disposition of the forces. I had my official maps and showed them the various posts and lines of our area, also the opposing enemy positions so far as we could define them. They seemed to be quite uninstructed about these essential facts! We arrived at the landing stage at 11 p.m. Paton and I left our boxes of foodstuffs with our faithful friend, (although always pessimistic) Captain Littler in his dugout above the beach. We then walked up the noisy, familiar Shrapnel Valley, reaching our dugout and getting to rest there about 3.30 a.m. on Thursday, 5th August. We really felt at home again amid the din of ceaseless firing! I had a sleep till 8.30, and reported to Major William Glasgow who had been appointed the C.O. of Pope's Post. He said, 'You are just back in time for the big show!' It was a good welcome. The Welsh Fusiliers were camped alongside of us. Luxford had sent me films for my camera, which soon proved useful. I gave out precious envelopes and paper to the men in the fire trenches, and spoke to each one as I moved along. I sent returns of the burials to the Principal Chaplain for the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, with details of positions of graves in the cemeteries.

We all had to sew white arm-bands on our sleeves and a cotton patch on the backs of our tunics. This was ordered as a guide to the warships in giving artillery support in the forthcoming battle for the heights.

CHAPTER 11

The Battle of Sari Bair

The sequel to all the preparations I had observed at Mudros and on my return to Anzac were soon apparent. On Friday 6th August about 4 o'clock in the clear afternoon light we saw from Pope's Post warships and Monitors emerge from the vicinity of Imbros and approach the coast. At 4.30 a fierce bombardment on the Turkish lines began from sea and land. We could also see bursts of shells down south on Achi Baba, but our immediate concern was with the deluge of explosives on the plateau near at hand over German Officers' trench opposite Courtenay's and Steele's. At 5.30 we saw the thrilling fight of Australians advancing through the dust and smoke towards Lone Pine trenches. They rose and fell as they came on, the drill of advancing attack in waves, and they reached the parapets of the enemy positions. There they clung like bees, just outside the hostile ridges. With my binoculars I could watch the battle from our high position on Pope's. We wondered at the delay; but the reason for it was afterwards revealed. The enemy trenches were heavily boarded over, and the trajectory from the ships was too flat to break up the timber, and the attacking force of the 1st Australian Division could not readily find entrance. But ere long, the men began dropping in through holes in the covering, and we could see the flash of bayonets like knitting needles as they worked their way along the Lone Pine trenches. Meanwhile enemy shells and rifle fire were being directed against Quinn's, Courtenay's and even Pope's, no doubt to prevent further attacks from the centre. Supports were still advancing from the Australian lines. Men fell, wounded helped their fellows as they could, the Lone Pine victory was gained by nightfall, but at a heavy cost. A fierce counter-attack was staged, but it did not succeed.

At 4 a.m. on the following day, we were called to arms on Pope's, as our men and the 2nd Regiment on Quinn's were to go forward, also the men on Russell's Top and Walker's Ridge. We could see them in the latter altitude meeting with heavy fire on no-man's land. The famous 'Chess Board' above the centre of our salient was being heavily attacked, but it was no easy game owing to its strength of position. The counter fire was tremendous as our 1st Regiment went over the top, led by Major Glasgow (Post C.9) and Major Moffatt Reid, acting C.O.

I had risen early and with Paton had prepared large tins of coffee from my store brought from Lemnos, and we carried the hot coffee right up into the fire-trenches. I also had my first-aid kit, and soon was busily occupied in bringing out wounded men on stretchers, with assistance from Paton and medical aids. Before long, I had a row of 13 patients lying in the Reserve trenches, and all had received the necessary attention with bandaging, etc. One man was in a very serious condition. I managed to fix temporarily a fractured arm with a bayonet for a splint. Our medical officer had established himself in a slight depression down on the right, and was not so easily accessible from the firing-line.

Meanwhile, how was the attack faring? Our men captured three lines of trenches with much depleted numbers. The Turks rolled down 'cricket-ball bombs' through underground channels into the captured trenches and these with others from the air were too efficient for permanent occupation by the attacking (and dwindling) force. Retreat was ordered and the surviving remnant came back to our lines. Major Glasgow and Lieutenant Harris were the only unwounded officers who returned. Paton and I had hot coffee waiting for the brave men as they came back into the trenches. I heard Sir William Glasgow (as he afterwards became) say that that drink was the finest he ever had in his life. He made that remark at a meeting in Brisbane many years afterwards. The Light Horsemen on Quinn's and Russell's Top had been similarly ordered out on this murderous adventure, for it was part of the strategy of the battle. The Turks were kept engaged in the centre, while the real attack was to come from a major quarter on our left, as became evident later on.

I think I may claim some credit for helping to save Glasgow's life! For on the night before this battle I went up to his dugout at the top of Pope's and there met Moffatt Reid and Nettleton with Glasgow. We knew that there was to be a desperate raid on the following morning, and as we chatted about it, I said to Major Glasgow 'well Major, there's one thing I would like to say: don't be shot for a bit of tailoring.' He said, 'What do you mean, Padre?' I replied, 'The Turks are shooting officers first of all. Anyone can see that you are an officer, by your riding-breeches and cap. Why not dress like the men? They all know you. They wear shorts, why not you?' He said, 'I haven't got any shorts.' I replied, 'Well, haven't you got a pair of slacks?' 'Yes.' 'Well, get them cut down, and preferably with a ragged edge, and wear a 'digger' old hat, and not a cap.' The Major grinned, went to the entrance and called out, for his batman: 'Barnes, are you there? Get a pair of slacks out and cut them down for shorts, the padre says so.' And he was able to lead his men in that rigout and come through scatheless, almost the only unwounded officer in the fray. As Sir William Glasgow he has honourably lived to serve his country in important posts after being in the thick of many battles.

After the return of the survivors, I went down into Monash Gully with Paton and served out coffee to the crowd of wounded lying in front of the Aid Post. The benefit of my visit to Lemnos was apparent in my having plenty of coffee packets which would have been quite unobtainable on the Peninsula, in our restricted area at any rate. I then went to the Beach, where the casualty cases

lay on stretchers. Many great friends were there, and as I spoke to them words of comfort and handed out cocoa and cigarettes, I felt the horror of war as perhaps I had not realised it previously, even when burying scores of dead, as at the end of May.

Before I reached the Beach, however, a great sight greeted my eyes. The Royal Navy was represented by a fleet of Ships in Suvla Bay! On the shore and the dry salt lake were thousands of men who had landed from the transports. I was able to tell some of the wounded of the significance of this attack from our left flank. Would that the promise of that landing had been fulfilled by speedy advances instead of dilatory muddling!

Sunday, August 8th reminded me that it was my dear wife's birthday. There could be no Church Service that day, for the battle was raging along the ridges. A night advance had been made by the New Zealanders, the 4th Infantry Brigade and British troops of the New Army, with whose officers I had travelled on the 'Abbassieh' from Mudros. I went up Walker's Ridge and saw Chaplain Makeham at work among the wounded. I could see that Hill 971 was being shelled and there were British lines on Chunuk Bair, but slightly held. From a machine-gun post I had an extensive view of the smoky area to the north, below the Camel's Hump, over the outposts, and to Suvla Bay. The line of communication for the wounded could be seen in front of No.2 Outpost where pinnaces were attending to transport them to Hospital ships. There were Indian troops at a mountain battery on the height of Walker's Ridge. The sandbags were smashed and I peeped through at the enemy lines, foolishly exposing myself, to take a snapshot. Fortunately, the shelling by our ships evidently kept the Turks' heads down. Col Murray, of the Indian unit gave me some of the Indian fare (chippattees?) for a snack. On the following night there were many burials to occupy all the chaplains.

The attack on Hill 971 and other points on the left continued for three more days and much ground was gained on the northern side of the old Anzac area. Unfortunately, however, the capture of Chunuk Bair and Hill 971 did not succeed. Some New Zealanders saw the waters of the Dardanelles strait from the heights, but after their withdrawal for reinforcements, the troops of the New Army were not able to overcome the desperate attacks of the enemy. I saw the rushes of the Turks led by an officer in white clothes (a German or an Imam?) on the crest, and all the brave trench digging could not consolidate our advanced lines so far away from the bases near the sea. The crucial weakness came from the dilatoriness of General Stopford at Suvla, for a swift mass advance from that new quarter would have made all the difference, as the reports of General Ian Hamilton show, between success or failure of the whole operation. A note from General Birdwood spoke of great gain although all that was aimed at, was not achieved, and we had suffered heavy casualties. Our Regiment had lost 58 killed and missing, and 98 wounded. Many of my dearest friends were with us no more. Major Luxford, chaplain of the N.Z.E.F. was severely wounded in the leg, and was unable to return to the Peninsula. I saw Thoms and arranged for two Anglican padres to come to N.Z. units, also one Presbyterian, Methodist and RC respectively for the Australian part of the Division. I interviewed Colonel Chauvel and arranged for money to be lent by himself, Lieutenant Colonel Stoddart, Major Glasgow, Padre G. Green and myself for purchase of varieties of foodstuffs for the troops, Green to make purchases in Egypt to which he was going for three weeks leave.

Padre King brought a visitor, Rev J.M.R. Dale, formerly a neighbour of mine in Brisbane, (at Toowong) to my dugout. It was a pleasant surprise, and we saw a good deal of each other. He was on the Peninsula as Chaplain to the Irish Rifles, just landed on the left. Chauvel attended the evening service on Sunday and it was well patronised by the diggers around Monash Gully. The singing was very hearty. The battle front was unusually quiet.

I had been thinking about my absence on leave from St Andrew's Church, Brisbane, and I wrote a letter of resignation from the charge, as I felt that it was not fair to the Congregation that the members should be without a regular minister for such a lengthy periods, as that which seemed to be involved in the campaign. How different it was from the facile prophecy of one of my fundamentalist elders in Brisbane, who had told me before I left that I would not see any fighting, as the War would be over in six weeks! When I asked him, 'How do you make that out?' He had given me the answer I half expected, namely that he had discovered it from the Book of Daniel! However, my letter of resignation was not treated seriously by St Andrew's Session, as I found out when I returned in 1916.

Dale and I decided to walk over from N.Z. Outpost to Suvla Bay. The trip proved to be very risky, as, although we held much territory at Suvla there were huge gaps of no-man's land in between, and as we walked along the grassy flat near the shore, we received much attention from machine-guns and even some shells from the enemy heights. We took cover by the beach for a while and then continued our journey to the Cape south of Suvla Bay, and saw something of the conditions there. Troops were landing from the transports, and Turkish shells were dropping, so we went down to the beach, in which some British Tommies were bathing. We spent the night in a sandy depression about the size of a shallow bath-tub sharing the rations with some of the Tommies. On the next day Dale re-joined his unit, the 30th Field Ambulance, and I was most hospitably welcomed by the doctor officers under the Red Cross Flag. We heard the quiet tramp of a column moving up towards W Hills and Chocolate Hills, where heavy fighting took place on the following days. I heard that a destroyer was about to leave for Anzac Cove, and I went aboard and was safely landed by pinnace. On the destroyer were some Ghurkas with whom I chummed up. I had been told that a Ghurka would not draw his khurkri (a heavy bladed curved weapon) unless he sheathed it in the blood of a foe, but these Ghurkas

three in number, gladly drew theirs for me to take a snapshot after I had given them some cigarettes. So much for tradition! I lunched with Captain Littler, our good Beach friend, and then picked up some official letters at HQ.

Sunday, 22nd August was observed with our services in the Gully, with Communion following. Then I received a great shock. Padre Dale came to tell me that Andrew Gillison was dead, shot in front of the lines while succouring a wounded man. In company with Corporal Pittendrigh (a Methodist minister) who was seriously wounded, Gillison had gone out after an attack near Hill 60 to rescue this member of the 4th Brigade, who was about 50 yards in front of the sap, and was suffering from his wounds and the bites of ants. The Turks fired on them, and they were later brought in; Gillison had been killed instantly. That night I went to the beach in front of No.2 Outpost for the Burial. A Sergeant had somehow procured a flag for the devoted padre's body, and after an impressive service we laid his body in a grave by the Aegean Sea. The moon shone on the face of this brave chaplain. I saw a ring on his finger, which I removed and posted it with a letter to his widow, who received it safely in Melbourne and wrote gratefully in reply to my condolences.

Next day I met General Godley, and later General Birdwood, friendly at all times. An Australian mail was in and I had the joy of reading letters from all at home in Brisbane, and one from my Mother in Sydney. Word came of the death of Lieutenant Colonel Rowell from peritonitis some days ago. He was one of the best Light Horse officers, being in command of the 3rd Regiment Heavy fighting was going on around Hill 60 well on the left, and on the Sunday following on Gillison's death came news of the death of William Grant, another Presbyterian Chaplain, of heroic mould, attached to the Auckland Mounted Infantry. He too was shot while succouring a wounded man in front of his lines up near 'The Apex'. The loss of Chaplains is seriously affecting our services on the left. Makeham (C. of E.) is to go to Egypt on special leave with some duties attached. I saw Thoms and suggested that Dale might be transferred to the A.I.F. but this proved to be impossible, for he was to accompany his Irish Brigade to Salonika. In the meantime Dale was not well, and he shared my dugout for some days. King has applied for return to New Zealand, under a recent ruling that Chaplains may return to their churches after one year's absence.

When the fateful month of August, with its torrid heat, was over the 1st A.L.H. Regiment was moved from Pope's Post, which we had occupied since we landed (with a brief intermission in Reserve Sap, off Shrapnel Valley) to No.1 Outpost. A carved Maori figure on the sap served to inform us that the Maoris had occupied this outpost earlier in the show. Here I took a dugout (?) in the front line, with a long stretch of no-man's land in front of us and the bald hill known as Camel's Hump on the north and a fine view of Anzac from Plugge's Plateau along the shore to the west and south. A secret sap ran from near Walker's landing-stage to No.2 Outpost. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers were camped alongside of us.

I had been turning over in my mind a suggestion for temporary protection from bombing after an attack on enemy trenches. As one heard at night the sound of fierce fighting on the left, followed by the explosion of bombs after the occupation of hostile trenches, I thought of the value of wire-netting in providing an early shelter from these missiles. If the advancing troops could carry wire-netting with them they would be able to fix up quietly a short-term shelter while they consolidated their gains. The troops would need to carry iron stakes to hold the wire-netting. I mentioned the idea to General Godley, and he thought it was a good one, and advised me to write to Ordinance HQ, in Egypt, which I did, but had no acknowledgment. Later on, I read of such provision being used in France, with spiral or corkscrew stakes for holding the wire. Thoms and Ryrie were at Godley's dugout when I read my brief paper and they approved of the general idea. Although I did not receive a reply from Egypt HQ, I had a cordial letter from Colonel Pridham of the Royal Engineers in regard to my suggestions.

My administrative duties were increased by the loss of many chaplains in the N.Z. & A. Division and also some other units attached to us geographically on the left of the old Anzac area, such as the Royal Welsh Fusiliers who were glad of my attentions. I met Dale by appointment and we went some distance to 4th Infantry Brigade HQ where I saw Monash and McGlynn. They agreed that Dale should act temporarily as padre to their men until Wray or McBain should arrive. Wray had been on well-earned leave to Egypt. A new Burial Ground was to be prepared on the left of No.2 Outpost, and Captain Farr arranged to meet me and choose the site. I had cables from my dear wife and mother with birthday greetings. They had been delayed in transit from Australia.

George (Sol) Green returned from Egypt, and I urged him to join up in a combined effort to hold four services each Sunday. A visiting Bishop had been defining the duties of Anglican chaplains narrowly while Green was in Egypt, limiting their concern to sacramental services for Anglicans only, and Green was prepared to follow this course, which, as I pointed out to him, would exclude numbers of the troops from receiving spiritual help, and many of them were going to their death. As I pointed out that the two of us could cover eight different services in various parts of the area each Sunday, and Green argued for the compliance with the Bishop's desires, a recumbent figure with a newspaper over his face suddenly flung aside the paper and sat up and said 'Don't be a ---- fool, Green, do as Padre Merrington suggests!' He was Lieutenant Colonel Bourne, the O.C. of the 2nd Regiment, to which Green was attached and he was a prominent Anglican from Brisbane! Green thereupon agreed to take full part in the division of duties suggested by myself, and we were able to hold eight services each Sunday, with brief Communion to follow. The plan was carefully drawn up so as to make the round alternately by the two padres. Our itinerary meant hard walking up hill

and, down dale, from Mule Gully to Sazli Beit Dere and up to The Apex, and the usual daily risk of a sniper's bullet on the way. At that particular time we were the only two chaplains in the area except that Father Power was with the 4th Brigade, and Dale (temporarily lent by the Irish Brigade, which, however, was soon ordered to Salonika). I had word that chaplains (including Harry Blamires) have been granted permission to leave Egypt for Gallipoli. This is good news, on Sunday, 12th September at 9.30 I held service at Godley's HQ. He was present, also Braithwaite, Pridham and Bentinck, also several orderlies. All knelt together on the ground for Communion, in a truly Christian spirit of brotherliness. Next, at 11.30 I took a service with the Irish Rifles, as Dale was again ill. At 3.30 I held my regimental service, and at 6.30 I went to the C.C.S. (No.13) for similar duty. It was part of my regular duty to send particulars of all burials to the Principal Chaplain, M.E.F.

One night when it was my duty to conduct the burials at the new cemetery there was a delay in the arrival of the burial party. I approached some men who were widening a sap nearby, and asked them if they had seen the burial party. They were Queenslanders just arrived with the 25th Battalion, so I got into conversation with them, Blythe and Gilmore were their names and I told them who I was. Blythe then said, 'I have been in your house with Corporal Snow and others!' He told me of my wife's hospitality to the soldiers, and how our little son Harvard had run up to him! I was excited and deeply moved by this unexpected contact with my loved ones, as we stood by an open grave near the Aegean Sea in the late dusk of a grey autumn eve.

The heavy drain on man-power was revealed by a parade of the men of the 1st A.L.H. Regiment, who had never been away from the Peninsula since we landed on the 12th May, just over four months before. There were only 38 such men, true heroes all! One of them was shot by a sniper on the following night. Digging parties were out after dark on the wide area under Turkish Sniper Nest, which stood on an eminence between the lines on the upper slopes. The same tale of losses was revealed when Captain Thoms and I met to draw up a Nominal Roll of the Chaplains. Death, wounds and sickness had carried away most of them. We wrote K.A. (killed in action), D.W. (died of wounds), W. (wounded), Inv. (Invalided to Egypt), Tr. (transferred for hospital duty - a heavy task in view of the casualties - in Egypt or Malta). Opposite one name of a man unknown to me personally, Thoms wrote E. I asked him 'what does that mean?' He replied 'Evaporated!' This man was of the gay type, a frequenter of the Abbaye of Roses and other dance halls in Cairo, and of so little use that he had been sent home. Needless to state, he had never been to Anzac. And so he was on record as Evaporated!!

The evidence that my Church in Brisbane did not intend to accept my resignation gave me much to think about. I had been away from the leading city Charge north of Sydney for a year, and I knew that although the congregation had preachers to supply the pulpit, the pastoral leadership was sorely needed. Accordingly, in view of the provision that had been made for return to ministerial work at home after one year's service abroad, I was led to allow my name to go forward for consideration in regard to returning at a convenient date. I also applied for leave to visit England prior to returning to Australia. This would enable me to visit hospitals where seriously wounded and sick men were undergoing treatment, and also to explain my proposal for Temporary Protection against Bombs, which I had forwarded to the G.O.C. through Colonel Pridham, R.E. As it proved during the ensuing month, neither of these applications proved decisive, for my health had suffered from the rigours of the campaign, and I was due to catch any of the many ailments which dogged the Anzac. In addition to dysentery and various disorders due to the monotonous rations flies, vermin, etc, malaria was making inroads, and it fell to my lot to become infected before October was out.

The battle went on all the time, shelling on No. 16 Hospital at No.2 Outpost caused many casualties, machine-gun fire whizzed over our heads and sporadic raids and counter-raids went on. Each Sunday I had four services in different parts of our large area on the left, up to the slopes of Chunuk Bair. My only recreations were reading (by masked candle-light) the papers, letters and such few books as found their way around the lines. More chaplains arrived to relieve the few we had and cover the units. A Y.M.C.A. hut was set up below Walker's Ridge on the northward slope. The weather was turning colder and storms were more frequent with the approach of winter. I had to hang on to the waterproof sheet over my dugout nearly all one night, when rain and gales swept the Peninsula. The cold was intense. The parcels sent by Flora and Mother were very acceptable. They sometimes contained socks and warm scarves as well as food-stuffs. I kept my letters going to both homes all through the war period to date.

I had innumerable narrow escapes from bullets, bombs and shells. Walking from place to place as I did was more dangerous than staying in trench or dugout. In the battle of Sari Bair, when I was looking out from a signalling post, a sniper's bullet aimed at my head rang against a small piece of steel about five inches square, which had been placed firmly in position there to protect a head from the snipers in Snipers Nest. Another who spotted me from another quarter sent one through a small branch just an inch above my cap. A bomb burst at the entrance to the Secret Sap in Shrapnel Valley as I returned from Burial duty about 1 a.m. just as I was hesitating whether to take that course or the old familiar track, which, fortunately I preferred.

I read some verses by Max Plowman, poet and soldier on the dear prospect of a rest after the war and memorised the following lines which looked forward a long time, and I echoed his deep hope:--

'Till the wounds in my mind shall be slowly healed
And the graves in my heart shall be over-grown.'

Chaplains Dexter, Robertson and Bladen came to my dugout, and Paton did the honours of tea for the party with a curry of chicken (marvellously proffered by the medical comforts unit) and boiled rice. I returned the calls in the 1st Australian Division lines at Brown's Dip, and also called on Macrae Stewart who had recently arrived as padre to the 21st Battalion. In fact I walked constantly all around the extended area from the extreme right to the heights of the Apex and out to the farthest left flank. My four Services on Sunday also included long tramps. Thoms and I met frequently on Chaplaincy replacements and other administrative matters.

So October came on, and bombardments, sniping and machine-gun fire brought many casualties. Sickness also took its toll. I was in constant touch with men of all ranks and units. Next to my dugout in the trenches and separated by a hanging blanket only were three men among whom was 'Bluey' who had the greatest vocabulary for bad language in our unit and could keep up a stream of it without repeating himself! He never came up from the beach without some 'souvenir' he had picked up on his way! I admit that, although I hate bad language, I sometimes found myself shaking with laughter at the sallies in the next apartment, often when I was lying in my sleeping-valise awaiting the coming of sleep.

I was now feeling the long strain of my life and work at Anzac, and was troubled by signs of rheumatism in my right leg. The next phase was malarial fever and cold shivering fits. But I was still carrying out my duties, and had many large attendances at Sunday services, including communions at different stations. A cablegram came to HQ notifying the approval of my return to Australia, also that I was given permission to visit England. Word came that I was to leave Anzac with Paton, who was also sick, at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, 27th October. And so after five and a half months since landing we walked to the Landing-stage in the early morning darkness. The familiar sound of bullets could be heard, and I think for almost the only time I was over there I felt some real fear. What if one of those bullets found its mark now on the eve of departure! It would be just too bad. But we reached the picket-boat and the deck of the 'El Kahira' and watched the receding heights of Anzac receding into the distance as the daylight spread over the eastern hills. Thankfully I acknowledged God's help and guidance throughout those strenuous and perilous months as I lay feverishly weak on the deck.

As the little ship approached the harbour of Mudros in roughish weather, the steering-gear broke and the steamer swung round just clear of a grey ship in the narrow entrance. Three hours delay ensued before we reached the 'Aragon'. I was despatched to the Officers' Rest Camp to have treatment for malaria which always got worse at night. On Monday, 1st November I was able to travel by a small ship the 'Prah' which left Mudros at 2 p.m.. Great precautions were taken against submarines and we called along the southern shore of Crete (St Paul's route); and little did we imagine that nearly thirty years later that island was to find the Australians and New Zealanders fighting a forlorn struggle and retreat from battle against the Germans.

CHAPTER 12

Return to Brisbane

The ship 'Prah' entered Alexandria Harbour on Saturday, 6th November, just six months after we had prepared to leave Heliopolis camp for the Dardanelles. I drove to the Windsor Hotel and met the Deputy Chaplain General for the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, I received a cable from Flora to the effect that my sister-in-law, Molly Livingston was embarking for service on the Orsova, and welcoming the prospect of my return to Brisbane. On Sunday I went to Dr Macky's Presbyterian Church and went to the manse for tea. Communion Service was held at night, and I took some part in the devotional portion. Afterwards I met young James Aitken of Hawick who was in uniform (Royal Scots). I was ordered to Hospital (No.17, Victoria College) just out of Alexandria on the following day, and there I met Rev Joseph Lundie, C.F., from Toowoomba, Queensland!

From there I went to Cairo where I met Chaplain-Captain Cope, who was anxious to talk with me about the gear he should take to Gallipoli. I advised him to take only the barest necessities, as he would have to carry everything up from the beach to his unit. I also met McPhee who was to leave for Victoria on the morrow. I went to Heliopolis in a motor ambulance. It was common rumour that I had been killed at Anzac. I visited the Bazaar in which I had made some purchases (Khan- Al Kahili) and was greeted as a long-lost friend. On Sunday I took a service in the old Aerodrome Y.M.C.A. Hut in which I had ministered so often before. I found many changes in the camp. I met our dear old friend Dr Gillan, the Church of Scotland Chaplain in Cairo, Colonels Sellheim and Ryan (Medical O.C.) who recommended me to stay in Hospital at No.1 Australian General Hospital with a view to transfer to Helouan Convalescent Home. I was still suffering from the effects of malaria and nervous exhaustion. I also developed a heavy cold and distressing cough. On 25th November I went to Helouan Officers' Convalescent Home where I stayed for a week.

On 30th November I received orders to go on H.M.T. Themistocles of the Aberdeen White Star Line, which was to leave Suez on 4th December, bound for Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney. I was appointed ship's Chaplain in orders. Archdeacon Richards and two other padres were on board, and many soldiers who had seen service of the Peninsula. We had a pleasant voyage under a delightful captain and arrived at Fremantle on Christmas Day. There we learnt for the first time of the Evacuation of Anzac and Suvla, with mixed feelings of sorrow and thankfulness. I had once asked Lieutenant Colonel Meredith while at Anzac the following question - 'Suppose we have to retreat from here, how do you think we would fare?' He replied, 'I expect we would lose about two-thirds of our force.' How different was the real experience! The marvellous and providential Evacuation from Anzac and Suvla cost hardly any losses of men. Yet it seemed grievous that after a the heroism and sacrifices of so many lives on the Peninsula we should have to give up the battle-siege. However, we did not then know what the struggle was to mean in the later years of the war, how Gallipoli prepared the way for the defeat of the Turks in Palestine, who acknowledged that they lost the flower of their army on the Peninsula, where their casualties were really much heavier even than all those suffered by the British Mediterranean Force. Nor could we know that 'Anzac' was to become the theme of lasting glory, and Anzac Day the national anniversary of the growing southern nations, the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand. Through sacrifice the lasting tradition of Honour and Glory was established after the mystical strain in the British character.

Our ship called at Adelaide and we arrived at Melbourne on the second day of the new year, 1916. I had hoped to meet Flora at Melbourne, but received a cablegram just when all my things were ready for permission to land, stating that she could not manage the trip, but sending loving greetings. It was wonderful to be steaming up Port Jackson on the 4th January and hearing the band play 'Home, sweet home', as the gangway was being lowered in Sydney Cove. Father and Arthur met me at the wharf, and we motored to 'Clew' in a taxi after dropping Father at the shop in Glebe Road. A little boy came out of the gate, and I said 'I suppose this is Harvard!' It was wonderful to be home again, with Flora shyly waiting for me in the house. Mother thoughtfully left us together for the afternoon. It was a complete home-coming when we all sat around the familiar table in the charming home by the Parramatta River with the bright summer light of peace shining on the water in front of the house.

On Sunday, Flora and I went to St Stephen's Church in the morning and Scots Church at night to give our united thanksgivings to God for His mercies. We spent a brief holiday at Wentworth Falls. On 2nd February we were welcomed at St Andrew's, Brisbane and a warm, glad welcome it was to the war-weary minister. The first visits I paid were sad ones, to Mr and Mrs Wareham, whose only son, Graham, had been killed in-the early fighting at Gallipoli, also to others to whom I gave sacred messages from sons who had made the great sacrifice. The Sunday services at first took heavy toll, after the rough and ready open-air gatherings in the dusty gullies amid shot and shell. Automatically I resumed my official status as Senior Chaplain of the 1st Military District, and I was soon busy with camp duties and Chaplains' Conferences. Also the Council of Emmanuel College claimed my time. The future of the College was still in doubt even after the failure of the negotiations during my absence, to dispose of the property to the Brisbane High School for Girls. The war had taken away nearly every student! From the Front I had written begging the Council not to close the College, and it was a case of marking time at the least. Another big interest

centred around the proposal to hold Anzac Day as a sacred memorial for our Fallen Servicemen. I was on the Anzac Day Committee, of which Canon Garland was secretary. I was also often on Recruiting platforms.

On Wednesday, 23rd February the Returned Soldiers' Association was formed, one of the very first to be started in Australia. I was elected to the first Committee. Headquarters now began to issue notices of fatal casualties to me in order that I should break the news to the next-of-kin in Brisbane and suburbs. Letters would come in the morning containing the names and particulars for me to follow up with the heart-breaking duty of informing the relatives of the sad tidings from the Front. And my full parish work went on. Fifteen new members were received for the March Communion. The Rev Richard Glaister was inducted as professor of Theology and Principal of Emmanuel College in succession to Dr Meiklejohn.

The strain was so great that we left our home at Hill End for a rest at Coolangatta. The sea-side change was, however, only partially beneficial. I needed two months of quietness and change in the hills to restore my mental as well as my physical condition to full efficiency. But I did not have the opportunity to get away from so many claims upon my time and attention. And, of course, the war and military training, recruiting and hospital visiting were very live issues, in which by my recent service and my rank as Senior Chaplain I was deeply involved. The first Anzac Day was observed with solemn parades and services in St Andrew's and other-churches while a public meeting was set down for the evening in the Exhibition Hall at which I was one of the speakers. I took my turn at Camp services on Sunday mornings at Chermiside, Enoggera and other centres.

At the General Assembly I was elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, which I regarded as an honour bestowed largely as a tribute to the men who had served on Gallipoli and also a recognition of the service of Saint Andrew's Church. The ladies rendered magnificent service to the soldiers in the vicinity of Brisbane by arranging for Sunday afternoon teas. The cheerful manner in which these voluntary helpers prepared and served the ham and salad and other food for hundreds of soldiers during the whole period of the war added greatly to the weekly feast, and it is hardly necessary to record the warm appreciation felt by officers and men of all ranks for this wonderful provision. My wife was naturally the leader of this and other church activities, but she could not have kept these teas going without the practical help of a grand band of workers. During World War II the same Custom was followed, also on Anzac Day each year after the morning Church services a luncheon is served in the hall.

As Moderator I made an official call on the Governor, Sir William MacGregor. Lady MacGregor was also present. That grand old envoy of the British empire in many colonial fields told me that he read the Bible every day in Greek and Latin, German and French. He showed me the large Polyglot Bible he used, with parallel columns in those languages. An act which he performed then I have never forgotten. With the book as bulky as a pulpit Bible in his right hand his outstretched arm raised it stiffly to me for my inspection! For a young man to do this would be an astonishing feat, but for a man of about sixty it was an amazing evidence of physical strength. He used the Greek of the Septuagint for the Old Testament, and we had a talk on this famous translation from the Hebrew into Hellenistic Greek. How rare it is to meet a layman with such scholarly interests in the Christian Faith and Biblical literature. My wife and I were invited to dinner at Government House on various occasions, not only during his term of offices but while the vice-regal successors held sway up to the time of our departure from Queensland. On one such Occasion we met Lord and Lady Chelmsford at dinner when they were re-visiting the State.

On May 22nd, 1916 the Rev Dr G.E. Rowe and I met in the Albert Street vestry to resume discussion of a matter which was to have considerable importance for the educational work of our respective denominations. The fact that the Methodists were thinking of taking over the Brisbane High School for Girls, and the Presbyterians were doing likewise in regard to the Clayfield Boys' College led to the suggestion that both churches might combine their efforts and jointly undertake the charge of both schools. The result was the establishment of a committee which was the precursor of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association which in due time had several schools under its control, with a wholesome leavening of spiritual influence on the educational life of boys and girls. Somerville House (Girl's High School), Brisbane Boys' College, Clayfield College (Boys), Moreton Bay Girls High School are listed in the Assembly's Report from the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association Council in the Minutes of 1946, for the Brisbane area. At Charters Towers there are Thornburgh (Boys) and Blackheath (Girls) colleges under the Association, meeting the great needs of the northern part of Queensland. Further inter-denominational co-operation by these churches was manifested in the combined 'Huts' set up in military encampments, which Dr Rowe and I heartily approved and started about the same time. We were both Senior Chaplains for our respective denominations. Later, hostels came into existence. For all these benefits the Churches owe a tremendous debt to the munificence of the late Mr W.R. Black, by whose gifts and legacies also the Church has obtained the means for many great extensions and developments.

I had slides made from my photographs taken on Gallipoli and gave two lectures on behalf of the Soldiers' Comforts Fund and the Red Cross. With a fine committee of ladies to assist with the sale of sweets, we made £120 approximately for each of these Funds. The Brisbane lectures were given to packed houses in Weston Olympia Picture Palace. I also gave the lecture at Wynnum, which showed a balance of £60, if I remember correctly. There was a hearty zeal for victory over Kaiserism on the part

of all loyal subjects, with a warmth of enthusiasm which wrought wonders. The second World War lacked something of this emotional quality. It was a distasteful matter of hard necessity to defeat Hitlerism and the Axis aggressors, and the grim, desperate task was undertaken in a business-like way with everything worth-while at stake, not only in Europe, but in the southern Dominions, especially after the Japanese advances almost to our shores. I also lectured on Egypt before the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, of which I was a member. Later I received the fellowships of the Society when Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams was Governor, and patron of the institution.

When the 2nd Battalion was about to embark for the Front I was asked to present the colours at a ceremony held at Enoggera Camp. Each Sunday morning early we chaplains filled a roster of duties at the various military encampments. I lectured at Toowoomba and Warwick in June, also Ipswich. Looking back from the year 1948 as I am writing these memoirs I marvel how I was able to do so much in addition to my Sunday services, mid-week class, and pastoral work at St Andrew's Church. Also I lectured twice a week to the Theological students in Emmanuel College.

An election for the Senate of the University of Queensland was held on the 1st July. Ten members were appointed by the Government, and ten were to be elected by the Council (mostly graduates). I was elected. My deep interest in university affairs from the days in Sydney, Edinburgh and Harvard made this a very congenial office. However, I left Brisbane on behalf of the Soldiers' Memorial Fund sponsored by our Church for the purpose indicated by the title, and especially for needed developments of Emmanuel College and the Commemoration of the names of all the Presbyterians who made the supreme sacrifice. I left by the express on 13th July and lectured at Allora, and then to the north Gympie, Maryborough Childers, Bundaberg (where I took Sunday services), Gladstone, Mount Morgan, Rockhampton (Sunday services) and Maryborough again on my homeward way. I gave a lecture in the Exhibition Hall on Anzac after my return from the tour.

On the 7th September we moved from Hill End to Mowbray Street, East Brisbane, which was to be our home for the remaining period in Queensland. The house was on the higher side of the street, about three doors from the intersection of the tram-line. Although the Brisbane River was only half a mile away, as the crow flies, we did not get as much of the cool north-east breeze as we would have liked. The heat of Brisbane was always a problem in the hottest summer months, and was felt very much indeed by Flora, the girls and Harvard, all busy at their schools, did not appear to be much distressed by the temperature, although Ancie often was not up to par, and Harvard's tendency to recurrence of broncho-pneumonia gave us much anxiety. I had bought a single-seater Ford car (second-hand) on my return from abroad, and later bought a new Ford four-seater, which assisted me in the performance of my many duties, here, there, and everywhere.

The early copy of my book, 'The Problem of Personality' came from Macmillan's in London in September. I am not sure whether I mentioned before that I corrected the last copy of the proofs in my dugout on Pope's Post a year earlier. The work was most accurately produced by the publishers. The reviews which appeared in the journals in England, America and even India were on the whole favourable although the pre-occupation with the war overshadowed philosophical reading and discussion. I have preserved most of the critiques in a large envelope, and will not reproduce any of them here.

I attended the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia which was held in Sydney early in October, during which visit I preached in St Stephen's and gave my Anzac Lecture in St James' Hall. On the Sunday morning, Father drove me to Woollahra Church, and on the homeward way a sad accident occurred. A newspaper boy dropped off a moving tram near the Victoria Barracks, and backed in front of Father's car, which struck him, and he later died in Sydney Hospital to which we drove him. I felt this accident more deeply than any casualty on Gallipoli where mortal wounds were common in defence of our common cause. On a moderatorial visit in Queensland to Killarney, Warwick, Yangan, Acland, Dalby, I received an urgent telegram from Father to attend as witness in the lawsuit for damages against him for the fatality in which he, as driver of the car, was implicated. I did so, and described how the accident really occurred, and the magistrate dismissed the case.

Pastoral work claimed my close attention after so many periods of absent on other duties, including many calls as Moderator to visit parishes and dedicate buildings for church purposes. The Rev John Robb, my Assistant, had been able to attend to many of the demands for sick visiting and the like for the period I was at the War and continued to do so after my return. I was connected with many organisations such as the Protestant League, the Council of Public Morality, the Six-O'clock Closing of Public Houses, Recruiting meetings, Returned Soldiers Association, in addition to Chaplaincy, and the Schools Association, etc. The membership of the congregation continued to grow steadily. And so the year 1916 drew to a close. My illustrated lectures on Anzac, given in various parts of Queensland, had netted £469 for the Presbyterian and Methodist Rest Homes at the military camps, in addition to proceeds devoted to other patriotic funds. The halls or picture theatres in which they were given were invariably full. I remember one lecture I gave at Rockhampton, during which a slide-carrier got jammed in the projector, and the efforts of the operator to move it were visible in the circle of light on the screen, causing much amusement to the audience. I called on the band to play and for over half-an-hour by talking and band music, we had to mark time so to speak, much to my embarrassment, but eventually the difficulty was overcome and the lecture proceeded to its conclusion.

The whole family had a delightful holiday at Spring Bluff, with Aggie and Jack Edwards, Rev W.G. and Mrs Pope, Dr Glaister, Mr Galway and his fiancée (Miss Netta Steele) among the guests, a merry party under the congenial care of the hostess, Miss Smith. We drove up in my Ford car, and the road uphill was muddy after heavy rain. The car skidded quite a lot, and we were later than we expected. Miss Smith told us that she inquired of a servant whether the Merringtons had arrived, and she received the reply, 'Oh, yes, and Dr Merrington has taken the car to the garage!' In that lovely summer climate we went on trips in various directions, played croquet and enjoyed happy talks and games at night in the large lounge.

After this refreshing holiday I soon plunged into the multifarious duties which awaited me. Not only the Church, but the University Senate, the Emmanuel College Council, the Returned Soldiers' Association, and Chaplaincy engagements were prominent. The name of the Returned Sailors & Soldiers Imperial League of Australia was chosen by the federal body of returned men, and I was elected President of the Queensland Branch.

We were visited by Senator Milner and the Prime Minister of the Federal Parliament, Mr William Hughes, during the early part of 1917, and each of them addressed a public meeting sponsored by our Branch. The atmosphere of Queensland was very tense, partly on the question of conscription and partly in regard to the War itself. The influence of Archbishop Mannix who called it 'a sordid trade war' and the cynicism of Mr Fihelly, an open Sinn Féiner, raised opposition to the war-effort in the sections of the population represented by the ecclesiastical and the political spokesman. Mr Hughes addressed a huge crowd in front of the Post Office, at which I was also one of the speakers in favour of recruiting. The need of reinforcements after the losses at Gallipoli and even in France was very pressing, but unfortunately the Roman Catholic and the Labour influence was on the whole adverse, and I was often attacked in the paragraphs of the 'Standard'. (Mr Gordon, St Andrew's church officer kept a book of newspaper cuttings over this period, and gave it to me before I returned to the war on active service). The weak move of the Federal Parliament to submit the Conscription issue to a referendum intensified the opposition to the whole war-effort by the sections already referred to. Meanwhile Anzac Day observances were held on the 25th April, and I took part in the annual public meeting in the Exhibition Hall. The majority of citizens were loyal and patriotic, realising the dangers of Pan-Germanism under the Kaiser, but the minority undoubtedly hampered the national cause. Even in the Presbyterian Assembly held in May, there was a heated debate on the war. Some of the pacifists and 'voluntaries' (such as former United Presbyterian Church of Scotland followers, who made a fetish of having no connection with the State or 'Caesar's wife', as they called it) made things very difficult for me in filling the Chaplaincy appointments required by the Army. My good friends, the Rev James Gibson and Principal Glaister were from the U.P. church, and their influence was of a neutralising rather a helpful character. However, although the debate went on for two days the loyal issue was eventually secured by a majority.

One of the undertakings to which I was strongly committed was the establishment of a Returned Soldiers' Residential Club, which was eventually opened at the Corner of Ann and Wharf streets. It performed a useful function for many years of its existence, although the perennial problem of 'the drink' hampered its success in later periods, as I found when I revisited Brisbane in the thirties.

Owing to the enlistment of most of the residential students in the war services, the future of Emmanuel College was still in peril. A strong plea for moving the College to St Paul's Church led to many conferences between the Council and the Kirk Session, but it came to nothing, for each body regarded the proposal from its own point of view, and the Scheme was abandoned as unworkable. So once more the College was saved from extinction.

Two auxiliary interests occupied my time and prayer. One was the foundation of the Spring Hill Mission which St Andrew's Session agreed with me was a desirable effort on behalf of a poor district lying to the north of our church, and much in need of spiritual and practical attention. It so happened that a lady friend of Dr Meiklejohn's in Victoria donated the sum of £200 to St Andrew's Church. I proposed to the Session that we should appoint Miss May Walker as Deaconess, with a view to special work in the Spring Hill district. We did not know where the money was to come from after her salary for the first year was paid, but we went forward in faith as we had done in founding the College and Hall. And our faith was justified. From that day to this (in 1948) the Mission Hall which was started has continued to fulfil its grand purpose in bringing the Gospel and its ministrations of practical care to the less fortunate dwellers in that area, under the faithful and devoted services of Deaconess May Walker.

The finances of the Mission and the Hall which was built on a suitable site in Spring Hill were met by generous helpers who rallied round the Deaconess, and especially by the generosity of the late Mr W.R. Black, who took a real interest in the erection of the Mission Hall and the amenities needed for Miss Walker's fruitful work.

The other piece of service rendered by St Andrew's to part of the suburbs was the oversight of the Auchenflower mission station. It was my duty to conduct Communion services and meet with the local committee of management to discuss the work of the

congregation. A building was built as the Auchenflower Presbyterian Church; and I understand that St Andrew's Session continues to exercise oversight of the aided charge.

I have already stated that the Referendum on Conscription aggravated the hostility of certain sections of the community to the war effort. My own experience of the urgent need of reinforcements at the front impelled me naturally to support by every means the mobilisation of man-power to secure victory. As an advocate of conscription I became a target for attacks by the representatives of the opposition. I received anonymous letters, one of which stated that I would be dead before Christmas. Stones fell on the roof of the house at night, evidently thrown from the cross street above. The 'Standard' frequently quoted Fihelly, who made sarcastic remarks about the advocates of Conscription including myself. The attitude of Mr Ryan and Archbishop Duhig towards the prosecution of the war appeared to be half-hearted; and as President of the R.S.A. and a prominent member of the Protestant League, I was pretty outspoken on the subject, and inevitably incurred the antagonism of many belonging to the Irish Section. At this time too, the situation in Ireland was being met by military action against the rebels.

The efforts being made to unite the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational Churches were failing to bring about a consummation so desirable to be wished. I had from my early teens been a strong advocate of Church Union among the kindred bodies which had so much in common. But the Church was divided, and Union proposals were not supported. Some of the 'modernists' like Professor Angus, of St Andrew's College, and many of the 'fundamentalists', joined by the 'old guard' of Presbyterian traditions combined to form the opposition, of which Professor Rentoul of Ormond College was the eloquent spokesman, and so the opportunity for Union was lost. This was a great disappointment to me personally, especially at a time when unity was so essential to the future of Church, State and civilisation itself.

My heart was with the fighting forces on the battle fronts of the War which was still in a rather desperate situation from the Allied point of view. Mr Woodrow Wilson at last came out on the side of freedom, but it took many months to mobilise the army, navy and air-forces of the USA and transport them to the actual areas of effective operation. The submarine menace was at its peak in 1917. My 41st birthday still kept me in the age of eligibility for war service. In a word, I wanted to get back to the War and do my part once again with the fighting men in France. My old regiment and Brigade under Sir Harry Chauvel were rendering wonderful service in Palestine. But I would go wherever sent by the military authorities.

I informed my loyal congregation and Session of my wish to enlist again and although they would have liked to retain my services, they offered no opposition, and promised me renewed leave of absence for the duration of the War. The Presbytery and the Council of Emmanuel College, the Senate of the University, the R.S.A. Committee all did likewise. I was ordered by the military authorities to embark from Melbourne, and so Flora and the children accompanied me to Sydney on the 26th December, 1917. Under that date my diary reads 'Leave for Sydney and the War: Hurrah!'

CHAPTER 13

Second Embarkation for the Front

The family spent Christmas at the Manse, Rose Bay, with Jack and Aggie. On Sunday I took the forenoon service at St Andrew's, Rose Bay, for Jack Edwards, and on New Year's Eve we went to Blackheath on the Blue Mountains and stayed at 'The Pines'. On the following Saturday we enjoyed the marvellous trip to Jenolan Caves. The motor run through grand scenery was capped by the walks through Lucas and Right Imperial Caves with their varied forms of rich colour and dazzling beauty. On the following Tuesday we moved into Zyanga Cottage. Principal Thatcher called on me, and I returned his visit and had a delightful conversation with the veteran teacher of the Congregational Church. On Sunday after service at the Presbyterian Church conducted by the Rev Charles McAlpine (an acquaintance of Glebe days), I met my old professor of English at Sydney University, Sir Mungo MacCallum, who seemed to have been deeply moved by the service.

When we returned to Sydney, I went to Victoria Barracks to make enquiries about my approaching embarkation and found confirmation of my previous notice that I was to sail on H.M.T. Beltana from Melbourne on the 19th January. I asked Major Tunks for books as reading-matter for the troops, and saw the Red Cross authorities for similar amenities under their care. In the afternoon of that busy day I baptised Arthur's son, John Cossar Merrington, and then went from 'Mayfield' to 'Clewer' and had tea there and farewells to dear mother and father. On the next day we had a family group taken at the photographer's and then all took the Manly steamer. On the following day good-byes were said to the dear children at Rose Bay, and then I motored with Flora and Aggie to the Railway Station, where Arthur and my old friend Walter Vout all saw me off. At Melbourne Mr and Mrs King (step-father's relatives) with Will and Blanche drove me to 'Wallingford' where I stayed the night. Before going aboard the ship I reported myself to Headquarters of Defence, and met General Sellheim, Colonel Kenneth Mackay and Captain Tiddy.

After providing myself with a tea-pot and sugar, boxes of reading matter for those on board and the troops, which I bought for 10/8d., I went on board the Beltana at Port Melbourne New Pier, and we sailed on Saturday the 19th at 12 noon, the date expected for departure. The large majority of the ship's passengers were munition workers going to assist in the British factories, but there were forty naval cadets under Mr. Dix of the Royal Australian Navy, and a few military representatives. We had a calm sea as we sailed towards King George's Sound (a familiar harbour with associations of the departure of the Main Body on 1st November, 1914). There was a Y.M.C.A. secretary on the ship, and his assistance was helpful in the services which I held each Sunday, and in other activities of a social and sporting nature. I started a Bible Class on the Life of St Paul which was attended by 16, mostly naval cadets. They were fine young chaps and credit to their College at Jervis Bay. They won the tug-of-war (with ten of a team) against all comers (with eight of a team) by their quick rhythmic jerks which pulled the heavier men along, every time. These boys showed discipline and a grand sporting sense, which was not always evident among the civilian passengers. On one occasion, the latter rang in a ninth man against the Officers' team of eight, and another time the end man twisted the long tail of the rope around a stanchion, against which the lads nearly pulled muscles out of action, until it was corrected.

The Beltana carried a gun over the stern and practice was made by the gun crew at boxes thrown overboard. The idea was to attack an enemy submarine periscope if such should appear. The firing was usually accurate and I took some snapshots of hits on the target. Boat drill was held regularly on board after alarm whistles were blown. On one occasion when near the Bay of Biscay after a fierce signal and parade of all passengers and crew some of the nurses, headed by the matron were ordered into the boats and the davits were swung out. I thought it was the real thing, and the water looked very cold! But fortunately it was only a very thorough exercise of the drill. The captain asked me several times into his cabin. He showed me the chart of sunken vessels off the coasts of northern waters, and I was astounded at the thick markings of what looked like forestry around Brest, Ireland and the English Channel, revealing the havoc of shipping and wrecks to be avoided by navigators. I was given the duty of censoring letters, an experience to be frequently repeated in the ensuing months.

We called at Durban and were welcomed by the celebrated lass, Miss Campbell, who flag-wagged in and out all Australian ships during that period of the war. Lady Campbell, a member of my Church in Brisbane, had given me a letter of introduction to Dr and Mrs Campbell, the parents of the young lady, and, accompanied by Major Richardson, I went by rickshaw to their home, where we were warmly received and taken for a motor drive. We had supper with Lady Campbell, and returned by tram and rickshaw to the ship. On the following day I got a light tropical suit ashore, and then took some of the midshipmen to meet Dr Campbell. Mr Mumford of the YMCA kindly lent me a lantern with which I would be able to show my slides on Anzac on board the ship, which made an acceptable entertainment on more than one occasion.

We arrived at Capetown, which Flora and I had seen from the ship Suevic on our first trip overseas in 1903, when, to our sorrow we were not allowed to land. This time there was no such prohibition, and I had a very pleasant excursion ashore, admiring afresh the grandeur of Table Mountain and the other heights around the harbour. I caught a Camp Bay tram and had a glorious run to that little bay, where I had tea with some hospital nurses from Australia who were homeward bound. I returned the lantern

kindly lent me by the YMCA as arranged by Mr Mumford before we left Capetown. We received on board some East African British troops including a very interesting Chaplain named Tobias (of Jewish descent) who had been severely wounded, and was granted furlough to visit England and have service in France if permitted to do so. He had had a wonderful escape from death, having been shot through the scapula. The bullet had just missed the heart. He could not raise his arm above the chest, but he exercised it so effectively, that he could improve the movement by the end of the Voyage. He was an Anglican padre, like his father, who saw him off the wharf. He did not wish to do duty on board but he was a regular attendant at services, and in the Bible Study classes his co-operation was very helpful. We became first-rate friends and I formed a high opinion of his courageous nature. His great disappointment after our arrival in London was that the medical authorities turned him down for duty in France, as he told me when I met him subsequently in Lyons restaurant one day. He was an honours man of Cambridge and had taken Theological study at Oxford. I think he was a South African by birth and upbringing.

We arrived at Sierra Leone in foggy weather, passing through minefields and a buoyed channel. There were several ships in harbour, including the Baccante, (a first-class cruiser) and an Auxiliary merchant cruiser, the Armidale Castle, of 14,000 tons, which became our escort in a Convoy of six other ships and our own when we left Sierra Leone on the 5th March. While at this interesting port, once fever-ridden to such an extent that it used to be called 'the white man's grave' I visited the Cathedral and the Bishop, who was a delightful man. While we talked on his wide verandah overhung by trees and vines, monkeys were chattering and capering in the branches. He told me of the valuable product of palm oil which was exported from the district and had useful materials for many war purposes as well as more peaceful industries. I also paid a visit to an Officer's Club out on the heights above Sierra Leone and enjoyed the whole experience at the tropical town.

Our last Sunday on board the Beltana brought together most of the passengers to a parade service which I conducted, and I had the great joy of receiving Messrs Steptoe and Knight into fellowship with Christ at the Communion which followed the main service. The Bible-study class was also well attended up to the last day of the voyage. Six destroyers escorted our convoy up the English Channel, one with an observation balloon high above its bow. Then the convoy divided with three destroyers keeping watch and ward over each section. The sight of the white cliffs of Dover through the grey mist was indeed refreshing and as we entered the estuary of the Thames, one noted the elaborate precautions which safeguarded the vital entrance to London. Speeches of appreciation of our skipper and a presentation to the O.C. troops, with the usual expressions of thanks concluded a happy voyage. We reached Tilbury Docks at 3.30 on March 19. During the last few days we had clearly heard the sound of the guns over the Front in France and Belgium, and we were soon to learn of the tremendous battle which was just beginning, the great German offensive of the early spring.

We found accommodation at the Bedford, which had been bombed slightly. Letters from home awaited me at Senior Chaplain Shannon's office, and I soon met General Griffiths and Padre Wray who had served faithfully with me on Gallipoli. I cabled Flora of my safe arrival. I was granted a few days' leave, and saw the familiar sights of London. On Sunday I attended the Abbey and heard the Rev William Temple (whom I had met in Brisbane) preach on 'Humility'. In the afternoon I called on the Digbys at Woodford, also on Mrs Digby snr. and Bertha, to whom I gave a silk purse and lace collar and cuffs, also sugar and tea. In the evening I went to the City Temple and enjoyed a sermon by Rev Dr Fort Newton. During the next few days I met Mr James Allan of Brisbane, who took me to see Sir Thomas Robinson, the Agent-general for Queensland. He kindly rang up Lady Robinson and Lady Moore, and a drive was arranged to Harefield Hospital twenty miles away. On our return I met Lady Birdwood and had tea with the Robinsons. I got away to Scotland and had a room at the North British Hotel at specially low rates for officers. I walked past the University, across the meadows to Tollcross and Montpellier Park and found that both Mrs Graham and Mrs Calder had gone from the rooms which had such sacred memories for Flora and myself for Agnes was born there thirteen years before. I called upon Professor A.S. Pringle-Pattison and Principal Martin, but both were out.

I went to Glasgow and found Mr Robert Smith at Hepburn and Smith's place of business, where I bought a costume for Flora, which Bob tried on one of his girls on the staff, whom I judged to be about the same height and figure as Flora's. I may say that this experiment proved to be quite successful, as later reports from Brisbane indicated! In the afternoon I met Mary Smith and young Bob (in uniform). I then took the train for Oban through the beautiful Countryside so familiar in the past. Annie, Chattie and Jim Maxton met me at the Oban station with a truly Highland cordiality. I enjoyed the walks about Oban, to Church with Mr and Mrs Maxton, and along the Esplanade to Dunollie Castle, also out as far as Kilbridge with its Livingston memorials. Then to MacArthur's for tea, Miss Annie waiting on us, eggs galore! The scenery was grand. We visited Miss MacDougall and the McCowans, all of whom we had liked on our former stay there. On Monday I had to be up by 4.30 to catch the train but Jim Maxton and two naval visitors were up and assisted me with my baggage, despite my protests. Back in Glasgow, I saw the Lambs prior to catching the express to Edinburgh. I had an interesting chat with Professor Pringle-Pattison at his home on Church Hill. He congratulated me on my book and told me that his views were very like those set forth in the publication. He and his wife had known the trials of the war in their family of sons. I also called on our old friend Mr William Smith, and I had tea at his home.

I was back in London on expiry of leave and had word of my likely appointment to Dartford Hospital, prior to going to Tidworth on the Salisbury Plain. And to Dartford in Kent I went on April 6th. The hospital was under the A.I.F. and was pleasantly situated on a large area of grassy meadowland. I took up the regular routine of hospital life with the medical staff in residence. I had never lived in a hospital before, although I had had plenty of experience of doing round the wards. My lecture on Anzac was appreciated by staff and patients in the crowded hall. Letters came from Flora and Mother, also from Mollie. Ancie, Frances and Harvard sent their characteristic notes and drawings, much to my delight. I was able to get to London in a few minutes from Dartford when I was off duty in the evening. On Anzac Day I conducted a combined service with the assistance of Chaplain-Major Beveridge, who offered the prayers. The same afternoon I left for Tidworth, staying at the Bedford for the night and attending an Anzac Concert at the Scala Theatre in London. Sir Thomas MacKenzie represented New Zealand and Mr Andrew Fisher spoke for Australia. The chairman thanked them for their addresses and called the latter Sir Andrew Fisher. In responding Mr Fisher said, - 'I am not Sir Andrew Fisher.' Then he paused, and added the single word, 'yet'!!

Tidworth, via Andover and Ludgershall, was the main military centre for many British field units, and also the A.I.F. There I found the A.A.G. to be Colonel McGlynn, formerly Brigade-Major to Colonel Monash of the 4th Brigade on Gallipoli. I was given a room in one of the large brick buildings named Jellalabad, and had a good view from the upstairs window of the wood which fringed the plain. On Sunday I attended the Garrison Presbyterian Church which was crowded. Many Scottish troops marched to their seats. The resident Presbyterian Chaplain was Major Morrison, a fine fellow, with whom I had tea and an interesting chat. At his request I preached for him at night, and returned to his rooms for supper. One of my out-stations was Parkhouse, where Gunson, formerly minister of the South Brisbane Congregational Church was the resident padre, and we had much in common and I co-operated with him in the services at the YMCA hut. Another place where I held services was Bulford, a medical station with Dr Bean, brother of Captain Bean of A.I.F. history fame, whom I had met on the Peninsula. At first I used to walk some miles to these places, but before long I got a motor-cycle side-car driven by a soldier. At Bulford we had lantern slides with hymns on the screen and some religious views and pictures, which helped to create a good receptive atmosphere for the services. Dr Bean was very sympathetic and regularly attended the Services there.

From my first arrival in England after leaving the ship Beltana I had urged Mr Shannon, the Senior Chaplain in A.I.F. Headquarters at Horseferry Road, to arrange for my attachment to one of our units serving in France. But the various requirements were being met by the Presbyterian chaplains already on duty there. So I had to remain on duty in England for two more months.

The glories of the English spring filled me with keen appreciation. The trees on the slope opposite my room were dressing themselves in living green. I knew that there were a few farms nearby and I was pleased to hear the familiar sound of a cuckoo clock striking one morning. Each day I heard it, and I thought that the clock must be running down. And then the intuition came to me that it was the real thing - a Cuckoo! I used to take lovely walks in the country when I had spare time, and I revelled in the trip to Marlborough and a thrilling walk through Savernake Forest with my friend Major Richardson, formerly on board the Beltana with me. Another walk was to interesting Ludgershall and its ancient church. As I rested on the grassy hillside I could faintly hear the distant sound of the guns firing in France.

A Presbyterian Chaplains' meeting had been arranged for the 7th of May, and Morrison, Gunson and I travelled to London and put up at the Bedford. We went to the opera 'Carmen' at night; and the padres met on the following day at Holborn Restaurant for luncheon. Sir Andrew Wingate occupied the chair, and Professor Cairns headed the chaplains. I met Dr Dykes Shaw, the Secretary of the Presbyterian Alliance, Col Beattie of the Canadian Chaplains Department, and my old friend of Egyptian months, Major Angus Macdonald, representing New Zealand padres. A photograph of the group was taken and I have a copy. It shows the Australian chaplains as well as those I have mentioned.

The English Congregational Union was meeting at the Memorial Hall, and Gunson and I wended our way thither. Professor P.T. Forsyth gave a stirring address, and showed his desire for a closer union of the evangelical churches. As he concluded his lecture, he remarked something to this effect - 'And now, I am going to say something which I hope will not suggest that you stone me as I leave the building. It is this:- Would congregationalism have come into existence as a denomination unless two fallacies had been accepted. First, that the New Testament lays down the authoritative form of future church government? And secondly, that that form is congregationalism?' (Sensation) I was introduced to the famous lecturer afterwards by Dr J.D. Jones, whom I had met in Brisbane. Dr Forsyth said to me, 'Perhaps you do not know that I was brought up under Presbyterian influence!' I answered his smiling remark by saying 'The aroma lingers.' It was a cheery interview.

I called on my publishers, Macmillan's in Martin Street, and was received courteously by Mr George Macmillan, who gave me one of their recently published books, entitled 'The Church in the Furnace.' He kindly autographed the fly-leaf for me. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England was in session at Regent Square Church, and I was introduced to the Clerk. Professor Anderson Scott of Westminster College led me to the Moderator, Dr Ramsay, who had me sit beside him during the sitting. A lecture was given by Professor Carnegie Simpson, whom I had met at New College, Edinburgh on one occasion. I returned to

Tidworth after four interesting days in London. A visit to Salisbury Cathedral and the site of Old Sarum where excavations of the foundations of an ancient Norman castle were being carried out. I was much impressed by the whole countryside and its great historical importance from the times of the Druids onwards. Naturally the famous Stonehenge monoliths and their surroundings on Salisbury Plain were also visited, and the relation of the stone altar and pillars to the rising and setting of the sun was explained by a guide.

The duties at Tidworth, Bulford and Parkhouse kept me happily occupied. Services in the crowded Garrison Church, contacts with officers and men, hospital visiting, and the well-attended film services at Bulford and Parkhouse were encouraging. The Anzac lectures always attracted interested audiences. Letters from home were the great events and my wife, children and my mother never missed an opportunity of catching the mail. Newspapers from Australia and the Weekly London Times were eagerly read and passed round. The New Zealanders were at Sling camp, which I occasionally visited on my motor-cycle trips to the out-stations. My cordial friendship with Padres Morrison and Gunson gave me much happiness. Occasionally I had a game of chess, as I had sometimes done in my Anzac dugout in 1915.

The Rev R.M. Legate of St Paul's, Brisbane, had come to England as a chaplain; and when he paid me a visit, I arranged for a motor-car from HQ to enable us to visit the district camps together and call on some of our Queenslanders. Padre Morrison also accompanied us. We had a perfect June day, and admired the springing verdure and flowery meads. We called at Hurdcott, where we met one of my St Andrew's young men, R.C. Hamilton, then we lunched with the mess at Fovant, drove on through Chickdale, Tisbury, Hindon to Longbridge-Deverill, thence to Sutton Veny and Warminster, meeting Duncan Fowles and others from Brisbane. On the return journey we messed with my friend Major Richardson at Codford, and so after a wonderful day, we reached Tidworth the same night. I had leave to visit HQ in London and saw Shannon, Colonel Graham Butler, Captain Treloar (Historical Records) who wants copies of all my photographs of Gallipoli, and Lieut Hector Dinning of Brisbane. In the evening after dinner we formed a party and had some community singing in the house and then went to Drury Lane to enjoy 'The Marriage of Figaro' with Gunson and Mr and Mrs Dinning.

Back at Tidworth the forty Chaplains available were gathered for instruction including gas-mask drill and other directions about the conditions of service at the Front. About this time I began writing my war diary in extended form. Word came to me of my approaching order to proceed to France, a long awaited event! The German advance had been pressed forward during the time I had been in England, and the war situation was very critical. On an official visit to London I handed over and sorted out, with explanatory notes, all my photographs, or rather negatives to Captain Treloar for reproduction. At Salisbury a conference of Presbyterian Chaplains was held, and Shannon, McCook, Bradley, McVittie, Legate, Peter A. Smith and Fred Paton (of New Hebrides) were present. In friendly intercourse.

Most of my time from the of June was taken up with preparations for my transfer to France. Treloar took charge of all my negatives, and I had my heavy baggage stored at the Australian Kit Base in London. I drew my 'tin hat' and box respirator from HQ after farewelling Morrison, Gunson and other good friends on Salisbury Plain. I arrived at Southampton, which was gay with flags. The American troops were pouring through on their way to France, and it was an inspiring sight to see the children giving them flowers and all welcoming them gratefully. By a happy coincidence, the date was the 4th July, the anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence and as I saw the Stars and Stripes waving in the sunlight at Southampton and the tall, loping athletic American soldiers walking hand in hand with the little English children, all smiles, as the 'Yanks' went to fight side by side with the British I felt a thrill of historic significance in the cheerful spectacle. As my ship was not due to leave till the next day I booked for the night at a hotel and, after looking around the town, I took a rail ticket to beautiful Bournemouth and walked on the pier and the beach before returning to Southampton.

CHAPTER 14

In France

The little ship 'Archangel' left Southampton at night and we had a calm crossing. There were 90 American officers and men on board. We entered the mouth of the Seine and berthed in the wharf at Le Havre. Accompanied by Colonel Martyn, a former University friend, I took the tram to Harfleur, of historic memory, and walked to the Australian General Base Depot, and then retraced my steps to the Australian Infantry Base Depot which was the definite sphere to which I had been appointed. Senior Chaplain Shannon happened to be on a visit to A.I.B.D. and he introduced me to Padre (Major) Gault the celebrated Methodist chaplain who was doing a wonderful work among the troops there. He was about to set out with a party of men on a walking tour to Gonfreville-l'Orcher, and I accepted an invitation to go along with him. The view of this old chateau situated on an eminence overlooking the River Seine and the grassy plains which surround it was captivating. As we sat together under the groves of fine trees Padre Gault gave a bright, informative talk to the men, and then we returned to our base in easy marching order.

On the following day, Sunday, a combined religious service was held in the large Cinema Hut. Shannon gave the address, and Robertson, a Baptist padre took the devotional part of the Service. I met Captain Harper, the son of Principal Harper of St Andrew's College, and later I called on him at the A.G.B.D. Gault was indisposed and I took his place in the evening at a service in the Woodbine Hut for the British Camp nearby. The Tommies were very responsive. My cubicle at A.I.B.D. was next to that of Major Neech, with whom I soon formed a happy friendship.

One of the important features of our life and work at the Depot was the farewelling of the drafts of men leaving for the front line. We gathered as many as possible in the Cinema Hut and Gault had them singing community songs and hymns. The Presbyterian, Methodist and other Protestant Denominational groups were then invited to remain for a brief Communion service. We took particulars of their names, units, and home addresses, and later wrote to their next-of-kin informing them that so-and-so had taken part in the Communion Service before proceeding to the front-line. We knew that many of the lads would become casualties, and our messages were very comforting to the relatives in Australia. During my first week the drafts going out were 600, 120, 30, 120 and 850, on successive days. Big events were in preparation near Amiens which had been threatened by the German advance, and within a month we were to learn of the mighty forward drive of the Australians under Sir John Monash from Villers-Bretonneux, so gallantly held by the Army until the time came for the beginning of the end for our foes. When the men were marching out in full kit from our Base we used to give them comforts and reading-matter. Padre Gault was the local representative of the Australian Comforts Fund, under Sir Thomas Henley in London, and was able to dispense such amenities, which were very welcome to the travellers.

The days were filled with duties. Gault had a wide range of operation and initiated me into the local round. We visited No.39 Hospital at Bleville and made as many personal calls on the inmates as we could. Then Padre Gault took his stand on the platform of the large YMCA Hut in which about thirty men were writing or reading. He began to speak, and asked those present to clap when he put out his right hand, to stamp when he expended his left, and to clap and stamp when he used both hands. The surprised loungers took up the cue, and presently men began pouring in from outside to see what was causing the applause. Before many minutes had passed, the big floor was crowded. Competitions were started, and tempting prizes of tins of tobacco, cigarettes, even tinned plum puddings were offered for the winners. Then community singing followed. The padre began a lecture on The Prodigal Son with lantern slides, and a deep impression was made by the time we sang the closing hymn. I met Chaplain Chambers (Ang.) in this hospital; he afterwards rose to episcopal dignity and was a warm evangelical churchman. Letters to and from my wife and weans were the brightest spots in the busy life all the time I was on active service, and they came and went with frequency. The Convalescent Camp was another centre for our work. Padre George Green (Sol) and Father Power, both of whom had served with me at Anzac passed through the Depot and we were glad to renew our old associations. I gave my Anzac Lecture at the crowded YMCA concert hall in the Convalescent Camp, and on the next night in the A.I.B.D. Cinema Hut when about 750 were present, including Major Ross, M.C.

The Chaplains held a retreat at Gonfreville-l'Orcher one day and among those present was Rev M. Gow, a YMCA worker, who is Unitarian minister and professor at Manchester College, Oxford. He was at Harvard in the eighties. The Subject of our discussion was 'The Place of Beauty in Life' a fitting change of theme from war and all its accompaniments. From the height we could see the testing of guns made by Schneiders munition factory, shells being fired at a marked spot on the flat land below us.

I kept in touch by letter with Mollie Livingston, whom I had not seen since September 1914 when she came to help Flora to nurse Harvard, then seriously ill with broncho-pneumonia. She had gone as a war nurse to Egypt, but was transferred to France before I returned from Gallipoli. At the time I was at Havre she was still at a hospital near Boulogne. I thought it was a good opportunity to visit her if I could get leave, so I made application for it, but such things take time to receive approval.

I gave my Anzac lecture (to about 750 men) at No. 39 Hospital, and also to other camps around Havre, generally with audiences which included other allied servicemen. The lantern was to be supplied at each place but I carried the heavy boxes of slides round with me. The black-out made it rather difficult sometimes to locate the camps. On one occasion I had to pass through a Chinese Worker's compound and someone before-hand warned me to mind that I did not get a knife pushed into my ribs! However, I reached the goal and returned unmolested.

I used to visit the hospital each morning and read my translation of the French newspaper to the boys there. Fortunately, the news at long-last was becoming better each day. The Allied forces were advancing from the west, north and south, and the Germans were retreating slowly. One young patient said to me 'Padre, do you know how we could win the war straight away?' I replied 'Sir Douglas Haig would be glad to know, that.' His answer was 'Issue Australian digger hats to all the troops and Jerry will run!'

We had only one air alarm while I was at the A.I.B.D. On 1st August I was awakened at night by the sergeant 'Air Alarm, sir.' As all seemed quiet I went to sleep again after waiting a few minutes, but I was soon awakened by the whirr of engines and the sound of shells, our own ack-ack defences, probably. I got up and saw the shells bursting round a few planes, pretty high up and heard too crashes of falling bombs. Soon the silence returned and sleep was resumed.

My leave came through and I left Havre on August 2nd by train, passing through Paris. From the window I could see the battle area not far away from carts and distinctly hear the roar of guns. I arrived at Boulogne at dusk, and put up at the Officers' Club there. After dinner I went out by cab with two WAACS who had missed the last train to Wimereux. They told me that there had been a big air raid on the previous evening, and I soon saw evidences of the damage done to houses on the slope above Boulogne, including the British HQ, or at least so I was informed. I found Mollie at the Nurses' quarters. I went for a drive with her in a cab and it was a very happy time that we spent together sitting in the cab and talking about Flo, the children and our mutual friends. She is looking very well. We both agreed to cable unitedly to Flo, as her birthday is near at hand. I made some purchases for Mollie on the following day and we had lunch together at the Folkestone Hotel. In the afternoon we took a trip to Pont de Briques, then dinner again at the same hotel. In the long summer evening a group of nurses, including, Sisters Norah Leman and Mackenzie (of the Glebe) strolled near the monument to Napoleon on Wimereux heights, commemorating his design to invade England. Two officers joined our party and we sat on the grass in the warm twilight and enjoyed ourselves in general conversation. Next day was the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of the War, and a combined service was held, the address being given by Chaplain-Colonel MacLean. I lunched at the Hospital and in the afternoon our party of nurses with Major Atchison and Lieutenant Kerr walked in the woods. It was a great joy to meet Mollie and have time to get to know some of her companions.

On the return journey I spent a couple of days in Paris, which was being bombed every twenty minutes by 'Big Bertha' about fifty miles away. I was having my hair cut when a burst not very remote occurred, and the barber grinned and said 'encore!' I joined a party under YMCA escort in a charabanc to view the sights of Paris which I had not visited since 1904. We saw Madeline Chapel Expiatore, L'Opera, The Louvre, The Tuileries, and ascended the Great Wheel near the Eiffel Tower. As we stood in front of the Arc de Triomphe and heard from the guide how it had been closed to traffic since the Germans marched through it in 1871, a bomb fell near at hand, and I thought how remarkable and tragic it was that once again Paris was under attack from the same enemy. A visit to the war museum at Invalides and Notre Dame concluded a very interesting tour of the city. I had as a companion Chaplain Forrest and the YMCA asked us to accompany an organised party to the Folie Bergeres at night, which we did, and saw something of the loose life on and off the stage. There were many American troops on leave at the time.

Back in Havre on August 7 I was in time to see 800 men moving off for the front, and take part in the usual farewell service and distribution of comforts. Next day was Flora's birthday, and I was the recipient of one of her frequent parcels. The news coming through from the war zone was most heartening, in fact Ludendorff named August 8 as Germany's black day. A social and dance was held in the Officers' Mess that night. A few days later a Chaplains' Conference was held under Colonel Williams, the broadest Anglican padre I have met. He favours combined services. I came to know him and we took part in a baptism by immersion of an American soldier at the seaside. He was a Baptist, and Williams consented to perform the ceremony as requested. We held a brief service on the beach and then Chaplain Williams entered the surf with him and immersed him.

I started, by request, a Study Class in philosophy at the Convalescent Camp, which aroused much interest and we had some good discussions. One of my friendships was formed about this time at the Havre Officers' Club, namely with Chaplain W. Lawson Marsh, who was Acting-Principal Chaplain for the British troops (Presbyterian) in the city. We saw a good deal of each other, and in later years after he settled in New Zealand our cordial attachment was renewed. Bishop Taylor Smith, the Anglican Chaplain-General was visiting Havre, and a conference was held on the subject of Venereal Diseases. I had been asked to prepare a paper on the subject, and I read it at the meeting. Medical men also took part. I stressed the moral appeal and the religious dynamic to overcome the temptations of the flesh. The Medical tendency was mainly to deal with the conditions from a sanitary aspect. One thing which I emphasised was the effect of the issue of prophylactic packets to all men going on leave,

which was like a recognition of, if not an inducement to sexual indulgence. The preliminary exhortations of the padre to men going on leave were followed by realistic descriptions of physical treatment after coition, which altered the atmosphere of the leave party. Everyone at the Conference agreed as to the gravity of the evil so prevalent in war-time particularly. Another lecture which I gave was on 'War and Psychology' which was read at the Convalescent Camp. Miss Lena Ashwell had a concert party under the YMCA and I met her and also some members of her company, who sought my advice about their spiritual and moral problems. I was thankful to be able to help some of them by friendly talk. I had a very busy time at the Base, as Padre Gault obtained three weeks well-earned leave to visit England, and I took over the various activities which he had carried on so successfully, although I could not quite imitate his wonderful 'stints'. But we were able to manage the farewell services, Sunday parades, distributions of comforts and personal work of various kinds. My Anzac lectures were given to thousands of servicemen and women all around the city. Rev Lawson Marsh was having difficulty in getting his reports through to General Sims, the Principal Chaplain, and I visited Rouen to see Rev Harry Miller, S.C.F. of that area, in order that he might help to clear up the trouble in Havre. I saw that delightful Presbyterian leader in Rouen, and he promised to speak to Sims on the subject, and he arranged that Sims would pay a visit to Havre in the near future.

The Australians at the Base Depots carried on a little journal known as 'The Digger' and I consented to write numerous articles for it. These appeared in nearly every issue and formed a pleasant change from the themes of war news, although the articles naturally dealt with the lighter side of the soldier's life. The crowing evidences of approaching victory brightened the spirits of everyone and made the flow of humour and jollity to abound. On 1st October word of Bulgaria's surrender to the Allies came through, and talk of the prospects of peace with the Central Powers became fairly general.

I met Captain Finlayson, of St Andrew's College, Sydney, who told me that he had left a note for me. He said that he had met Professor Hugh R. Mackintosh of New College, Edinburgh, on duty as a YMCA lecturer at Havre. Dr Mackintosh asked him, 'Do you know of a philosopher named Merrington?' He replied, 'we have a padre of that name.' 'I should like to see him.' Hence the note. I rang up the professor, and he cordially invited me to lunch on the following Monday. We then had a cheery talk and afterwards I accompanied him to his room, where we discussed philosophy, theology and books in general. He told me of the conversion of Professor A.E. Taylor from a kind of agnostic to High Anglicanism, Bergson and Bosanquet's a refreshing change from the prevailing chatter of the camps. I saw him frequently during his short stay at Havre, and the chaplains arranged for a course of lectures by the professor on Bergson and theological implications, which was much appreciated by us all. He had written a review of my book on Personality. His visit meant a kind of intellectual renaissance for me and the other padres. I gave a talk on Infinity of God.

For a long time I had been in correspondence with senior Chaplain Shannon about an appointment up the line with one of our A.I.F. units. At first there had been a prospect of my attachment to the 4th Division, but another man had a prior claim as he was able to return to duty after illness. On 31st October I received the notification of my appointment to the 2nd Artillery Divisional Troops. I wrote in my Diary, 'Te Deum'. Just at this juncture I was asked by the A.I.B.D. commandant, Colonel O'Donnell to represent our Depot at the annual Grave Ceremony of French, Belgian and the other Allies fallen at Cimetière Sainte-Marie. I caught a Red Cross car and joined in procession and ceremony, which was led by the Australian band.

I had a bout with influenza and throat trouble at this juncture, unfortunately. There were signs of an epidemic of Spanish Influenza beginning already, which later grew to the most serious proportions among military and civilian personnel. But I am thankful to say that my illness did not become so bad as that. The news of Turkey's defeat in Palestine and the surrender of Austria cheered us all greatly. Rumours of the desire of Germany for an armistice filled us with great hopes of the end of the terrible struggle. My efforts to obtain permission to join up with the 2nd Division were delayed by official dilatoriness, each Sunday I thought would see my last service at the Base. On the 10th I preached on 'Lest we forget' (Deut. 6) to a very large congregation, the band leading the praise.

On 11th November came the great news for which everybody was waiting: 'The Armistice has been signed.' The commandant borrowed my Australian flag, which had been given me by the ladies of my Church, and it proudly flew over the largest depot of Australian soldiers in France at 11 o'clock on that eventful day. (On my return to Brisbane I presented it to Emmanuel College). After the news was confirmed I went into town and saw and heard the signs of remembered bereavement by widows in black, and thankfulness overcoming memories of tragic sufferings in the past. At night the crowds went mad with delight. I was spotted and placed in the centre of a huge ring of dancing soldiers, WAACS and French lads and lasses. Everybody shook hands and sang songs of rejoicing. The War was over. It was Victory Day.

Padre Racklyeft, who had been a member of my congregation of St David's, Haberfield arrived at last as my relief from Havre. I introduced him to the soldiers at a big Victory gathering in the Hut. I prepared to flit as soon as I could get my pass. With my gas-mask I attended the 'gas lachrymatory and chlorine' tests, passing through the gas chamber. But still my transfer was delayed. So I made it my business to walk with Racklyeft to Montevilliers and interview Major Elwood, O.C. Reinforcements, and

on my return received my movement order to go up the line to my new unit. I was very disappointed at the delay which had occurred in giving me an appointment to the front much earlier, and especially while battle was still raging; for it had always been my desire to be a front-line participant, as I had been on Gallipoli. However, in reviewing my war services I must acknowledge that the Anzac experiences had given me my share in active service in the fullest sense. And I have to admit that, from the spiritual and moral standpoint, the needs of men at the base are probably greater in many respects than those in the fighting zone; for the temptations of the cities and the leisurely conditions which usually prevail make the presence and guidance of padres even more important, perhaps, than is the case amid the comradeship and stimulation of common adventure. No doubt the example of a faithful padre in the front line and the sad rites which are part of his duty have to be set against what I have just said, but the morale of an army has to be firmly upheld at the bases as well as at the advanced posts.

The irksome delay which had taken place in issuing my movement order was another and bitter source of chagrin, and it was something I had to explain to the officers of my unit after my arrival thither. In the meantime I had rather a long journey to make by train to Rosecamps, where I put up at the Officers Rest House, for breakfast and lunch. A group of British prisoners released from the enemy congregated there. Some wore helmets, others Hun caps and balaclavas. At 9.45 I caught a train for Amiens, and had an experience of the dirty conditions of a troop train. There was no light and the floor was almost knee-deep with rubbish, bully-beef tins, papers, cartons, etc. The windows were broken, and the cold wind swept through the train. There were some Americans including negro units travelling, but there was plenty of room. As we approached Amiens, the speed slackened, but to my annoyance the train did not stop so I threw out my gear, piece by piece, and hopped off as the pace began to quicken, for the train was bound for Corbie. Fortunately I was able to pick up my baggage amid the crowds which thronged the long, curving station. I proceeded to the Rest House, where there was no rest or room. I put my haversack under my head and my greatcoat over my legs on the floor of the lounge. But two loquacious Tommies recounting experiences on leave in Paris prevented any sleep, until I rebuked them, and then stalked out in the early morning darkness and walked about Amiens, seeing the dim outline of the great cathedral, which had been damaged slightly by enemy action. The thing was to get up the line. I found a row of motor lorries nearby and one of them agreed to give me a lift on my way to Estrées. The fog had lifted, and I enjoyed the drive along the Route Nationale through Villers-Bretonneux, where the Australians made history, and on though ruined villages, poplars still lining some parts of the great road, across the Hindenburg line, I saw gun emplacements, camouflaged trenches, dugouts, the litter of recent battles, weapons, helmets, smashed bridges, dead horses, stranded tanks, groups of German prisoners being moved, the military traffic and war cemeteries. Such is the debris of war! As I approached my destination, I noticed a board on a gate, 2nd Division HQ, so I asked the driver to stop, and reported myself to Colonel Riggall, the O.C. Divisional Artillery and Units. I had lunch and had to explain why the delay had occurred in my arrival, for the appointment had been notified to them a month before. I then proceeded to Estrées, through the famous Mons, for I was attached to the 13th Battery, under Major Shorthouse. I was soon at home with my new friends. On Sunday, 24th November we had a Thanksgiving Service for Victory, at which I spoke from a gun carriage (text Psalm 124). I walked over to the ramshackle YMCA hut and became aware of the music of the intermediate air in the Finlandia of Sibelius. I found a driver, Corporal Leary Smith playing this over and over again on a piano which lacked two or three sounding notes. I sat down beside him and saw his broad fingers, grimed with his work of cleaning chains and leathers of the gun carriages. I asked him if he was fond of music. He answered that it was his great ambition to study under a celebrated musician in Brussels (I forget his name), while he was so near at hand. I told him of the developments being announced for educational opportunities and I offered to write to the authorities to find out whether the wish of Driver Corporal Leary Smith could be gratified. I am glad to say that the application was successful, and later on he was freed from the military duty and granted leave to study music in Brussels.

We left our camp of Nissan huts at Estrées, near Terry for Vermand, passing on our way through Belleuse, part of the Hindenburg Line, Levergies, where a Frenchman was beginning to dig out his house, Fresnoy-le-Grand, where the Germans were repairing buildings, Bohain, with its flat church tower ruined, Vaux-Andigny, with a captured gun-park, Saint Souplet with a damaged church. Through pouring rain we rode, for I had been given a horse (which I walked alongside of most of the trek), through Cartignies and back again, for we set up our headquarters there, and I was given a billet with a farmer near the village. It was Friday, and I asked about a Church service on Sunday. Then I inspected and visited all the men's billets. I met Major Fisher, who had been with me in 1914 on the Omrah.

His Majesty King George V (with his sons) was visiting Marbaix, and, owing to the departure of several officers and a party to attend the parade there, our Church Service was attended by a smaller number than usual. The men clambered up a loft above the stable in the farm where I was billeted for the informal service. In the afternoon I rode out to Marbaix, but the royal party had taken their departure before I arrived. On the return I saw Brigadier Cameron Robertson, of Toowoomba, who had been on the Omrah in 1914 riding along, and we pulled up and had a brief chat. The road was crowded with refugees looking for their homes. Cam Robertson visited our mess next day, and urged me to get my slides from England, whither they had been despatched with other gear before I left Havre. A personal visit would be necessary to obtain the slides, and I made application for leave to get them. I had now been six months in France, and was entitled to have leave.

The farmer with whom I lived was Monsieur M. Prisette, who had a lot of German war material stacked in his stable, from which I secured a flare pistol and some flares as souvenirs. I slept in a cold room which was pervaded by a peculiar odour. As Prisette showed me round, he opened the door next to my room, and I thought, now I shall see what is in here. I found in the dark, closely shut room a donkey nibbling at straw and several large rabbits, so the smell which came directly under the rough door leading into my room was explained! I called on General Rosenthal at Divisional HQ and was warmly received by him: we had frequently met in Port Melbourne and on Gallipoli. I also visited 5th Division HQ and met many friends. Chaplains Dowling and Tonge had a pow-wow with me at Avesnes. I had letters from Flora and the children, also from Clewer, and I wrote my regular mail home and to many whom I knew. One of my special friends in the 13th Battery was Lieutenant Matthewson, of Victoria. I had correspondence from Major (afterwards Sir) Thomas Henley who in reply sent me some 'comforts' from his Fund, which were much appreciated by the men. I ran a few 'stunts' after Gault's manner. On Sunday 15th, Lieutenant Evans and 100 men attended service, at which I made reference to Repatriation and our need of spiritual help.

On 17th December I left Cartignies on leave and managed to get a lift in a car travelling to Amiens, where I caught the train to Paris. I visited Versailles and saw the splendour of the palace and grounds with admiration. I went at night to the Opera 'William Tell'. The express had just re-commenced running to Boulogne, and I was able to cross the Channel to Folkestone and reached London at 7.50 on the 20th, and I got a room at Regent's Palace Hotel at 6/6 for bed and breakfast. On Sunday I heard Dr Jowett at Westminster Chapel. The congregation crowded the large auditorium. The text was 'they have taken away my Lord.' The Lord is not gone, though the world changes. It is not autumn but spring. Again in the evening I heard him on 'Be no longer children, tossed to and fro, etc.'

I met Fred Digby, father's nephew, and went out to his place at Pinner, not far from Harrow school. I bought a lantern for my lectures costing, with accessories, £19. A shoe maker whom I visited remembered Merrington as an old London name. I went to a Mystery Play at St Martin's in the Fields. On Christmas Day I met Fred by appointment, and we had a family Christmas dinner at Woodford with the Digbys. We called on old Mrs Digby and Bertha, who were so kind to Flora when we first visited London in 1903. The Countess of Harrowby and Lady Ryder had invited me to an 'At Home' at 19 Grosvenor Place, where I met General Birdwood and had some conversation with him. The guests were all given a photograph of the King and Queen. At night I went to Albert Hall where a reception was held for servicemen.

On Boxing Day President Woodrow Wilson, whom I had seen in procession in Paris, arrived in London and was welcomed by the King. I had a splendid post at the railings of St Martin's where I met the Rev Dick Sheppard and had a talk with him. There were forty veterans of the United States Civil War there, and I had interesting chat with them. After the King had met the President and while he was driving past, the King touched Mr Wilson on the arm, and thoughtfully pointed him towards these American veterans, whose banner was fastened to the railings. The President turned and saluted them with an upraised hand and a smile. In the afternoon I attended an entertainment for Australians, at which Sir William Hughes gave an address. On Friday, I had lunch at Miss Hodgson's home. She is the daughter of an eminent leader in old time Queensland. Mr Hodgson was mayor of Stratford-on-Avon, and his name is on the statue of Shakespeare there. Miss Hodgson's brother lives at Stratford, and Miss Hodgson gave me an introduction to him. I saw Captain Treloar at the War Records Office, and we went through my photos, which he had had enlarged, and he gave me a full set of the enlargements with my comments on them, like those which he kept for official purposes. On Sunday I heard Dr R.J. Campbell at Christ Church, Westminster. I had heard him in the City Temple in 1903 and, as I observed the changes which the years had wrought in him I thought of an aged pilgrim who has travelled far along the road of life since he brought out his 'New Theology'. He had found the old faith again in the Anglican Church. At night I went to the humorous play 'Nothing but the Truth' and thoroughly enjoyed it.

I was deeply interested in the questions about Shakespeare, and had taken Professor MacCallum's full course on him at Sydney University. At Havre, Captain Neech had propounded the Baconian 'heresy' and I had done a lot of reading on the subject with a freshly inquiring mind. So, armed with Miss Hodgson's letter of introduction, I took the train to Stratford and put up at the Shakespeare Hotel. On New Year's day I called on the Rev Mr Hodgson, who kindly showed me over Trinity Church. I saw the entry of Shakespeare's baptism, and was struck by the date, 25th April 1564. I had not realised before that the celebrated day on which we celebrate Anzac landing was connected with Shakespeare's baptism, although I knew that 23rd April (St George's Day) is kept up as the traditional date of his birth. The other features of Trinity Church I had seen on my previous visit in 1904. Mr Hodgson told me an amusing incident regarding one of the stained windows, showing Enoch with a scroll in his hand. An American visitor exclaimed to the guide - 'Oh, Enoch did not die; he was translated!' To which the local worthy replied - 'Yes, that is the translation!' After a visit to Anne Hathaway's Cottage I went to Clopton House where Mr Hodgson lived. It is temporarily used as a war hospital, and several Australians were there. I went through the wards speaking to the patients. I also visited Shakespeare's birthplace and Harvard House, writing my name in the register of Harvard graduates there. From Stratford I visited Oxford and called at Corpus Christi College to see Dr F.C.S. Schiller, but he was away on holiday. And so I welcomed 1919 with a thankful heart.

I returned to France with my lantern and slides by way of Havre, where I lunched with Professor Mackintosh and met many Havre friends. The 2nd Divisional artillery had moved to Thuin in the neighbourhood of Charleroi. I was fortunate in being billeted with a very respectable family. It was a lawyer's home which overlooked the hills and valley of the district known as Belge Suisse. I had a happy life there, writing up my war diary in such spare time as I had from my duties. A Congregational padre named Slack was a near and congenial neighbour. I gave a lecture in the YMCA on 'Philosophy and Present-day Life.' A big occasion was my public lecture on Gallipoli in a picture Theatre in Charleroi, over which General Rosenthal presided. It was crowded with military and civilian people. I met Frank Rolland, a Melbourne padre whom I had first met in Edinburgh University days. He told me a good story about Rev Fred Paton, who had succeeded him as padre to the 9th Battalion, just after it had gone into reserve after many months of hard fighting. Missionary Paton on arrival was asked to take part in a debate on the subject, - Which is the stronger Element, Fire or Water? The chaplain was naturally chosen to speak for Water, and when his turn came he said- 'I feel very diffident in speaking to you men who have been under fire for five months but I would like to point out that you could not live under water for five minutes!' The crowd roared and the padre had made a great hit, his popularity was assured after that beginning. I also met Walter Lockhart Gibson of Brisbane and we spent the afternoon together. It would be tedious to narrate the many engagements which I had. In addition to my Sunday services and hospital visiting, my Anzac lecture was in demand all around the district where military camps were scattered, and these undoubtedly added to the many important forms of entertainment which help to occupy the minds of the men away from home, such as concerts, etc. We formed a debating society and drew a crowd of about 100 for a discussion of the 'Pacific Captured Possessions' ,over which debate I presided. I conducted a Bible-Class each week, and also sponsored a literary circle with Padre Slack.

The Hon W. Hughes visited us and spoke at the Hotel de Ville. He told us of the differences which existed at the Peace Conference. He emphasised the fact that the nations of which Australia was one, which had fought all through the war, now found themselves besieged with delegates from little countries in Europe and Asia who were pressing claims as if they were of supreme importance. He made us laugh as he recited a list of such countries, many of which were unknown to the majority of his listeners. Self-determination had caught on everywhere. As I write about this in 1948, the similarity which exists in many respects is remarkable and a disturbing factor for the prospects of world peace.

The problems of entertaining the troops at Thuin occupied our attention. Some of the local dances were not well conducted, and Padre Slack conceived the idea of running an old-fashioned party! We asked some of the ladies to select girls to be invited, and about sixty of them joined a slightly larger number of men from the A.I.F. in the Hotel de Ville. It was a great success. An amusing incident occurred when I was explaining the game of Jolly Miller to the Belgian lasses. Speaking in French, I said - 'Vous allez et allez, et donc..' I hesitated, and continued, 'Donc vous vous renversez.' There was a roar of laughter from the girls, for the phrase really means, 'you turn yourselves upside down!' A notion not lost to the continental humour!! I hurriedly added 'Carry on sergeant!' As a matter of fact, I should have remembered the meaning of 'se renverser', for when I was discussing my lantern slides with the operator for my lecture at Charleroi, and I asked what I should say if he inserted a slide the wrong way up, he had told me to use the reflexive verb. However, we had a very jolly party and all present voted that it was a pleasant variation from the stock type of entertainment. The literary circle was also appreciated by those who attended it from week to week. I was busily occupied writing up my Gallipoli Diary.

The death of my grandfather's brother, the first Vicar of Hazelwood, which occurred in 1887, had involved his niece, Miss Sidengham in the possession of his legacy, and her death during the war released the residual estate to the descendants of my grandfather. The Jenkins family, knowing that I was overseas, wrote and asked me to interview the lawyer, Mr E. Downes, of Gray's Inn, in the interest of all concerned. I obtained leave of absence to proceed to London and met the lawyer. The estate was diminished in value by the fall in stocks and amounted to only a few thousand pounds which were to be equally divided between the sisters and brothers, and of course their children. While in London, I met Sister Mollie Livingston and went to the opera 'Aida' being performed one night, Mozart's Magic Flute a night or two later. The World's Adult Education Association was being formed, and I attended the meeting. Among those who were present were Mr Mansbridge, Lord Haldane, Bishop Long and (as I afterwards discovered) Mr T.D. Adams of Dunedin, who held the chair of Classics later in Otago University, and became one of our great friends. My term in Belgium was now over, for I was appointed to Dartford Hospital in Kent once again, and slept in the room which I formerly had. During this period of waiting for repatriation when troops were being embarked for Australia as quickly as possible, I had the opportunity of visiting members of the Ada family at Maidenhead. I was present at the American Universities Dinner in Holborn Restaurant, and sat at the Harvard table. Among the speakers were Lord Bryce, Sir F.E. Smith and Mr Davies, the American ambassador. General Pershing and the British political leaders and generals were well represented at the long table of honour. Sir F.E. Smith made the principal speech, and advocated closer relations between Britain and the United States, giving humorous instances of the lack of understanding between the two countries to the detriment of goodwill and full co-operation.

On Anzac Day 5,000 Australians and New Zealanders marched in procession and Mollie Livingston and I had a good view of it from the railing of St Martin's in the Fields. Planes flew overhead. In the afternoon an entertainment was held by the YMCA. At

night a reception was held and there I met Mr Hughes, Mr Andrew Fisher, Senator Pearce, Major-General William Glasgow, Cameron Robertson, Sir Thomas Henley and many others. In conversation with Mr Hughes who had just come over from the Peace Conference, I found that he was not favourably disposed towards the proposed League of Nations. He criticised Woodrow Wilson for his personal detachment. Mr Hughes said to me:- 'I know men, and Wilson is an iceberg!' I ventured to suggest that if there was one country in the world that ought to support the League it was Australia, situated in a distant and rather isolated part of the globe. However, the Prime Minister seemed to side with Clemenceau as against Wilson. I paid another visit to Scotland and found myself sitting opposite the Rev George Simpson Duncan in the compartment of the train. I had already met him, and knew that he was favoured by Principal Andrew Harper for the post of his successor at St Andrew's College, Sydney; in fact Dr Harper had visited France to interview him. My own name was before the Council as an applicant for the Principalship. Duncan and I were the best of friends, and when we parted on the Waverley station we expected to meet before long in Australia. In the course of conversation during the journey we discussed Field Marshal Haig's capacities as a military leader during the War. Duncan had been Haig's Chaplain at Headquarters at Montreuil. 'What do you think of him?' I asked. 'Well, to begin with, he is one of the best-read men I have met; and I think that if he had been Commander-in-Chief instead of Foch, he would have done quite as well as Foch in finishing the fighting up to the armistice.' I then questioned him about the extraordinary slaughter around Passchendaele. Duncan replied, '-I am glad you asked me about that. In 1917 General Nivelle had come to GHQ and told Haig that the French in the centre of the front-line had lost heart, and wanted to give up and get back to their homes and farms. If the Germans came on in the centre there was nothing to stop them. The French General then asked Haig what he could do about it Haig was silent for a few minutes, and then brought his fist down on the table and said.-'The Germans will not come on. I will hammer, hammer, on the northern flank, and they will not dare to risk the turning of their right flank in Flanders!' The campaign of limited offensives on our left flank was the direct result of this situation. It was terribly costly to Australian and N.Z. troops; but it was imperative, and it saved the whole position in that fateful period.' Duncan also told me that when the German advance took place in the early part of the following spring and Haig issued his famous order, 'Backs to the Wall', and all the officers at Headquarters were nervously busy, Duncan held his usual service. A few orderlies were present and, to his surprise Sir Douglas Haig came to the service. After it was over, and Haig spoke to the Padre, the latter said, 'I did not expect to see you here this morning, Sir.' And Haig said, 'I am only trying to do the right thing, as you have been advocating. Is not the Lord King? We must depend upon God's help if we are to be victorious!' The sincere religious faith of the leader was the secret of his life and the inspiration which brought about in due time the successful outcome of the awful conflict. Lord Haig afterwards became an elder of the Kirk.

In Edinburgh I called on Professor W.P. Paterson and met Professor Sarolea at his home on a visit, and saw through the marvellous library which Sarolea possessed. He lived next door to Paterson. Principal Alexander Martin invited me to lunch at the Liberal Club. I took the tram out to Colinton Road and made a call on Professor Hugh Mackintosh, and was invited into his study, where Professor Kemp Smith, of Princeton was evidently engaged in special conference with him. Later, I lunched at New College with G.S. Duncan, Martin being in the chair, Mackintosh and Mr Newlands were also there.

I took the train to Saltcoats and visited Flora's aunt, Mrs Gardiner and her daughters, Jessie Gardiner and Mrs Maggie Boden. Next day I met Robert (Bob) Smith and with his partner, Mr Hepburn had lunch at the Liberal Club in Glasgow. In the afternoon I paid a visit to another aunt and uncle of Flora, Mr and Mrs Archie Lamb. On my way southward from Scotland I spent a day at Carlisle, seeing the castle and abbey, and then went on to Windermere, Bowness, Rydal and Grasmere, paid homage to Wordsworth's church, home and grave, walked to Orrest Head after a visit to Ambleside, and enjoyed the Lake Country to the full.

CHAPTER 15

Return to Queensland

My embarkation orders had come through in April, and a final visit to Dartford Hospital enabled me to collect my effects. I had been put down for the ship *Borda*, but hearing from Mollie that she was booked for the *Devanha*, I had the sailing altered so that I could proceed with my sister-in-law on the same ship. We sailed on the *Devanha* (on which I had gone to Anzac Cove in 1915) on 8th May, the band playing us off at Devonport. The YMCA secretary on board was Mr Dodds, and we soon formed a Literary and Debating Society at a large meeting of the soldiers. I also began a Bible Class. Remembering Padre Gault's famous 'stunts' I tried to follow his methods to some extent, and entertained the men, with competitions and talks. I adopted a mode of talking about the countries lying near our course, with a geographical and historical popular account of them, e.g. Portugal, Spain, Gibraltar, Morocco, Algiers, Tripoli, Italy, Sicily, Malta, Egypt. In these talks I was furnished with handy material from the volumes of the *Everyman Encyclopaedia* which I had bought in London. The weather was very hot in the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. At Colombo a party hired a motor to visit Kandy. It broke down at a village, and we would have been in difficulty had not a tea planter picked us up in his car and taken us to the Queen's Hotel in Kandy. We saw the sights of that interesting place, and managed to get back to our ship in time for the departure.

Mollie was a great favourite on board. She used to spend much of her time below deck pressing the men's uniforms, although the temperature was almost overpowering. An election was held for a Mock Parliament, and Mollie was elected for the Boat Deck constituency at the top of the poll. In the Parliament she was appointed to the Ministry as Attorney General! Services were held regularly and were well attended. I spoke on behalf of the Returned Soldiers' Association and Repatriation to a huge crowd of soldiers one night. We reached Fremantle on June 14, Adelaide on the 20th, where we were amazed to see the open barrows of fruit for sale near the wharves. At Melbourne I visited the King family and Dr Rentoul. We arrived in Port Jackson on June 26th and had a grand welcome from our relatives, whom we soon visited in their own homes. Two days later I arrived at Toowoomba, where Flora and the children met me by previous arrangement, and we had a holiday all together at The Bluff. At St Stephen's Church, Toowoomba I unveiled an Honour Board: and we all returned to Brisbane on Monday, 14th July. We were warmly welcomed by a crowd of friends.

On 19th July, Peace was celebrated in Brisbane. I marched with the Artillery in the procession. Fireworks were brilliant at night, and some of my German flares were sent skywards from the flare pistol which I had brought from Cartignies. Peace had been signed at Versailles, and the League of Nations had come into existence.

After the Welcome Social at St Andrew's Church Hall, life began to resume its regular routine in Brisbane. Mollie Livingston came to stay with us for a few weeks. In addition to the Church services and pastoral work, the College Council, Theological Hall lectures, and University Senate occupied my attention. The Returned Soldiers Club and Association were naturally not forgotten. The Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association was still functioning with vigour. Our daughters Agnes and Frances attended Somerville House under the joint headship of Miss Harker and Miss Jarrett. Harvard went to the school at Kangaroo Point. Although he had recovered from the severe attack of broncho-pneumonia which had laid him low when I first went overseas in 1914 his health was sometimes interrupted by slight attacks of the same complaint. We were naturally anxious about him. In September Dr Morgan told us Harvard had pneumonia and urged us to send for Sister Livingston, who had been so helpful in nursing him in his first attack. She arrived from Sydney a few days later, and the boy showed an improvement. On 20th November Flora and I were guests for dinner at Government House. Sir Matthew Nathan had succeeded Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams as Governor of Queensland. General Sir Harry Chauvel visited the State in December, and it was good to meet our former Light Horse Brigadier after his distinguished services in Palestine. And so the year, 1919 drew to its close.